

Little Learners Nursery & Day Care Day Care of Children

Tulloch Place
Inverlochy
Fort William
PH33 6JD

Telephone: 01397 701040

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 13 February 2018

Service provided by:
Nevis Bank Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003001835

Care service number:
CS2003008658

About the service

Little Learners Nursery & Day Care has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011. It provides a care service to a maximum of 42 children aged six months to not yet attending primary school, where no more than nine have reached their second birthday. The service is provided by Nevis Bank Nursery Limited and operates from refurbished accommodation in the village of Inverlochry on the outskirts of Fort William. The service has sole occupancy of the building and has secure outdoor play areas.

The nursery is in partnership with the Highland Council to deliver early education and childcare to 3-5 year old children as well as eligible two year olds.

The service's main aim is:

'To provide a warm, secure, safe and friendly environment for all children in our care. They will benefit from a wide and varied range of activities which are appropriate to their developmental stage. All experiences will be child led: child centred and will be focused on the interests and needs of the children within the group and outdoor experiences are available throughout the day.'

A full set of aims and objectives are available from the service.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC); Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC supports children and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

There were 23 children present on the first day of our inspection and 19 on the second. We observed babies and children fully engaged in their play within the two playrooms and could see that they had formed friendships with their peers as well as relationships with staff. Some of the younger children showed us the toys and materials they enjoyed most while older children chatted confidently about their chosen activities at nursery. We could see that the range of experiences and activities offered were in keeping with children's individual needs, interests and developmental stage. Children's comments included:

"Are you writing down my name - is that it?"

"I'm helping with snack it's all for me." (Little girl was laughing then explained to us later that the snack was her friends and the babies.)

"That's a phone it's not magnetic."

"I'm making a sandcastle."

For this inspection we received questionnaire responses from 12 parents/carers whose children attended the service. Eight strongly agreed and four agreed that they were happy with the overall quality of the service. Written comments from parents included:

"I can't praise the staff highly enough! My son absolutely adores all of them. They are fantastic with all the children."

"I moved my son from [another provider] and what a difference in service. He is happier, more stimulated and learning more. He is also doing better with potty training."

"I like the care my daughter receives however I would like to have more feedback regarding my daughter's development. She's only one day a week but do feel they organise days out and she doesn't get involved or we are told too late for her to join in."

"My child has an excellent relationship with her key worker and other members of staff. Staff clearly care about the children they work with and celebrate their achievements. I would like to receive more information about my child's progress within their curriculum."

"My son has grown and developed extremely well since starting here a year ago. The staff always keep me updated on his development and he is becoming a very lively and well-mannered child. Can't recommend them enough."

We also spoke with two parents during our visit who spoke highly of the professionalism and approachability of staff. They believed their children were benefitting from the nursery experience. Parents' views have been incorporated within the main body of this report.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated the service priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

We found, and parents confirmed, that staff had developed trusting and respectful relationships with families. Staff worked hard to make sure children's individual needs were being met: for example staff kept two way diaries about babies and younger children's individual needs and routines to share with their parents. Consistency in routines contributed to children feeling nurtured and safe at nursery. We observed older children being consulted by staff about their interests and activities using tools such as circle time, mind maps and big

books. Giving children opportunities to develop their ability and confidence in talking and listening made it more likely that they would feel their views were valued, included and respected.

We sampled children's personal files and online learning profiles to see how children's health and wellbeing needs were being supported in other ways by staff. All about me folders reflected GIRFEC wellbeing indicators and were reviewed with parents every six months, or sooner if need be. One of the strengths of the service was how they worked with families as well as other professionals or services to support good outcomes for children with additional needs. For example staff had participated in training provided by the epilepsy nurse and keyworkers attended multi agency review meetings for individual children. This was in keeping with the joined up approach promoted by Scottish Government within the GIRFEC framework as well as the service's own improvement priority 'to develop community partnerships with the life of the setting.'

Staff we spoke to were confident in their knowledge of child protection and this was reinforced by regular training on safeguarding children. The centre manager and depute shared the Child Protection Co-ordinator role and we could see from children's chronologies that they worked closely with other agencies when families were found to need additional support to keep children safe. This approach ensured the welfare of children.

The service had moved to new accommodation since the last inspection and staff spoke highly of how the light airy building had contributed to theirs and children's sense of wellbeing. The service had continued an improvement priority to develop their outdoor play area and we could see that local businesses had helped them to up-cycle materials that would offer children new experiences. Tyres were being used for sensory areas such as fairy gardens and a mud kitchen had been modelled from palettes. Contact with natural materials and textures stimulates children's curiosity and creativity. It also supports the development of social skills and language as children engage in imaginative play with their peers. Staff made good use of local amenities, including parks and community walks, to provide additional outdoor experiences for children. This ensured that children had a range of opportunities to be active, healthy and achieving during their nursery week.

What the service could do better

Staff were becoming confident in using online profiles to document observations of children and to track their individual learning and development. All about me files were also a useful tool for planning to support children's health and wellbeing and to celebrate their achievements. However we encouraged the service to continue to develop children's personal plans to give a more holistic picture of each child's progress and to assist staff in identifying and supporting children's individual next steps.

There was some good practice in the management and administration of children's medication systems but we found this could be improved. For example recording forms could be streamlined and a copy kept near the medication to support children's health and safety. Medication should be clearly labelled with the child's name and stored in individually labelled containers while at nursery. We signposted management to our best practice guidance that would assist them in reviewing their systems - Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services (Care Inspectorate 2014). Please see recommendation 1.

We discussed other areas where practice to support children's health and wellbeing could be improved. Children's cots should not be placed under windows or beside radiators and each child should have their own bedding. The mattress should be checked and disinfected between each child. Further safe sleeping messages for the nursery setting can be found on the Scottish Cot Death Trust's website:

<http://www.scottishcotdeathtrust.org/skyblucms/resources/early-years-safe-sleep-guide-2017-1.pdf>

The service undertook risk assessments of the environment however staff needed to be more vigilant about new hazards. For example we found a nappy sack on the baby playroom floor that was a potential choking hazard to any child finding it. As this may have fallen out of one of the children's own bags we encouraged staff to share information with parents about common accidents involving children. We signposted management to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. (ROSPA) <https://www.rosipa.com/resources/hubs/keeping-kids-safe/>

The service had moved to new premises since their previous inspection and management had liaised appropriately with the Care Inspectorate and Environmental Health to ensure that the accommodation was fit for purpose. We discussed how risk assessments could be used now the service was operational to ensure the health and safety of all service users. For example, we observed that the proximity of children's toilets to the kitchen area used for preparation and serving of children's snacks posed a risk of cross infection. We referred management to 'Space to Grow' to assist with planning alternative snack arrangements and help minimise this risk. 'Space to Grow' is a tool for providers, planners and architects to use when planning new and/or refurbishing existing early learning and childcare services. <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/549001/space-to-grow.pdf>

We highlighted other areas where infection control measures could be better, for example providing a change of bedclothes for each child that required to nap during their nursery session. The manager and staff should refer to the revised Health Protection Scotland guidance: Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (October 2016). Please see recommendation 2.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Management should review the policy and procedures for the administration of children's medication and incorporate best practice.

The service should refer to the Care Inspectorate guidance: Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services (2014)

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing and Standard 14: Well-managed service.

2. Management and staff should ensure that appropriate measures are implemented to reduce the likelihood of any cross infection among people using the service. For example, use of individual bedding for children, preparation/serving of children's food.

Management and staff should refer to the revised Health Protection Scotland guidance: Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (October 2016).

National care standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2: A safe environment and Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
25 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
9 Jul 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
26 Oct 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
2 Sep 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
21 Jan 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
25 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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