

# Loirston School Nursery Day Care of Children

Loirston School  
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Aberdeen  
AB12 3HE

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Type of inspection: Announced  
Inspection completed on: 5 June 2018

**Service provided by:**  
Aberdeen City Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000349

**Care service number:**  
CS2003014441

## About the service

Loirston School Nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children at one time aged between three years to those not yet attending primary school. It is provided by Aberdeen City Council and operates as part of the Loirston Primary School community. It is close to local amenities including shops and a library.

The indoor area is divided into three rooms, which are all open plan to each other. There is an outdoor area that children in all three rooms share.

The service had developed a set of aims which included:

- To offer a wide range of contexts for learning which cover all curricular areas.
- To provide a nurturing environment where children can develop respect for themselves, each other, their community and the wider world.

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

## What people told us

Children were happy and confident in the service. They readily approached staff for comfort and reassurance. Children particularly enjoyed playing outdoors.

We sent out 25 Care Standards Questionnaires; 15 parents completed and returned the questionnaires to us. When asked about the overall quality of care their child received at the nursery:

- 11 parents/carers indicated they were very satisfied
- four parents/carers did not answer the question.

Parents we spoke with were happy with the quality of care their child received. They felt their child enjoyed their time at the nursery and found staff helpful and approachable. They particularly liked that children spent a good amount of time outdoors. Some parents felt they received limited information about how their child was progressing with their learning. They found the learning journals did not give them good quality information to enable them to have an overview of their child's time at the service. Some parents told us they did not know who their child's keyworker was.

Comments from parents included:

"The staff are excellent, very caring and professional at all times. My son is very happy in the nursery environment."

"Individual learning and development could be more informative for parents but my child is still young and probably this will happen next term."

"All staff are very welcoming and make time to have a quick chat whenever I collect. My child has commented on how much he loves all of his teachers. Big thumbs up to all the staff at the nursery."

"I am not convinced staff assess the level my child is working at and if they do they don't pass it on to me. She enjoys nursery and I feel it has improved in the past 6-12 months with more structure."

"My daughter loves attending Loirston Nursery, it is a great environment where they ensure plenty of outdoor play in all weathers. She has a great relationship with the staff and it is a huge bonus that staff are consistent, we know who will be there and when."

"Staff are approachable, are very friendly and caring. We also find they have the children's best interests at heart. Overall we are very confident with this nursery's abilities."

"I don't think we have met the nursery teacher. The staff that are in my son's nursery seem to be early years practitioners."

"The staff are friendly and kind. My son loves his time at nursery and all the different activities they have for him to do."

"All staff are very welcoming and my son has gained a lot more confidence since starting Loirston."

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plans. These demonstrated the service priorities for development, based on their last inspection from Education Scotland.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	2 - Weak
Quality of management and leadership	2 - Weak

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Staff were nurturing and compassionate in their interactions with children, supporting children to feel secure and confident. The positive relationships staff had developed with parents enabled them to exchange information to support children's wellbeing needs.

Children who required additional support were not being adequately supported to progress and achieve their potential. Staff did not demonstrate a shared understanding of how to meet the needs of these children. Strategies to effectively guide staff were not recorded to support consistent practice. The impact of support

provided was not evaluated to assess effectiveness. Staff did not have a sufficiently good knowledge of children not in their group to ensure their needs were met. **(See requirement 1.)**

Effective systems were not in place to ensure children's health needs were met. Parental permission forms for medication did not include sufficiently detailed information to provide clear guidance for staff. These were not reviewed often enough for staff to be confident they reflected children's current needs. Staff did not have sufficient awareness of the health needs of children who were not in their group. This potentially placed children at risk. **(See requirement 2.)**

A keyworker system had been developed to help build secure relationships and meet children's learning needs. We suggested the keyworker system could be developed to ensure more consistent care was provided for children needing additional support. We also advised that details of keyworkers should be shared with parents to promote effective links with home.

Staff were clear on possible signs of abuse, supporting them to identify when children may be at risk of harm. We advised the most recent child protection policy should be available in the service to provide clear guidance for staff. Effective systems to record wellbeing concerns were not in place. As a result there was no overview of children's wellbeing needs to ensure an accurate assessment had been taken of their needs and that the right support had been provided. **(See recommendation 1.)**

Snacks were sociable experiences with opportunities for children to develop their independence skills through helping in the preparation. We looked at the snack menu and saw these provided nutritious options, supporting children to be healthy.

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 2

1. To ensure children's care and support meet their needs and is right for them, the provider must develop care plans that provide comprehensive and effective information and ensure staff use these effectively to meet children's needs by 18 June 2018.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19).

It also complies with Regulation 5 (Personal plans) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

2. To ensure children's health needs are met, the provider must ensure:

- comprehensive information is recorded that clearly details the health needs of children and how these will be met
- information is reviewed to ensure it reflects children's current needs
- all staff are fully informed about each children's medical needs.

By 18 June 2018.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I am confident that the right people are fully informed about my past, including my health and care experience, and

any impact this has on me."(HSCS 3.4) and "My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event". (HSCS 4.14).

It also complies with Regulation 4.1a (Welfare of Users) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 1

1. To ensure children received the right support at the right time effective systems for recording and assessing children's wellbeing needs should be implemented.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm. (HSCS 3.21).

**Grade:** 2 - weak

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The service was secure, clean and well maintained. Good communication between home and nursery was supported with informative noticeboards.

At times the nursery was very noisy. Staff sometimes contributed to this by raising their voices to make them heard above the children. This was not conducive to a calm environment which supported children's learning. Research shows that noise can create confusion and fear for some children with additional support needs. We asked the service to consider how noise could be reduced. **(See recommendation 1.)**

There were three separate play spaces indoors, with children allocated to one of the play spaces. The range of natural and real life resources supported children to explore and develop their imagination. Some of the areas could be developed to provide more in-depth learning opportunities to support children's progress. For example, the construction and home corners could provide more resources to promote numeracy and literacy as well as opportunities for problem solving and investigation. There were no areas for children to relax in a quiet environment and explore a range of sensory experiences. We asked the nursery to review how the areas were being used to consider more innovative ways of using the space. **(See recommendation 1.)**

Children were supported to be active, with good use of the outdoor area. Free flow access enabled children to choose when to play outdoors. There was a range of interesting opportunities outdoors. Children were engaged in the mud kitchen, experimenting and exploring. They enjoyed imaginative play whilst making a den with blankets. The outdoor area could be developed to provide more opportunities for children to problem solve and investigate, such as extending the range of open-ended resources. Better opportunities to creatively engage children in mark making and numeracy would further support their development.

A previous recommendation about developing responsive risk assessments was not met. We asked the service to consider how individual children's needs could also be considered in these. Accident records were not audited to

identify potential issues and actions that could be taken to reduce the risks. We asked the service to do this, to help reduce any potential risks to children.

Effective procedures were not in place to minimise the risk of spreading infection. Although children washed hands before snack, this was not happening consistently after toileting. Toilets were often left not flushed and we saw a toileting accident was not dealt with appropriately.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. To ensure children are supported to achieve their potential the indoor environment should be developed to provide:

- a calm environment with peaceful areas for children to relax
- more stimulating learning experiences.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling." (HSCS 1.30) and "My environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells." (HSCS 5.18).

Further guidance to support the service with this can be found at:

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/549001/space-to-grow.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/201173/national-practice-guidance-on-early-learning-2014.pdf>

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

Staff were kind and caring and were genuinely fond of the children. As a result children had formed good attachments with staff and were confident to approach them. Staff spoke respectfully to the children and made good use of praise. This promoted positive behaviour and supported children's self-esteem. Parents found staff helpful and friendly and were pleased with the good relationships they had developed with them and their child.

Effective systems were not in place to share key information between staff. As a result some staff were unable to effectively meet children's health and development needs, including for those children who required additional support. **(See recommendation 1.)**

On the whole staff supervised children well, supporting them to be safe. However, on occasion staff did not take into account the identified needs of individual children. This meant some children were not always appropriately supervised, potentially placing them at risk. **(See recommendation 1.)**

Staff were in the early stages of effectively supporting children to achieve their potential. Observations and identified next steps were not always focussed on significant learning and did not identify meaningful progression opportunities. The overview of children's skills gave staff an understanding of the level children were at. However, staff had not yet implemented systems to track if next steps had been achieved. **(See recommendation 2.)**

Staff were in the early stages of using effective interaction, such as questions and comment to support and extend children's learning. They were not yet confidently following children's interests to enable children to lead their learning. This meant children were not being adequately challenged and supported to extend their curiosity. **(See recommendation 2.)**

Staff had attended a range of training opportunities and had knowledge of some of the best practice guidance. However, these were not yet being used effectively to support the improvement of the service and the quality of children's experiences.

Most staff that were required to be, were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training. However, one member of staff's registration had lapsed. Following the inspection the member of staff was removed from caring for children until their registration was completed. **(See requirement 1.)**

Staff appeared keen to develop and improve the service further and were well intentioned. During discussions they were keen to take on board our suggestions to further improve the service.

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 1

1. To ensure the safety of children all staff working in the service must be registered with an appropriate professional body within the required timescales by 18 June 2018.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14).

It also complies with Regulation 9 (2) (c) (Fitness of employees) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 2

1. To ensure children's needs are met and they are safe, effective systems for ensuring all staff know the needs of each child and use this knowledge to effectively support children should be implemented.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me." (HSCS 1.19).

2. To support children to progress and achieve staff should develop their skills and knowledge of:

- observation, assessment and planning
- effective interaction to support and extend learning.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me." (HSCS 1.27).

**Grade:** 2 - weak

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

Due to teaching commitment in classrooms in the school, there had been limited support from senior managers for the nursery. As a result there had been little guidance or evaluative feedback provided to support staff. The pace of change in the nursery was too slow, with no senior manager taking a lead to effectively guide this. There was no strategic overview of the level the nursery was performing at. The lack of support, guidance and overview had impacted negatively on the service's ability to make improvements. **(See requirement 1.)**

An action plan had been developed following the last Education Scotland inspection. This showed the positive impact on staff confidence, however there was little evidence of any improvements to outcomes for children. A greater focus on impact on children would support the manager and staff to make improvements that would make the biggest difference to children.

Monitoring systems were not formalised or frequent enough to identify what was working well and areas to develop. Monitoring had identified some basic areas for improvement but this was not yet impacting positively on practice. Effective systems were not in place to identify whether the needs of individual children were met. **(See requirement 2.)**

Staff had undertaken some self-evaluation to support improvements to the service. However, this was at the very early stages and had not yet been formalised. Staff would benefit from support to critically reflect enabling them to identify meaningful changes that would have a positive impact on improving outcomes for children. More effective use of nationally recognised indicator would support staff with this. **(See requirement 2.)**

Parents felt they were not asked for their views to assess and improve the quality of the provision. We asked the manager and staff to consider how parents could be more meaningfully involved. We suggested better ways of sharing information with parents to support them to engage in their child's learning should be considered. Most parents were not aware of the next steps their child was working towards and felt the learning journals did not give them the information they wanted.

The manager and staff were keen to develop the service, we offered to undertake some supporting improvement work with the staff. The local authority also agreed to work with the staff team to support improvements.



## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 2

1. To ensure children receive high quality early learning and childcare and their individual needs are met, the provider must ensure the service is effectively managed and led by 24 August 2018.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

It also complies with Regulation 7 (2) (c) (Fitness of Managers) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

2. To ensure children receive high quality early learning and childcare and their individual needs are met, the provider must:

- implement a robust and effective quality assurance process
- promote a culture of continuous improvement.

By 5 October 2018.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (HSCS 4.19).

It also complies with Regulation 3 (Principles) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 0

**Grade:** 2 - weak

**What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection**

## Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

The service provider should review the procedures for the administration and storage of medication in line with best practice guidance.

The service manager and staff should refer to the Care Inspectorate good practice 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

**This recommendation was made on 2 March 2016.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had not been met. Effective medication procedures were not in place to ensure children's health needs were met. We have made a requirement in the 'Quality of care and support' section of this report.

#### Recommendation 2

The manager should ensure that responsive risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety of children while attending the service.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 – A Safe Environment

**This recommendation was made on 2 March 2016.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had not been met. Risk assessments were not responsive to the needs of individual children. We have asked the service to consider how the needs of individual children can be considered to ensure their safety.

#### Recommendation 3

Management should continue to work with staff and all stakeholders to embed quality assurance processes that capture areas for improvement. This is to make sure that management monitors effectively the quality of work of each member of staff and the service as a whole.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 13 – Improving the Service; and Standard 14 – Well-managed Service

**This recommendation was made on 2 March 2016.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had not been met. Effective quality assurance systems were not in place to ensure individual children's needs were met and to improve outcomes for children. We have made a new requirement in the 'Quality of management and leadership' section of this report.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
21 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
27 Sep 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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