

Rocking Horse Nursery - Aberdeen

Day Care of Children

49 College Bounds
Aberdeen
AB24 3DY

Telephone: 01224 273400

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

31 July 2018

Service provided by:

Rocking Horse Nursery - Aberdeen

Service provider number:

SP2003000341

Service no:

CS2003001766

About the service

Rocking Horse Nursery operates from a purpose-built environmentally friendly building within the campus of Aberdeen University. It has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011. It is registered as a day care of children service to provide care to a maximum of 78 children at any one time aged from birth to those not yet attending primary school of whom no more than 21 may be under 2 years of age.

The age range of children attending at weekends will be:

- a maximum of 12 children aged 0 to under 2 years
- a maximum of 10 children aged 2 to those not yet attending primary school
- a maximum of 8 children aged 5 to under 8 years.

The care service may operate between the hours of 8:00 and 18:15, Monday to Friday. In addition the care service may operate for a maximum of 20 weekends in a 12-month period between the hours of 9:30 and 17:00.

The nursery children are well placed to visit many local areas of the community including the zoology department, the botanic gardens and library.

The aims and values of the nursery include:

- to use innovative approaches which meet the needs of individual children
- to promote overall health and wellbeing
- to respect the needs of individuals and encourage creativity
- to provide regular opportunities for outdoor play
- to provide challenge through play
- to work in partnership with parents
- to provide staff with opportunities for continual professional development.

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

When we arrived, all children were playing outdoors in the warm sunshine. Children had great fun splashing and experimenting during water play. Others enjoyed building in the sunken sandpit whilst others explored loose parts.

We spoke with a number of children during our inspection. Their comments included:

"I'm making a road for the sand."

"I'm going up the hill... down now... wheeeee!"

We were unfortunately unable to speak with any parents during the inspection. We did however email seven parents and received five responses. They commented positively about their children's overall experiences.

We sent out 45 Care Standards Questionnaires; 22 parents completed and returned the questionnaires to us. When asked if they were happy with the overall quality of care their child received at the nursery; 19 parents strongly agreed, two agreed and one disagreed with this statement. When asked if they were confident that there were always enough staff to provide good quality of care; 16 strongly agreed, four agreed and two disagreed with this statement. Sixteen parents were confident that staff had the skills and experience to care for their child and support their learning and development; six agreed.

We shared all comments with the management team including concerns raised in relation to dealing with challenging behaviour and staff understanding of how this should be managed.

We observed staff interaction with the children and found they dealt with more challenging behaviours quietly, sensitively and respectfully.

One parent expressed concern over staffing ratios. On the day of our inspection we found there was more than enough staff working within all areas of the nursery. Staff were well deployed both indoors and out to ensure children were well supervised and that their individual needs were accounted for.

Comments from parents included:

"Since my daughter started at RHN at eight months old, the staff have spent time getting to know her very well, which has been important to me and extremely beneficial for her in terms of everyday experience and her learning."

"The RHN team work very hard to provide a stimulating environment and offer a huge variety of experiences."

"The RHN is always very clean and the food provided is excellent, again, both things that are important to me and I value. An amazing nursery!"

"The staff at Rocking Horse Nursery are amazing. They are so supportive, kind and enthusiastic. They are always interested in the children and their preferences and needs. But also they are great at providing new and interesting challenges."

"The nursery environment is brilliant. The children always have a wide range of engaging activities and the outdoor space is outstanding."

"I cannot imagine a more idyllic setting to entrust my son to. I feel privileged that we have been able to experience Rocking Horse. School has a lot to live up to!"

"The staff at Rocking Horse are wonderful for many reasons. One important reason for me is their enjoyment of the children's company. It is difficult to leave one's child with strangers, but I found it very helpful to see how, beyond their obvious professional childcare skills, the staff all seem truly tuned into each child's personality and individual needs. They have fun and as a result the children are calm and relaxed with them. We are very grateful parents and feel lucky to have RHN."

"We're delighted that our daughter goes to Rocking Horse Nursery. It's a fantastic facility, both indoors and outdoors, and the staff are professional, caring and creative. We have only positive things to say about our experience!"

"The Rocking Horse Nursery continues to exceed my expectations in the quality of care they provide my child, which has been for nearly three years. Never have I questioned anything they have done. The staff are

tremendous and show genuine interest in my son's life and he speaks very positively about them. The environment is stimulating, the garden area a big hit and the toys are all good quality and age appropriate. My son's happiness and delight to be at nursery speaks volumes to me."

"My child attends the nursery full-time, though never seems to tire of it, as the staff make a real effort to ensure the activities are varied and challenging. I feel the Spanish and Mandarin lessons are a fantastic opportunity, and my child loves to sing in Spanish, and uses Spanish words to name objects at home. The nursery makes the most of their outdoor area, and will often keep the kids outside all day when the weather is good. I believe that this has been of real benefit to my child."

"I'm always really happy to hear that my child has been playing outside on nice days. The staff are vigilant about sun cream and encourage carers/parents to apply this to their child on sunny days. The green room gives a stimulating yet relaxed atmosphere for the children and I feel that the staff tailor their relationships with the children in a way that is best for the child, for example soothing/distracting them if upset when the parent/carer leaves."

"We are very happy with the nursery, the staff is lovely and caring, the building and gardens amazing and my child is very happy. Some days she even tells me it's too early to pick her up and I should go back to work!"

"Very happy with the service, the progress our child has made, the staff we have met and the general ethos of the nursery."

"The nursery has been truly fantastic with my son. He has settled in so well and made many friends. The staff are always caring and friendly. The food looks and smells fantastic."

"This is our first experience with 'nursery' for our child and we have been very impressed and pleased with all aspects of the Rocking Horse Nursery - kind and professional staff, great management, excellent building, caring atmosphere."

Self assessment

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

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

The staff team knew the children and families using the service well. Pertinent information was gathered at enrolment. This enabled staff to effectively support children when they started, helping them to feel nurtured and included.

Effective partnerships with parents and other professionals supported the good quality of care children received to help them achieve their potential.

All children clearly enjoyed child-led play, allowing them to follow their interests supported by interested and attentive staff.

All children had direct access to the outdoors and experienced daily, safe, active and energetic play. As the nursery is located in an enriched community, children experienced frequent outings to places of interest, such as the botanic gardens.

Snack and mealtimes were overall, positive experiences for children. They were supported by staff who knew their dietary needs and preferences. We found however, that opportunities to increase children's independence and responsibility could be further enhanced. Snacks and meals took account of best practice guidance to keep children healthy.

Staff interaction was positive throughout our visit. Staff's warm and caring nature towards children created an environment where children were nurtured, happy and secure. Staff were motivated and worked well together as a team and told us they felt well supported in their roles. Staff we spoke with knew children well as individuals and spoke confidently about their individual care, learning and development needs. Ratios and the deployment of staff ensured children's responsive care.

Recruitment procedures were safe and effective. All checks were undertaken prior to staff starting employment. However a clearer means of tracking recruitment information should be developed.

An organised induction procedure ensured staff were confident and competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Staff were appropriately qualified or working towards a qualification and were registered to practice with the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC).

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. Staff attended child protection training to gain further knowledge. The staff we spoke with had a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and the systems in place for reporting and recording any concerns. We suggested scenario-based examples be included within training for staff's increased understanding and awareness.

Staff told us they had good access to training to underpin and enhance their knowledge and practice. Staff were able to discuss practice and personal development needs through management monitoring their practice and arranging support and supervision sessions.

Parents expressed how happy they were with staffs' level of care and knowledge of their children and the very good relationships they had developed.

What the service could do better

Personal plans were in place for all children and these took account of pertinent information to enable staff initially to effectively support children. Although staff knew children well, a number of those plans sampled did not contain sufficient detail demonstrating children's development or achievements.

We discussed with management how observations within learning journeys should be followed through, where appropriate, with meaningful next steps. Management and staff need to continue to develop personal plans for all children, clearly detailing how the health, welfare and safety needs of the children would be met. Staff should also be supported to ensure that they are able to more effectively record the progress made by children and plan for individual next steps in learning. Management told us that tracking children's progress had already been identified as an area to develop for the whole centre, and was included in the service's Quality Improvement Plan.

Effective evaluation of planning for children's learning was not routinely being carried out. Senior staff and management should develop this area, to ensure that learning experiences planned for are of good quality, taking account of children's individual support needs and next steps. This would then impact positively on children's learning and development.

We reviewed the management of medication policy and procedures. Appropriate step by step information had been sourced for those children with life threatening conditions. However not all medicines were appropriately stored along with a copy of the child's care plan to enable staff's quick, responsive action to keep children safe and well.

Children's allergies were well documented. However, clear action plans for all children should be in place so that staff can provide effective treatment in the event a child experiences an allergic reaction.

Children's individual sleep routines were recognised and supported. We did however suggest that staff review how they manage sleep routines taking account of best practice guidance.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

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
14 Jun 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
18 Jun 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
30 Aug 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 5 - Very good 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good
19 Oct 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
19 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
26 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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