

Charleston School Nursery Day Care of Children

Charleston Road
Cove
Aberdeen
AB12 3FH

Telephone: 01224 249349

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 October 2018

Service provided by:
Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000349

Service no:
CS2003014418

About the service

Charleston School Nursery has been operating since April 2004 and registered with the Care Inspectorate since the Care Inspectorate was formed in 2011. The service is provided by Aberdeen City Council. It provides a day care of children service for a maximum of 40 children at any one time aged between three years to those not yet attending. The service must comply with the current staffing schedule dated 18 March 2004, which must be displayed together with the certificate.

The service operates from a designated area within Charleston School in the suburb of Cove. The nursery has its own entry area for children and parents. The nursery class consists of a large open plan play space with a cloak room area, kitchen and snack area. A door leads from the main play room direct to the designated nursery play area: a fenced area within the main school playground for children to play.

The aims of the service include:

- Provide a welcoming, safe, stimulation environment for all.
- Ensure an inclusive approach to meet the needs of all in partnership with parents and other agencies.
- Nurture an ethos of achievement in a supporting environment.
- Respect each other, our property, our school community and our world.
- Be reflective and ensure continuous improvement.

The Care Inspectorate checks services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as 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. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it Right for Every Child: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included.

What people told us

There were approximately 27 children present during the morning session and 11 children present during the afternoon session. We observed the children and saw that most were happy during their time at nursery. Some children were participating in their own learning however most would have benefited from more support from staff. Children played well together for the most part with some support from staff however this could be improved. At times children did not know teachers' names and some approached us to help them.

We talked to children about their experiences while they played and they told us that they like to be at nursery and like to go outside, sometimes visiting the woods.

Nine parents returned completed Care Standards Questionnaires to us before the inspection. We also spoke with eight parents as they dropped off and collected their children. All told us they were happy with the service provided. Many parents commented that staff were nice, approachable and caring towards their children. Some parents explained that they would like more information about what their child does and learns while at nursery. Others disagreed that staff had worked with themselves and their children to develop individual plans. We looked at these aspects of care as part of the inspection and have included our findings in the report.

Comments from parents included:

"I was asked to register online for an interactive learning journal which has not started yet. This would be helpful."

"Staff have recently started writing on a board at the entrance to let parents know what the children have been doing each day instead of a handover individually."

"My child is very happy at nursery. They have learned a lot from going."

"As a parent I feel content that my child is well cared for and well stimulated while in the nursery staff's care. The staff have assisted my child in becoming the confident and caring child they are now."

"Although the interactive learning diary system is used, I don't believe it is updated often enough to count as the only communication in regards to learning and development."

"There is very little done to inform parents what children have done that day - usually just met with a 'they've been fine'."

"Feel like there are probably a lot of resources in the nursery but they are not being used. Each day seems very same same."

"The outdoor area of nursery could do with some attention to make it a more stimulating environment."

"Having only employed a nursery teacher a few weeks ago I am unsure to what level the other staff were qualified to do this in the absence of said teacher."

"Although parents have been asked for feedback I have seen very little of this taken on board"

"Although I am confident my child knows to stay in nursery until I get there, there has been an instance where a child left the nursery door at collection time without a parent and without being noticed by staff. I was shocked at how little responsibility staff showed for their part in this."

"My child is very happy at nursery."

"The one way system makes picking up/dropping off smoother."

"The newsletter that was introduced last term is really good."

"My child loves going to nursery and loves his teachers. I always feel when dropping my child off, confident that they are well looked after, listened to and cared for by all staff."

"My child loves nursery. All the teachers are friendly and approachable."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated their 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	3 – Adequate
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	2 – Weak
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Established staff within the nursery knew children well. Staff were kind and caring in their interactions with children, helping children to feel welcomed and safe.

Children received sensitive care at times requiring dignity such as changing clothes. Staff supported children well in personal hygiene routines such as learning how to wash hands at appropriate times throughout the day.

Personal plans for children with identified additional support needs were meaningful and provided the information staff needed to meet children's needs. Staff worked closely with other agencies to ensure the sharing of relevant information. Key staff attended multi agency meetings enabling them to gain a better insight into the needs of individual children.

Key staff knew individual children with additional support needs well. Close bonds had been developed between children and support staff. For some of these children, individual likes and dislikes were used to promote learning. This resulted in good quality care that was meaningful to their needs.

Staff demonstrated appropriate knowledge and awareness of how to keep children safe and protected following the correct guidance and procedures. This helped create a safe and secure environment for children.

Children could access the outdoor play area throughout the session direct from the playroom, meaning children could choose when to play outdoors. Children were encouraged to wear their coat and warm clothing for the weather. The afternoon children enjoyed time in the 'woods' collecting leaves for their interest table. These items were later explored by some children to make 'soup'.

A number of staff changes had occurred over recent time. Staff discussed that a more settled team had helped them begin to make some improvements. They spoke positively about these so far and the difference this had made to the team working well together. Staff shared a positive attitude and were keen to make further improvements to the service.

What the service could do better

Personal plans were not in place for all children attending the service. This had already been identified by the senior management team with plans in place to correct this as a matter of urgency. Up-to-date, informative plans will support staff in consistently meeting children's needs, choices and wishes.

Some children who had identified additional support needs did not receive a consistent approach to their care by staff. Most staff were not confident in how to implement planned strategies to support children in their behaviour. Staff had identified that these were not always effective but were unsure of other approaches to take. Staff should be supported in how to review strategies that are meaningful and work for each child.

Chronologies for children did not always contain all the relevant information to enable staff to assess children's wellbeing needs. This meant that any additional support that may be required may not be put in place.

Children were often not fully engaged in play and learning which meant that they were not being supported to achieve their potential. Activities for children did not provide enough challenge and promote learning. Staff did not always show understanding of how children's play could be extended and at times their interactions stopped play and exploration. **(See recommendation 1.)**

Staff had attended some training during in service days however the impact of this was not evident in their practice resulting in poor quality experiences for children. Staff would benefit from support to develop their knowledge and expectations surrounding children's play and learning. We discussed how staff needed to review and evaluate their practice against the Health and Social Care Standards and best practice document such as 'Building the Ambition'.

Children enjoyed a rolling snack approach allowing them to choose when to have snack. However consideration had not been given to the length of time this took and the impact to staff deployment. We suggested that this along with a review of the snack menu take place to ensure practical healthy options were in place.

Staff did not effectively manage the routines of the day to allow for children to lead their learning. They spent a long period at tidy up time. During this time children were not supported by staff appropriately which resulted in them wandering. Children were then expected to sit for long periods of group time. This meant they spend a large part of their morning in adult led tasks. **(See recommendation 2.)**

Staff communication throughout the session was not effective to meet children's needs. Staff did not communicate to deploy themselves safely and effectively within the play areas. This meant at times insufficient supervision and support for children was in place, potentially placing children at risk and allowing for poor quality learning experiences. **(See recommendation 3.)**

The service had identified procedures to ensure children were safe while parents were collecting their children. Staff did not follow these procedures. Considering the limited communication between staff resulting in poor deployment and supervision this increased the risk to children. **(See recommendation 3.)**

Staff had built positive relationships with parents however most parents did not receive enough information about their child's day. Most parents we spoke to confirmed they would appreciate more information on how their child is at nursery and what they are learning. Parents had access to online interactive learning diaries where staff recorded observations of learning and progress. These did not hold up to date and informative information.

The management team was aware of and had identified many of the issues we have raised within this report and were keen to make improvements. Options for support and improvement visits were discussed with the service and we look forward to working collaboratively with the service to achieve positive outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. To ensure children receive high quality care, support and early learning experiences the provider and staff should ensure:

- Staff improve knowledge and understanding of children's play and best practice documents that support this.
- Staff are effectively supported in implementing their learning to ensure improved outcomes for children.

This ensures that high quality care is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "as a child I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support me and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential" (HSCS 1.6).

2. Staff should ensure routines are flexible with improved opportunities for children to direct their own play.

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

3. Staff should communicate effectively as a team to ensure they are deployed appropriately to enable them keep children safe and provide good quality care.

This ensures that high quality care is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "as a child my care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well" (HSCS 3.19).

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	
20 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
20 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
22 Apr 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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