

Little Owls Nursery Day Care of Children

59A South Street
Armadale
Bathgate
EH48 3ET

Telephone: 01501 732051

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

30 January 2019

Service provided by:

Little Owls Nursery (Scotland) Ltd

Service provider number:

SP2014012401

Service no:

CS2014333732

About the service

Little Owls Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children at any one time aged from 12 weeks up to and including ten years, of whom no more than ten children are under the age of two and no more than ten children attend primary school. The provider is Little Owls (Scotland) Ltd a private limited company. The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate in November 2015.

There were four children present on the morning of the first visit and six children present on the day of the second visit.

The nursery operates from purpose-built premises situated close to the town centre in Armadale, West Lothian. The nursery is close to local amenities and public transport. There are three playrooms on the ground floor and a room on the first floor used by the school aged children.

The aims of the service included the following:

- to provide a safe, secure, welcoming, nurturing and happy environment for children from the age of six weeks to five years.
- to provide high quality experiences for children.
- to promote positive behaviour by giving praise and encouragement and being attentive to the needs of the children.
- to continually assess the children's development and plan for their next stage of learning.
- to treat every child as an individual recognising additional needs, gender, race, nationality and culture.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 January 2019 and an announced visit on 30 January 2019. On the first visit the inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate early years inspector and by a Care Inspectorate complaints inspector. On the second visit the inspection was carried out by the early years inspector. We considered a complaint made to us during the first visit. We fed back the findings of this inspection to the provider/manager after the inspection.

As requested by us, the service sent us their annual return.

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 parents 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

We sent the nursery 18 care standards questionnaires to give to parents of children using the service and received nine completed questionnaires before the inspection. We spoke with one parent during the inspection.

Feedback indicated that all parents strongly agreed or agreed with the following statement:

"Overall I am happy with the quality of care my child receives in the service."

Further comments made by parents included the following:

"Child settled well. Staff were great at reassuring me. They were very patient..."

"I am satisfied with the level of care being administered to my (child)."

"Amazing nursery. Fantastic staff and manager."

The children present in the nursery during the inspection were happy in their environment. They played happily and could easily ask staff for things they wanted. Some children involved us in their play and confidently showed us their toys and activities.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We discussed aspects of their own improvement plan. This demonstrated their priorities for development and how they planned to monitor 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	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children and parents were warmly welcomed into the setting. Children enjoyed a caring and inclusive environment where all children were well supported. There were lots of instances of staff giving cuddles and comfort to the children. Children were settled and comfortable in the environment. Children's differences and preferences were acknowledged and care was tailored to meet individual needs. This practice supported children to feel safe and secure.

Parents were kept informed about what was happening in the service through daily chats and on-line communications. This meant parents felt included in their child's care.

During the session most children were engaged, busy and having fun. Children had opportunity and choice about playing with friends and playing alone. They were consulted in a sensitive way about their day-to-day care. This meant children were respected and valued.

Children's personal plans were in the process of being developed and a plan was in place to involve parents in children's learning. Some instances of spontaneous planning showed how children's interests had been valued. This practice enhances children's learning experiences, builds confidence and self-esteem and helps children to feel respected and involved in the life of the service. The personal plans should provide information about each child's needs and areas for development. Effective and meaningful personal plans and individualised care, will support improved outcomes for children. Entries showing children's interests, wishes and preferences and development needs, should be dated and reviewed as necessary. This was a requirement made at the last inspection and is carried forward here. See requirement 1.

There were some effective infection control systems in place to support children's health, however hand washing practices could be improved, for example when children come in from playing outside and before meals.

Healthy food options were provided to children. We suggested the service make use of the guidance document "Setting the table" to support staff understanding about the role that childcare providers have in shaping both current and future eating patterns in young children. [http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/21130-Setting the Table Nutritional Guidance and Food Standards.pdf](http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/21130-Setting%20the%20Table%20Nutritional%20Guidance%20and%20Food%20Standards.pdf)

The service could also make use of the document "Food Matters-Nurturing happy, healthy children" a resource that highlights examples of good practice in supporting children to eat well and enjoy good food every day (hub.careinspectorate.com).

Staff should review meal times to provide opportunities for children to socialise and to learn independence skills and encourage children's enjoyment of the occasion. This will also provide opportunity for language development and confidence building.

The service was planning to set up a hydration station for the children so that they had independent and easy access to water at all times.

Medication was recorded, stored and administered appropriately, supporting children's wellbeing. The service should update their medication procedure to show clearly that parents have given first dose of medications.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. The provider must, after consultation with each service user and where it appears to the provider to be appropriate, any representative of the service user, within 28 days of the date on which the service user first receives the service, prepare a written plan ("the personal plan") which sets out how the service user's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met.

The provider must -

(a) make the personal plan available to the service user or any representative consulted under paragraph (1)
(b) review the personal plan when requested to do so and when there is a significant change in a service user's health, welfare or safety needs. The personal plan should be reviewed at least once in every six month period whilst the service user is in receipt of the service.

The provider must as part of the process build a competent picture of events for individual children recording all relevant issues effecting their health, welfare and safety, sharing these records with parents as appropriate.

This is to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulations 5(1)(2)(a)(b) - Personal Plans.

Timescale: 31 March 2019

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The environment was secure, safe and offered plenty of natural light and fresh air. The playrooms provided large bright spaces.

Some areas of the nursery could benefit from comfortable adult sized seats and more cosy spaces to allow children the opportunity to rest and be comforted.

Equipment was not easily available to children as the staff were in the process of reorganising this onto shelves. The home corner could be developed to provide resources to allow imaginative and creative play. Providing natural resources, loose parts and treasure baskets would also support children's imagination and creativity.

Evaluation of activities should be developed to ensure activities are relevant, stimulating and meet the needs of the children. See recommendation 1.

Play spaces could be better defined for example, the home corner and a construction area should provide areas that allow children to play uninterrupted. Resources should be tidied and made ready for each day, for example the home corner and doll house.

Children had access to local community parks and the library and during the inspection enjoyed a walk in the locality collecting resources for an art project. While on the walk, staff used lots of language with the children, named things they saw and promoted fun.

The nursery garden had been developed and enhanced over the past few months to provide more interest and challenge (e.g. areas for growing, digging and climbing) for the children. At the time of inspection however, this resource was not used. We suggested the service should consider how all children could have free access to the outside area. Free flow indoor to outdoor play helps children to feel responsible and lead an active life. Staff should ensure that all children including the youngest ones have daily opportunity to play outdoors. See recommendation 2.

Best practice documents could be used to support staff to provide activities and resources that provided interest, excitement and opportunities for creativity and curiosity. We referred staff to the document Pre Birth to Three. This national guidance includes important information on pre-birth and brain development and it reflects the principles and philosophy which underpin the Early Years Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and Building the Ambition http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/PreBirthToThreeBooklet_tcm4-633448.pdf.

We also referred staff to the resource, "My World Outdoors", a pack which promotes the extensive benefits of outdoor play for children's overall development and learning. It groups together examples of innovative and effective practice around the recognised wellbeing indicators. (hub.careinspectorate.com)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Activities and resources should be provided to meet the needs of each child. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials". (Health and Social Care Standards 1.31).
2. Children should have access to daily outdoor play. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "The children should be able to choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors". (Health and Social Care Standards 1.25).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Staff responded warmly toward the children and this meant that children were comfortable with the staff caring for them. Staff were respectful of children, for example, gaining their permission before nappy changes and telling them when it would be lunch time. Children were comforted and cuddled when needed, their dignity was respected and they felt safe and loved. The staff knew the children well and were caring, patient and supportive.

Staff felt well supported by management and encouraged to give their views, ideas and feedback. They were enthusiastic and committed to their roles and keen to learn.

Staff were developing individual planning records for the children and identifying learning goals. Plans were in place to support staff to learn about making meaningful observations of children's play to support children's ideas and interests.

Generally the staff group were inexperienced and therefore had limited understanding of current best practice guidance and child development. Staff should revisit best practice guidance to ensure their practice meets current expectations. See recommendation 2.

Children's play was mainly adult directed and we recommend staff undertake learning about appropriate and meaningful intervention in children's play. This would support good outcomes for the children. See recommendation 1.

We noted that some staff were less familiar with the ethos of supporting children to manage risk in their play. Opportunities to discuss this practice with peers would support practitioners to build their confidence in this practice and encourage confidence in the children in learning about how to keep themselves safe.

There was an up to date child protection procedure in place. Staff we spoke to had good understanding of child protection and procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. Staff should refresh training in child protection regularly. This will keep their knowledge and understanding up to date and promote confidence in dealing with concerns. Parents could be confident that staff had children's health and wellbeing at the heart of their practice and that they were aware of how to keep children safe.

Children were kind towards each other and it was evident that by staff modelling respectful interactions, children's respect for their peers was promoted. This good practice helped the children to become aware of the needs of others and reflected the nurturing and respectful ethos adopted by staff.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The provider should ensure that the balance between child led and adult initiated play supports children to achieve their potential. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "as a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials." (Health and Social Care Standards 1.31).

2. Staff should undertake to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in early education and childcare and should consider best practice guidance such as:

- Building the Ambition <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>
- My World Outdoors www.hub.careinspectorate.com
- My Creative Journey www.hub.careinspectorate.com
- Pre Birth to Three http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/PreBirthToThreeBooklet_tcm4-633448.pdf
- How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk1hgioearlyyears.asp>

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice." (Health and Social Care Standards 4.11).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Developments in the service since the last inspection included the employment of a part-time development manager to support improvement.

However, the staff team remained largely inexperienced and we support the manager's plan to employ an experienced staff member to support improvement and to ensure a more balanced staff team in relation to experience and qualifications. Regular and specific training opportunities for staff will enhance outcomes for children and help them achieve. See requirement 1.

The manager was visible daily for staff, children and parents, giving opportunity for feedback. It was evident that views were listened to and action taken on these. We saw a good level of engagement between the manager and staff throughout the inspection and this showed a desire for improvement. The forward thinking and reflective management team gave us confidence that improvements would be identified and made.

Staff strengths and areas for development were recognised through regular meetings. An ethos of openness and collaboration with the staff was promoted and staff were encouraged to contribute to the improvement of the service.

The manager should ensure that the quality of all aspects of the service is monitored and evaluated. For example, we identified some aspects of the quality of the environment and resources and staff training needs, as areas for improvement during the inspection. A system needed to be put in place so that the management team could effectively monitor the quality of children's experiences and the quality of staff practice on an on-going basis. See recommendation 1.

Good communication with families had been maintained and the service should continue to develop partnership working with parents.

The manager should become familiar with the requirement to make notification to the Care Inspectorate regarding significant events, including the employment of a new manager.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. The provider must ensure at all times that suitable qualified and competent persons are working in the care service in such numbers that are appropriate for the health, welfare and safety of children. In addition to this the provider should make arrangements to ensure:

- Staff knowledge and understanding of early childhood development and attachment theory is increased.
- 'Building the Ambition' best practice document is read, understood and put into practice by staff to enhance children's experiences and quality of care and support.
- A robust training plan should be developed and completed for all staff based on their individual areas for development of knowledge, skills and experience.

- There are enough staff to make sure children are cared for consistently, by known adults with whom they have a relationship, every day.

This is to comply with SSSI 2011/210 Regulation 15(a) - Staffing and Regulation 4 (1) Welfare of Service Users

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. We recommend the provider ensures a robust staff practice monitoring system is introduced and embedded into practice. This could include observation of staff practice and interactions with children, peer assessment and reflection using best practice documents such as "Building the Ambition" and "How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare."

This is to ensure 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).

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must, after consultation with each service user and where it appears to the provider to be appropriate, any representative of the service user, within 28 days of the date on which the service user first receives the service, prepare a written plan ("the personal plan") which sets out how the service user's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met.

The provider must -

(a) make the personal plan available to the service user or any representative consulted under paragraph (1)

(b) review the personal plan when requested to do so and when there is a significant change in a service user's health, welfare or safety needs. The personal plan should be reviewed at least once in every six month period whilst the service user is in receipt of the service.

The provider must as part of the process build a competent picture of events for individual children recording all relevant issues effecting their health, welfare and safety, sharing these records with parents as appropriate.

This is to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulations 5(1)(2)(a)(b) - Personal Plans.

Timescale: 28 April 2018

This requirement was made on 3 April 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

Personal plan format had been revised and new formats were in place. This work was in the early stages and as a result this requirement is made again at this inspection - February 2019.

Not met

Requirement 2

The provider must ensure at all times that suitable qualified and competent persons are working in the care service in such numbers that are appropriate for the health, welfare and safety of children. In addition to this the provider should make arrangements to ensure:

- staff knowledge and understanding of early childhood development and attachment theory is increased.
- 'Building the Ambition' best practice document is read, understood and put into practice by staff to enhance children's experiences and quality of care and support.
- a robust training plan should be developed and completed for all staff based on their individual areas for development of knowledge, skills and experience.
- staff increase their awareness of suitable deployment throughout the day in order to ensure children's needs are consistently met.
- there are enough staff to make sure children are cared for consistently by known adults with whom they have a relationship with every day.

This is to comply with SSSI 2011/210 Regulation 15(a) - Staffing and Regulation 4 (1) Welfare of Service Users

Timescale: 16 April 2018

This requirement was made on 3 April 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

The creation of a development manager should help to address the issues identified. However this requirement has been made again at this inspection - February 2019, as sufficient progress has not yet been achieved.

Not met

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Staff should undertake to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in early education and childcare and should consider best practice guidance such as:

- Building the Ambition <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>
- My World Outdoors www.hub.careinspectorate.com
- My Creative Journey www.hub.careinspectorate.com
- Pre Birth to Three http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/PreBirthToThreeBooklet_tcm4-633448.pdf
- How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk1hgioearlyyears.asp>

This recommendation was made on 3 April 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation has been made again at this inspection - February 2019, as insufficient progress has been made

Recommendation 2

We recommend the provider ensures a robust staff practice monitoring system is introduced and embedded into practice. This could include observation of staff practice and interactions with children, peer assessment and reflection using best practice documents such as "Building the Ambition" and "How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare."

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 13 Improving the Service

This recommendation was made on 3 April 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation has been made again at this inspection - February 2019 as insufficient progress has been made.

Recommendation 3

We recommend the provider implements an effective system for recording children's attendance and times, staff attendance and times and staff deployment in the playrooms throughout the day. This will allow them to confidently assess and ensure that children are cared for by those who know them best and can confidently assess and meet their needs.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 12 Confidence in Staff

This recommendation was made on 3 April 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Additional staff has lessened the need to record deployment of staff.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Enforcement

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
26 Feb 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment Not assessed Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
4 Dec 2017	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
16 Feb 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.