Inspection report

Harlequin Kindergarten
Day Care of Children

6 Brunel Way
Murray Road
East Kilbride   G75 0LD

Inspected by:  Aileen Quinn
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection:  Unannounced

Inspection completed on:  29 June 2006
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<tr>
<th>Service Number</th>
<th>Service name</th>
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<tr>
<td>CS2003044538</td>
<td>Harlequin Kindergarten</td>
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<th>Service address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aileen Quinn</td>
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<td>Care Commission Officer</td>
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<th>Inspection Completed</th>
<th>Period since last inspection</th>
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<tr>
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<td>13 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Princes Gate</td>
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<td>Castle Street</td>
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<td>Hamilton</td>
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Introduction
Harlequin Kindergarten Nursery is part of the Harlequin House organisation. There are four nurseries in total, this one being located in East Kilbride, very close to the town centre. The nursery has been registered with the Care Commission since 2004 to provide a maximum of 143 places for children aged between babies and those not attending primary school. There are currently 215 children using the service over the week. The service can be provided Monday to Saturday between the hours of 7.00am and 7.00pm, although parents currently use the service Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm. The service is in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to provide pre-school education for children. There are several playrooms, including a separate dining area and physical play area. The outdoor play area can be accessed easily from all playrooms. The nursery is brightly decorated, with recent improvements being made in the baby rooms, the entrance and corridors.

Basis of Report
Before the visit the service was sent notice that an unannounced inspection would take place and details of how to access and update their annual return and self evaluation. Thirty questionnaires were sent to the service to collect parents’ views and eight of these were received before this report was written.

During the visit which took place on 29 June 2006 between the hours of 8.45am and 6.00pm, the Care Commission Officer spoke with the manager, the general manager for all Harlequin services, 12 members of staff, approximately 25 children and one parent. The Care Commission Officer also looked at a range of policies, procedures and records including the following:

- Attendance Register
- Fire Safety Records
- Insurance

and spent time observing how staff members worked with the children. The condition of the premises and how the areas were used was also examined.

The Care Commission Officer took all of the above into account and reported on whether the service was meeting the following National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:

- Standard 3: Health and wellbeing
- Standard 4: Engaging with children
- Standard 7: A caring environment
- Standard 10: Involving other services
- Standard 12: Confidence in staff

A particular emphasis was placed on the following themes and documents:

- Child Protection
- Birth to Three (published by the Scottish Executive- learning and teaching Scotland)
- Nutritional Guidance (published by the Scottish Executive – Healthier Scotland)
- Scottish Social Services Council’s Codes of Practice
An audit of safe recruitment practice was also carried out and 9 staff files were examined as part of this. The outcome of this audit is reported under standard 12 of this report and any recommendations and requirements relating to this are stated at the end of this report.

**Action taken on requirements in last Inspection Report**
No requirements were made at the last inspection.

**Comments on Self-Evaluation**
The self evaluation had been completed and submitted electronically. This contained information about the strengths of the service and accurately reflected areas for development.

**View of Service Users**
Around 25 children spoke to the Care Commission officer during this inspection. They were happy and eager to do this. Children were confident and inquisitive, offering information on how they enjoyed attending nursery. Children had established close relationships with their peers and with staff. They talked about meeting their friends and said that they enjoyed coming to nursery.

**View of Carers**
Eight questionnaires were returned form parents using the service. These gave parents the opportunity to comment on how the service provided privacy, dignity, choice, safety, equality and diversity, and realising potential. Overall, parents were happy or very happy with the service. In particular parents were happy with the way their child was assisted with their personal care and that their child was treated respectfully and fairly by staff. Most parents indicated that staff 'always' interacted well with their child. Most parents knew about the service's complaints procedures and half indicated that they knew about the procedure on child protection. Comments from the questionnaires included "cannot fault the staff at all", and (child) "is very happy and loves the teachers". One parent commented that the menu was 'great' and another indicated that they would like to see their child out in the garden more often.

One parent was spoken with during this inspection. They were happy with the nursery. They believed that staff communicated well with them and had no concerns about the service.
Regulations / Principles

Regulation:

Strengths

Areas for Development

National Care Standards

National Care Standard Number 3: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Health and Wellbeing

Strengths

Staff ensured that detailed communication was in place, particularly when children were moving into another playroom. A settling in procedure was in place, and discussion took place with parents to determine when a move would be appropriate. Daily recording sheets were in place and verbal discussion took place at the beginning and end of each day. During this inspection, parents had telephoned the nursery for a report on how their child was enjoying their day.

Staff were confident in how they would report any child protection concerns and clear written procedures were in place for this purpose. Senior staff had recently taken part in child protection training and there were plans for training to be shared with all staff. Children spoken with talked about healthy eating and toothbrushing and were aware that they should wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Menus were displayed and any allergies noted. A weekly order of fruit ensured this was available every day. Children in the baby room were assisted appropriately when eating, and older children were encouraged to be independent in the dining room. Children throughout the nursery could sleep or rest when they needed to, and the outdoor play area was used by most children during this visit.

At least one member of staff in each area had a qualification in first aid, and there were plans to provide this training for additional staff. Recording sheets for the administration of medicine were detailed and clear procedures were in place to ensure safe storage and use. Emergency procedures were displayed around the premises and fire safety records indicated that drills and alarms tests were regular.

Areas for Development

Although staff were clear about reporting procedures for child protection, many staff had not attended training on how to identify a concern. This was planned for the summer months. Although the nursery followed national advice for toothbrushing and had regular visits from a dental hygienist, not all children attending took part in this scheme. Staff should use the advice from the dental hygienist and ensure all children in the nursery who should be brushing their teeth, are.

The menu in the nursery was mainly processed foods, for example, fish fingers and potato
faces. On the day of inspection all children in the nursery had soup, with sandwiches on jam and cheese. Snack in the afternoon was potato cheese puffs and crackers. None of the staff spoken with were aware of the new nutritional guidance and although managers were aware of this, no account had been taken of it. Managers indicated that menu decisions were made by the provider of the service. The self evaluation document highlighted this as an area for development. (see recommendation 1)

**National Care Standard Number 4: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Engaging with children**

**Strengths**

Staff working in the nursery had a variety of experience and qualifications relevant to their role. Further to recommendations made at the last inspection, staff had been working closely with Education Support Services to improve the curriculum and monitoring and evaluation of children's learning. Most staff spoken with who worked with children under three years were aware of the new Birth to Three document and planning and observation had changed taking this into account. Staff were observed to interact positively with children and knew individual children well.

**Areas for Development**

Although most staff were aware of the new Birth to Three publication, the use of this was not consistent among staff working with this age group of children. Although some staff had met as a group to discuss how to take this forward, this had been decided by individual staff rather than management. Not all staff had a clear understanding of responsive planning and did not record this appropriately. This work was at it's early stages and should be continued to enable staff to become more confident with the advice in the document. The self evaluation document highlighted this as an area for development.

**National Care Standard Number 7: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - A Caring Environment**

**Strengths**

Detailed written information was available for parents on the service provision. The company had a clear code of behaviour for staff, and staff also had a copy of the Scottish Social Services Codes of Practice. Children were encouraged to form positive relationships, and disputes between children were settled appropriately during this visit. The service had links with South Lanarkshire Council Learning Support team if required. Daily written and verbal feedback took place and children attending were happy and settled. The notice board and regular newsletter ensured parents were kept up to date with any changes in the nursery.

Parents were encouraged to provide detailed information about their child before a place was offered and it was clear that staff took account of parent's views and wishes while caring for their child. A complaints procedure was in place and a suggestions box was available at reception and the office.

**Areas for Development**
Questionnaires had not yet been used by the service to get the views of parents using the service. As the suggestion boxes were not well used, this would provide the nursery with detailed information on all areas of the operation of the service. The self evaluation document highlighted this as an area for development. (see recommendation 2) Although the nursery had put in place various methods to communicate with parents, records of communication did not detail the outcome of any concern. (see recommendation 3)

**National Care Standard Number 10: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16**
- Involving other Services

**Strengths**

The service had improved links with local primary schools and had received visits from more than half the schools children would attend. They were also working closely with South Lanarkshire Council and attended regular meetings which improved contact with other providers. Recent links had been made with the Social Work department. The nursery had established an effective working relationship with a local dental hygienist, who kept them up to date with recent changes in toothbrushing standards. The nursery had highlighted in their self evaluation that they would continue to develop these links.

**Areas for Development**

There were no areas for development identified at this time.

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

**Strengths**

The nursery had a policy on staff recruitment. This included references and a Disclosure Scotland check and management advised the Care Commission Officer that there was a procedure in the company to re-check Disclosures every five years. Staff were aware of the National Care Standards and staff ratios stated therein. All staff were qualified to Higher National Certificate, or were working towards this or the level below. Staff ensured continuity of care through a careful settling in procedure for children moving into other playrooms. Annual appraisals were carried out and staff spoken with had found these supportive and helpful in identifying their personal development needs.

**Areas for Development**

Staff working in the nursery indicated that during tea breaks and lunches they sometimes fell below recommended staffing levels. Records of staff and where they were deployed in the nursery were not clear. (see requirement 1)

An audit of safe recruitment practice in the nursery found the following: The recruitment procedure did not detail the procedure before employment, for example who were appropriate referees, or that an Enhanced Disclosure was required. (see recommendation 4) The service did not have a system in place to check that employees were physically and
mentally fit for their work. (see requirement 2)
Information held in staff files was not comprehensive. Of the nine staff files checked, only three contained details of their appointment, position held and start date. (see recommendation 5)
Although Disclosure numbers were recorded on staff files, there was no date of when these had been carried out, and there was no written information stating that these checks would be updated regularly. (see recommendation 6)
It was not always clear that referees were appropriate or that the content had been checked. References were not always on headed paper from previous employers and there was no record of who the referee was in relation to the employee. (see recommendation 7)
Enforcement
No enforcement action has been taken against this service.

Other Information
N/A

Requirements
1. The provider must ensure that at all times the number of staff present in each area is appropriate for the health and welfare of service users. Records of where staff are deployed over the day must be in place.
   This is in order to comply with:
   SSI 2002/114 Regulation 13 (a) - a requirement to ensure staffing is appropriate, Regulation 4 (1) (a) - a requirement to ensure the welfare of users and Regulation 19 (3) (g) - a requirement to keep records.

2. A system must be in place to determine the physical and mental fitness of all staff working in the nursery.
   This is in order to comply with:
   SSI 2002/114 Regulation 9 (2) (a) - a requirement to ensure the fitness of employees.

Recommendations
1. The provider of the service should obtain a copy of the nutritional guidance for early years: food choice for children aged 1-5 in early education and childcare settings. The provider should use the guidance to improve the menu. Parents and staff should be made aware of this guidance and could be involved in suggesting changes to the menus. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 3: Health and wellbeing.)

2. The nursery should consider ways to formally gather the views of parents. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 7: A caring environment.)

3. The nursery should ensure that any concerns are logged and action taken recorded. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 7: A caring environment.)

4. The Recruitment Procedure should be further developed. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 12: Confidence in staff and SSSC Code of Practice - Employer 1.1)

5. Staff files should be more comprehensive. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 12: Confidence in staff and SSSC Code of Practice - Employer 1.4)

6. The date Disclosures were carried out should be noted and plans to re-check should be included in written procedures. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 12: Confidence in staff.)

7. Clear records of references, including the relationship to the employee should be in place. (National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 12: Confidence in staff and SSSC Code of Practice - Employer 1.3)
Aileen Quinn
Care Commission Officer