Care service inspection report

Woodlands Nursery.
Day Care of Children
Methilhaven Road
Methil
Leven
KY8 3LE
Telephone: 01334 659483

Inspected by: Sarah Connell
Karen Mack
Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 18 March 2013
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Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Care service number:
CS2003015966

Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:
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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

- Quality of Care and Support  6  Excellent
- Quality of Environment  6  Excellent
- Quality of Staffing  6  Excellent
- Quality of Management and Leadership  6  Excellent

What the service does well

Woodlands nursery provides a nurturing learning environment. A welcoming and friendly atmosphere encouraged parents to become involved in the service resulting in exemplary partnership working.

What the service could do better

The nursery has identified beneficial areas for improvement with parents, staff and children through their self evaluation processes.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The team has worked exceptionally well to provide a service which meets the specific and changing needs of the community. Enhancing their approach in working with families benefited those who use the service and resulted in outstanding outcomes for children.

Conclusion

From the evidence examined and the outcomes for children we observed during our inspection, we concluded that the service provided excellent care and support to children and their families. Creating links and learning opportunities both in nursery and at home are high on the agenda for all. This resulted in excellent outcomes for children and families.
Who did this inspection
Sarah Connell
Karen Mack
1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Requirements and recommendations
If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it needs to do more to improve, we may make a recommendation or requirement.
- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service based on best practice or the National Care Standards.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (“the Act”) and secondary legislation made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement may be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Inspectorate.

Woodlands Nursery Centre is accommodated over three buildings - the Nursery, the Family Unit, which is in an Elliot Medway hut adjacent to the nursery, and the Kirkland building, which is situated at the entrance to Kirkland High School and Community College, across the road from the main nursery building.

The Nursery Centre and Kirkland operate a morning and afternoon session and accommodates children who require to stay for lunch.

Early entry places for children aged from two to three years are offered in the Family Unit. In addition the Family Unit offers creche facilities to children aged six weeks up to an age to attend school to support families attending workshop sessions.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support – Grade 6 – Excellent
Quality of Environment – Grade 6 – Excellent
Quality of Staffing – Grade 6 – Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership – Grade 6 – Excellent

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.
Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.
2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out
In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection
We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. This was carried out by inspectors Sarah Connell and Karen Mack. The inspection took place on 18th March between 9.30am and 4pm. We gave feedback to the manager on the same day.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self-assessment forms that we asked the provider to complete and submit to us.

We sent 40 care standards questionnaires to the manager to distribute to relatives and carers of people who used the service. 21 completed questionnaires were returned before the inspection.

During this inspection we gathered evidence from a number of sources, including the following:

We spoke with:

* Six parents/carers
* The manager
* The staff
* The children

We looked at:

* Evidence from the most recent self assessment.
* Children’s records.
* Accident and incident records.
* Written policies and procedures.
* Minutes of meetings with staff/children/parents/carers and other professionals.
* Observation and inspection of the environment, toys and equipment and staff work practice.
* Children’s personal learning plans (PLP’s).
* Staff files and training records.
* Information for parents.
* Newsletters.
* Questionnaires and quality assurance systems.

We have taken account of all of the above information when writing this report.

**Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

**Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

**Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services’ responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org
What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection
There were no outstanding recommendations.

The annual return
Every year all care services must complete an ‘annual return’ form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment
Every year all care services must complete a ‘self assessment’ form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment document from the provider. We were satisfied with the way the service provider had completed this and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under. The provider identified what it thought the service did well, some areas for development and any changes it had planned. The provider told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self-assessment process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account
On the day of the inspection there were 51 children in the morning and 58 in attendance in the afternoon. The children were very confident and engaged throughout our visit. They were happy to tell us about their nursery and the various activities they took part in daily.

One child we spoke to told us, “I like everything at nursery, home corner is best. I get a different snack everyday. I like playing games.”

More comments are included in this report.
Taking carers' views into account

We received 21 completed care standards questionnaires from parents and carers of children who use the service. Overall 17 strongly agreed and three agreed that they were happy with the quality of care their child received in this service.

We spoke to a parent who used the Family Unit, their comments included:

"Coming here has given me more confidence as a parent. They have taught us how to cope with older children and what they need. I have used the 'bumps and babes' class. The staff are brilliant they help if I need someone to talk to."

We spoke to parents who used the nursery service, their comments included:

"The children have really come out of their shell. They don’t cling to me at all now. The nursery has really help with their talking. I get regular newsletters and fill out forms to tell them what I think after any courses or things I have attended in the nursery."

"He loves it here! He has really come on and is talking much better. I like that he can get out to play when he wants here, because we don’t have access to a garden at home. He makes a lot of things here. Plenty to do and the staff are brilliant."

More responses are included throughout this report.
3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

We found this service had continued to perform to an excellent standard in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after we:

* Spoke to the manager and staff.
* We also spoke to parents and children who used this service, and viewed relevant documentation.

The care service involved children who use the service and their parents and carers and asked for their views in several ways. Excellent examples of these included:

- Stay and play sessions encouraged the parents to stay in the nursery with their child and take part in activities. Staff supported these sessions by speaking with the parents about what their child was learning through their play.
- We considered monthly newsletters to be informative and wide ranging; they included stories about the environment, upcoming events, staffing and encouraged people to express their views.
- Daily chats with parents - We observed the management and staff team welcoming every child into the nursery and speaking with parents.
- Questionnaires were regularly given out. We could see the responses were collated, parents were given feedback and action plans were created to improve the service. This aspect of consultation was clearly embedded in practice.
• Group and circle time for the children promoted opportunities for them to participate in the life of the service. We could also see how children’s views, ideas and opinions were gathered verbally. The children were consulted throughout our visit, resulting in them having ownership of their learning.

• Children’s files and planning indicated that information from parents and children influenced the planning and activities. The learning experiences and any changes to plans could be tracked through the planning, PLP’s (Personal Learning Plans) and minutes of meetings. This showed staff were responsive to the children’s changing care needs and their suggestions.

This outstanding practice demonstrated that the staff team valued the importance of working in partnership with parents and encouraged them to be involved in children’s care and education, which helped to ensure each child’s needs were identified and met.

The Woodlands Information Group (WIG) had continued as an ongoing part of the service. We could see this had been reviewed and steps were taken to ensure the group continued to be helpful and current to the parents using the service. This ensured the group discussed matters that were appropriate to the changing needs of the children and families using it.

There continued to be an extensive range of information displayed which highlighted events which had taken place and what was planned for the future. Continuing to update displayed information for children and parents helped to keep them informed and interested in the various projects the nursery was involved in.

The use of the consultative tool PLODs (Possible Lines of Development) was recently introduced and was becoming part of regular staff practice. PLODs is used to encourage children to participate in their own learning and interests.

With the help of skilled staff observations and facilitation we could see that the children were taking advantage of many learning opportunities and leading the direction their own learning took. For example during an interest in numbers the children found a numbers jigsaw and asked for this to be added to the PLOD booklet as part of their learning journey, this shows that the children were aware of their learning in different contexts and were building the capacity to manage their own learning.

On the day of the inspection we spoke with some parents, their comments included:

“I’m very happy with Woodlands nursery, I get good feedback every day”
“Lovely nursery, the fund-raising they do helps my child experience things, like the animals with Zoo lab.”
“We have lot’s of opportunities to get involved, for example the stay and play sessions are really good.”
17 parents strongly agreed and four agreed that they were kept informed about what is happening in the service, for example, through newsletters and information boards.

17 parents strongly agreed and two agreed that staff shared information about their child’s learning and development with them and, where appropriate, their child. One parent disagreed and one didn’t know.

**Areas for improvement**

The service identified the following area for improvement:

To further embed the use of PLODs with all staff, as a consultative tool.

We support this area for improvement as it will further enhance the impact of this strategy and the benefits to the children and staff through working in partnership.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0
Statement 3
We ensure that service users’ health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths
We found this service was performing to an exceptional standard in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after we:

* Spoke to the manager and staff.
* We also spoke to parents and children who used this service, and viewed relevant documentation.

The nursery continues to ensure that service user’s health and well being needs are met.

Best practice was displayed in the use of the children’s PLP’s. We looked at examples of observations taken on children, how staff would provide opportunities for further learning and development and how all achievements were celebrated. This ensured that the children’s achievements were acknowledged which promoted their confidence and self esteem.

Medical and individual support plans were in place for children; these were individual to each child, detailed clearly how they would be helped and were reviewed regularly. This ensured that the staff were aware of the children’s individual needs and made preparations to meet these needs.

Throughout our visit we observed excellent interactions with children; they were treated with dignity and respect. We could see how confidence was boosted as they learnt new things by asking questions and being encouraged to speak constantly to staff and each other. A patient and nurturing atmosphere was evident throughout the whole staff and management team. Staff performing in such a way encouraged the children to grow and develop confidence and trust in the staff team.

The children have achieved their fourth green flag status from Eco Schools which recognised the school’s outstanding achievements as an Eco school. There were compost buckets in the rooms for the snack left overs. Children recycled as part of their daily routine. This encouraged the children to develop an awareness of the importance of caring for the environment. Using home grown foods and recycling materials regularly meant the children were encouraged to become responsible citizens as part of the Eco project.
This project was further enhanced by the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The nursery operates a fruit and soup pack scheme. Parents can buy a variety bag of fruits and vegetables to take home. The children have been involved in creating simple recipes in nursery that they can try at home with their parents. This established project has created links with the children’s nursery and home education whilst promoting positive attitudes to healthy eating at home.

Staff were excellent at encouraging the children to develop friendships. For example, we saw children were encouraged to gather round the interactive TV to watch a story. One child asked for this and when more showed interest the staff encouraged the children to all join in making it a very social time with lot’s of conversations and questions. This helped the children to feel settled and secure in the nursery and aided in extending their learning through everyday experiences.

The day was planned around the children’s interests. There were ample opportunities for free flowing play which staff skillfully facilitated. For example, one child asked to go outside and staff went out with him. The learning opportunities were created outdoors as well as indoors. Children very much led their own day and were able to express choice and make decisions.

Real life experiences aided the children in developing concepts. For example the tool bench was stocked with real tools at all times. The musical instrument area had blank music paper for the children to write down notes as they made music. Providing real opportunities helped children to learn safety rules and a range of skills.

12 parents strongly agreed and eight agreed that staff had worked with them and their child to develop an individual education and support programme for their child. One parent strongly disagreed.

16 parents strongly agreed and five agreed that the service provided a healthy and well-balanced diet which met their child’s dietary and cultural needs.

**Areas for improvement**

The service identified the following area for improvement:

To build on partnership working with Fife Gingerbread by developing the Teenage Parent programme further.

We support this area for improvement.
Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent
Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths
The evidence for the grade awarded for this statement is included under quality theme 1, statement 1.

Areas for improvement
See quality theme 1, statement 1, areas for improvement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 2
We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

Service strengths
We found this service was performing to an exceptional standard in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after we:

* Spoke to the manager and staff.
* We also spoke to parents and children who used this service, and viewed relevant documentation.

Exemplary use of the space, buildings, outdoor areas, resources and time meant that this gave an extensive range of learning opportunities to encourage children’s development. We could see that the resources were well maintained and changed to suit learning interests and needs.

The children we spoke to said:

“I like painting.”
“I like the story corner.”
“I like drawing elephants.”
“I like singing the elephant song.”

There was exceptional use of pictorial prompts and rules which meant that children with less developed language skills could still participate fully in all aspects of the service. For example, the snack routine was displayed using pictures. This helped children to follow the process independently.

We found the premises to be a clean, secure, safe, bright and stimulating environment. Space is well planned and organised encouraging children to move freely between different areas, increasing independence as they help themselves to equipment and make decisions about what to play with.

The children were fully supported in their play; we could see that staff members were always on hand to help if needed. The staff proved to be outstanding at promoting the effective use of the many resources. For example, they encouraged the children to move from the room to the garden as they continued their play; the children’s imagination and flow of learning was encouraged in all areas as they played.

Infection control procedures were displayed. Staff and children were well aware of the routines and rules surrounding these. We saw the children washing their hands after garden time without being prompted from staff. This helped children to develop an understanding of the importance of personal hygiene and promoted healthy lifestyles.
During discussions with staff they demonstrated confidence and knowledge about child protection issues and what they would do if they had a concern. This training and experience helped staff to ensure that children were protected. Regular child protection training meant staff were vigilant in safeguarding children and dealing with any concerns promptly.

The service recently completed a former area for improvement, this was to finalise the Traffic Management Plan for the nursery and share this with parents and other stakeholders. This added to the safety of all service users.

Nine parents strongly agreed and nine agreed that the staff asked for their child’s views about the activities and outings, and used them to plan future activities. One parent disagreed and two didn’t know.

17 parents strongly agreed and four agreed that the service had a suitable range of equipment, toys and materials for the children.

Areas for improvement
The service identified the following areas for improvement:

Plan for the upgrading of external paintwork at the Kirkland Building.
Arrange for the low-level fence surrounding the Family Unit to be upgraded.

We support these areas for improvement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent
Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths
The evidence for the grade awarded for this statement is included under quality theme 1, statement 1.

Areas for improvement
See quality theme 1, statement 1, areas for improvement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of recommendations: 0

Number of requirements: 0
**Statement 3**

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

**Service strengths**

We found this service was performing to an exceptional standard in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after we:

* Spoke to the manager and staff.
* We also spoke to parents and children who used this service, and viewed relevant documentation.

The highly motivated and skilled staff team proved to be very passionate about their work with the children. This was mirrored in their excellent interactions with children and as a result, the confidence the children displayed. This best practice improved the outcomes the children experienced. For example, one staff member told us she had attended PLOD’s (Possible Lines of Development) training which had helped her develop another method of consulting children throughout the service. This promoted children’s ability to direct their own learning at a pace that suited them.

Staff received yearly support and development meetings relating to their performance. They confirmed the manager regularly gave feedback on their work or suggested ideas for improvement. This was achieved through communication meetings, two weekly staff meetings and termly supervisions. This ensured that the staff were encouraged to assess and improve their own performance and recognise training needs. It also helped them support children effectively and meet their needs.

Staff training was planned in advance to ensure staff were able to attend. Staff had mandatory annual training and have attended additional training based on the needs of the children. This was reflected in the staff training files and action plans. Training was responsive to the children’s needs and equipped staff with the skills and knowledge to continually provide high quality care.

Staff were supported to pursue matters that interested them and benefited the children. For example one staff member told us how she would be swapping positions with someone in the Family unit to gain further experience in delivering the pre-birth to three curriculum. Training was organised for her as this would extend her underpinning knowledge in this area. Plans are also in place for best practice visits to take place so that further practical experience is gained.

Staff demonstrated excellent interactions with the children during our visit. They were responsive to children’s needs and encouraged the children to use everyday activities as learning experiences. It was evident the staff team were highly skilled and extremely motivated.
Best practice was displayed as policies and procedures where adhered to. During our visit and staff were able to demonstrate good knowledge of these when asked. This ensured that staff were working in line with best practice guidance to provide the best possible care for the children.

19 parents strongly agreed and two agreed that their child appeared happy and confident with the staff.

17 parents strongly agreed and four agreed that they were confident that the staff would protect their child from harm, abuse, bullying and neglect.

Areas for improvement
Through self evaluation the following areas for improvement were identified by the service:

To continue to develop the curriculum in line with the guidance detailed in 'Curriculum for Excellence'.
To continue to review Family Unit programmes in line with the needs of the local community.

We support these areas for improvement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent
Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths
The evidence for the grade awarded for this statement is included under quality theme 1, statement 1.

Areas for improvement
See quality theme 1, statement 1, areas for improvement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
**Statement 4**
We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

**Service strengths**
We found this service was performing to an exceptional standard in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after we:

* Spoke to the manager and staff.
* We also spoke to parents and children who used this service, and viewed relevant documentation.

It was evident during our visit that the management team were very involved with the service. They were not only involved in the leadership of the nursery but were included and devoted to the delivery of high quality care and support to children. The presence of management in the delivery of the service created an opportunity for the staff to learn from the manager’s examples of best practice interactions with children.

The management team use their Standards Quality Improvement Plan to inform their goals for the service. They monitor the service’s progression of improvement through the ‘monitoring and evaluation calendar’. In addition to this, regular meetings are held with staff with the agenda ‘how are we getting on with our areas for improvement’? This ensures that goals and tasks are carried out in the allotted time frame and that improvements to the service are ongoing.

We could see the management team regularly asked the staff for their input. One excellent example of this was the regular and targeted evaluation meetings on aspects of provision. For example, asking ‘how do we promote numeracy and literacy and how can we improve this’? This encouraged staff to participate and give suggestions to help the whole team achieve goals and continue to make plans for further improvement.

Regular planning meetings were held. These ensured that the staff were involved in the future day to day plans for the service and gave them another opportunity to discuss the quality of the service. Children’s PLP’s were monitored by the manager to ensure quality and consistency in what is recorded. Written feedback was given to staff. This ensured that children’s learning and development was recorded in a way that was meaningful to them and their families.

After discussions with the staff and management team, it was clear that the whole team had made exceptional efforts to help take the centre forward and to create a vision of what they would like to achieve in the future.
The management team use parent and staff questionnaires to assess the service and their leadership. This meant they received feedback from an outside perspective on how they are doing and informed future plans for improvement.

As part of their ongoing self-evaluation the staff asked for feedback from parents, one was written on a flip chart after a stay and play session, comments included; “We both enjoyed it.” “Made very welcome - had fun” “Great fun, lot’s of great activities to try.”

13 parents strongly agreed and six agreed that the service had involved them and their child in developing the service, for example asking for ideas and feedback.

**Areas for improvement**
The service identified the following areas for improvement through self-evaluation:

To continue to review the impact of peer monitoring on the quality of playroom provision.
Head of Centre to further develop his capacity by supporting peers in the PRD (Personal Review and Development) process.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0
4 Other information

Complaints
No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements
We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

Action Plan
Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).
5  Summary of grades

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<th>Quality of Environment - 6 - Excellent</th>
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<td>Statement 1</td>
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<th>Quality of Staffing - 6 - Excellent</th>
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6  Inspection and grading history

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Gradings</th>
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<td>Unannounced</td>
<td>Care and support 6 - Excellent</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Environment Not Assessed</td>
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<td>Staffing Not Assessed</td>
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<td>Management and Leadership Not Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Oct 2009</td>
<td>Unannounced</td>
<td>Care and support 5 - Very Good</td>
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<td>Environment 5 - Very Good</td>
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<td>Staffing 4 - Good</td>
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<td>Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good</td>
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All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.
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