

Cornerstones Nursery Day Care of Children

Loon Brae House
Ashgrove Road
Ratray
Blairgowrie
PH10 7BS

Telephone: 07825 686016

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 20 June 2017

Service provided by:
Hartley and Gordon Nurseries Limited

Service provider number:
SP2015012587

Care service number:
CS2015341434

About the service

Cornerstones Nursery operates from a detached villa in Rattray, Blairgowrie. Playrooms for the youngest children are located on the first floor with children aged between three and five years cared for on the ground floor. Children on the ground floor have direct access to a very well-resourced, enclosed nursery garden.

The service has been registered, with the present owners, to provide a care service since July 2016. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 47 children aged from birth to not yet attending primary school as follows:

0-2 years - 13

2-3 years - 10

3 years to those not yet attending primary school - 24.

Other conditions unique to the service state that the service can only operate between the hours of 08:00 and 17:30.

We check 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 the 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.

The nursery have developed a comprehensive list of aims and objectives which include:

- To provide a warm and welcoming environment for all.
- To ensure that children have positive experiences of success at their own level in order to give them confidence and motivation for learning in the future.
- To provide an engaging curriculum which delivers experiences and outcomes from the Curriculum for Excellence and Pre-Birth to Three Guidelines.
- To create a partnership with parents to enhance their child's development and promote health awareness.

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 and 20 June 2017. We gave feedback to the service providers and manager at the end of the inspection.

What people told us

We provided the service with 15 questionnaires for parents of children using the service. Twelve completed questionnaires were returned to us before the inspection. Those who completed our questionnaires strongly agreed that they were happy with the quality of care and support their child received while in the service.

One questionnaire disagreed that staff work with children and families to develop individual education and support programmes. We saw, during our inspection, that parents were able to log on to their child's learning journal and share information and review learning and observations at any time. Observations were personal and next steps relevant to each individual child. Another questionnaire disagreed that the service provided a healthy well-balanced diet to meet children's cultural and dietary needs. Parents provided packed lunches and we could see from the snack menus displayed that the service was following current best practice guidance.

We had the opportunity to speak with parents during our inspection. They confirmed that they were happy with the service provided.

They told us:

"Delighted with the improvements in the nursery since the new owners have taken over! Increased security and safety, new toilet facilities, more information for parents and an improvement in staff performance. There is great use of the outdoor space and community trips and activities. I'm a delighted parent!"

"Very happy with the overall experience for my child at the nursery. Love the outdoor space and the fact that the children are allowed to explore and get messy. All the staff are so pleasant and genuinely caring."

"The outdoor and garden area are superb. Every time I see my child playing they are having an amazing time. They love going to the nursery and love the staff. The nursery are always improving something. My wife and I know all of the staff. Management have dealt with any issues quickly and efficiently. We love the nursery!"

"All staff are lovely and very approachable, they keep me informed as to how my daughter is doing. The staff have helped so much with my daughters speech and share information with myself and the speech therapist."

We received six staff questionnaires prior to our inspection. The responses were very positive and indicated that staff were happy and were well supported in their roles. During our inspection we had the opportunity to speak to all staff members who confirmed this.

During the inspection we observed the children at play and found them to be happy and confident, enjoying their activities and snacks.

The children were happy to tell us about the nursery and the things they enjoyed doing there and were keen to involve us in their play.

"This is my stick, it's big. It won't fall down, see?"

"It's a map! It's a map of all around the world."

"I like your nails, they're pretty. My mummy has nails like that sometimes."

"I've already had my lunch, my tooth was a bit sore so I didn't have my cucumber. It's a bit wobbly, look?"

"Are you coming to our sports day? I'm going to win all the races, I'll run super fast like this."

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 paperwork. 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	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during our inspection we evaluated this theme as very good. We looked at how the service was meeting the needs of all children and how it supported safety, independence and choice.

We spoke with staff about the service's child protection policy. We were satisfied that they had a good working knowledge of their responsibilities and the procedures to ensure that service users were protected.

We saw that children were busy and purposeful. They interacted well together and made full use of the space and resources available to them. The resources supported children's independence, providing them with some opportunities to investigate and be creative.

Staff interactions were warm and nurturing. Staff treated children as individuals and used what they knew about each child to communicate with them effectively. This was confirmed by the parents and carers we spoke to. Staff caring for children in the baby room tried, as much as possible, to follow children's home routines. Changes to routines were shared with all staff. We suggested that as numbers increase, staff in the baby room could begin to use daily sheets or diaries to note information about feeds, nappy changes and sleep to give to parents.

The staff were skilled in responsive planning. Children were fully included in the planning and developing of most learning experiences. Floorbooks in the 3-5 room recorded children's previous knowledge, the questions they had as well as recording their learning journey and their new knowledge. This told us that children were included in leading their learning and were responsible for the direction it took. Children confidently shared recent learning and told us about the activities they had experienced. We suggested that staff should record children's comments as they looked through and revisited their learning experiences. We would like to see more reference made to the SHANARRI indicators, across all stages, in children's everyday play and learning.

Electronic journals were used throughout the setting. We sampled journals from each room. We found them to be well written, sharing children's achievements, observations and some next steps. The journals were updated regularly. Parents had the opportunity to log on and comment as well as the opportunity to share children's wider achievements and experiences by uploading photographs. This ensured that staff and parents worked in partnership together.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

During the inspection we evaluated the service to be very good. We looked at the physical environment, resources and opportunities for children.

Staff had organised the environment well and made the most of all available space. The nursery was clean and well maintained. Staff told us that they felt the service was well resourced. We saw a range of resources which were available for children to use. We discussed increasing the number of 'Loose Parts' (the provision of open-ended resources) to support creativity, problem solving, collaboration and decision-making.

The outdoor area provided children with excellent opportunities to explore the natural environment as well as providing them with experiences using more traditional resources. The staff confidently encouraged children to assess and explore risks which helped them to find out more about their capabilities. This gave children responsibility and freedom, with guidance, to experiment and learn naturally through play and to learn from their mistakes. We observed some missed opportunities in literacy and numeracy and suggested ways the service could maximise opportunities both inside and out.

Good use was being made of the local community. Swimming lessons had recently been introduced at a local pool. Parents told us they were delighted their children were being offered this opportunity to learn another valuable life skill.

Snack and mealtimes were observed to be relaxed and well organised. Children were encouraged to be independent across all stages. We suggested that the provision could be improved by staff eating alongside the children modelling good manners and eating habits and through the provision of real crockery and cutlery.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as very good. We considered staff training, staff recruitment and the motivation of all staff.

All staff within the service had undergone PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) checks and were registered or beginning the registration process with the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council).

Staff worked in close partnership with parents and carers, they enjoyed positive nurturing relationships. This was evident from the comments made in our questionnaires.

Staff had been recruited following best practice guidance. We suggested that children and parents could become more involved in the recruitment process. A comprehensive induction programme was in place to support new staff.

We found the staff to be well-trained, motivated and professional. They spoke positively about their roles within the setting. Staff presented as respectful of each other creating a nurturing environment and positive ethos, which was reflected in the children's attitude towards each other. We saw evidence of this in the way which children spoke and looked after each other.

Trained staff were very supportive of the setting's trainees. Each trainee had been assigned a mentor to support them through their studies.

In-house training covered a variety of topics. Evidence was kept in a staff training floorbook. Staff were encouraged to reflect and comment on their training and the impact it had on their practice.

Positive and nurturing relationships were evident throughout the nursery. Children approached staff for help and reassurance throughout the session which demonstrated that they had developed trusting relationships. Staff were respectful and encouraging with most giving children time, where needed, to answer and to find their own solutions to problems encountered during their learning and play. The children shared achievements with staff throughout our visit and these were celebrated appropriately.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection we evaluated this theme as very good. We spoke to staff about the quality assurance processes which were in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the service. We looked at how parents and children were involved in the evaluation of the service.

Staff told us that they felt well supported by the owners and manager. They had clear remits and responsibilities. The owners were visible and regularly involved in the day-to-day running of the service. During our inspection we observed that they knew each child and that children were keen to share stories and achievements with them.

All staff were included in the improvement agenda which helped to ensure consistency and a shared vision. Regular staff meetings were held to discuss issues arising and records of these meetings were kept with key actions and persons responsible identified.

The service had worked hard to involve parents in contributing to and participating in the service. Parents were given opportunities to participate in the self-evaluation process through feedback and questionnaires. The creation of a parents committee and a 'room spokesperson' ensured that all parents were being given the opportunity to have their voices and opinions heard. All actions were displayed clearly on a 'you said, we did board'. We found the management team to be very responsive and open to parental requests and ideas. We would like to have seen more opportunities for children to become involved in regular evaluation of the service.

A detailed monitoring calendar was in place. We particularly liked the way the manager revisited her observations to ensure that any actions identified were being addressed. We suggested that staff might begin to engage in peer monitoring.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

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

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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