

Pumpkin Patch Nursery Day Care of Children

Belhaven House
Edinburgh Road
Belhaven
Dunbar
EH42 1NS

Telephone: 01368 860008 / 865898

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

8 August 2019

Service provided by:

The Pumpkin Patch Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:

SP2003003086

Service no:

CS2003013299

About the service

Pumpkin Patch Nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service is registered as day care of children to provide care to a maximum of 56 children at any one time. The service operates between the hours of 7.30am to 7.00pm, Monday to Friday.

The nursery operates from a large private house within spacious grounds. It is located in Dunbar, close to a range of local amenities, the beach and public transport.

The aims and objectives of the service included:

"To provide the highest standard of childcare from birth - five years olds in a safe, bright and colourful environment.

To create a learning environment which balances indoor and outdoor educational activities, there by promoting a healthy body and mind.

To nurture happy, confident children with day-to-day practical knowledge, whilst instilling a sense of respect both for each other and the environment.

To closely monitor our service to ensure that the quality of care and education we provide is of the highest standard.

To help children discover new things and to prepare them for school with resourcefulness, confidence and an enthusiasm for learning."

What people told us

Eighteen Care Standard Questionnaires were given to the service for parents and carers. One Care Standard Questionnaire was returned to us. Written comments included:

'Due to staff turnover it has felt disjointed and unsettled recently. There is never a constant of staff in each room and no clear manager. Ratios seem to be an issue and we worry about clear guidance and structure. However my child always seem happy there'.

We spoke with parents during the inspection process, they told us

- "There is a complete inconsistency of staff and no manager presence. We never know who is in charge and neither do staff. The only consistency for my child is the other children."
- "The gardener is fantastic and does planting with the children. There have been two posts in my child's learning journal in the last eight months".

Parents contacted us after the inspection to discuss their concerns. These included

- "We have concerns around ratios, particularly early in the morning. Lack of staff retention, not knowing who will be in the nursery when I drop my children off. A number of different carers due to the use of agency staff and no longer a key worker system. Poor communication from management and there is a complete lack of management presence and lack of support for staff. There had only been one communication since the last inspection about what action the nursery are taking. There has been no evidence of improvements. The staff that are at the nursery are loving and caring but there is no evidence of any pre-school learning."

- "There is a lack of management at the nursery, there is never a manager first thing in the morning or at the end of the day. There is no communication with parents about staff, who is leaving, who is working that day. Often when I drop my child off I have to introduce myself and my child to the agency staff. We have been told that the administrator is the manager. The administrator brings a dog to the nursery office, in doing so the dog

has to walk through the nursery. Parents were never informed about this. There are no learning journal entries and no daily feedback."

- "There is a complete lack of management on site. Parents aren't informed about agency staff working on the day. Feedback is limited, just what my child has eaten or when they have slept".

Our findings supported what parents had told us.

Self assessment

The service was not asked to submit a self assessment prior to the inspection. There was limited evidence of any improvement since the last inspection but an improvement plan was now in place.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	2 - Weak
Quality of management and leadership	2 - Weak

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Limited progress had been made to meet the requirements and recommendations since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection there had been a change in the core staff team, with only one staff member still in place since March. This created issues around consistency for children and their parents. Parents told us that they often did not know the staff at the nursery when they dropped off their children in the morning, often resulting in their children being reluctant to attend. Our observations confirmed this. Consistency of staff should be addressed so that children and parents are welcomed by familiar people, who know the children in their care.

On viewing children's personal plans and e-learning journals we saw that these lacked information and were inconsistent. Where there were individual observations of children, these were not effectively used to provide children with challenge and depth of experience. Consequently, the e-learning journals did not demonstrate where the individual child was in their learning and development and how they were being nurtured and supported by staff. A requirement had been made at the last inspection and is carried forward into this inspection. See requirement one.

We saw that where children had additional support needs the service was not liaising with other services involved with the child. As a result there was a lack of consistency and continuity for the child. This meant that the service did not have all the information about children to enable them to assess their needs and provide the appropriate support. This was discussed at the previous inspection but no action had been taken. A requirement had been made at the last inspection and is carried forward into this inspection. See requirement two.

As highlighted at the previous inspection, we saw that information shared by other professionals and parents had not been effectively recorded or acted upon. For example, where a child attended speech therapy, no action

had been taken to gain further information to support the child. A requirement had been made at the last inspection and is carried forward into this inspection. See requirement two.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 2

1.

The provider must ensure that children's needs are met.

By 4 November 2019 the provider must ensure that personal plans provide a holistic and current view of the child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan must be reviewed and updated with parents at least once every six months, or sooner if required or requested, in line with current legislation.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'my personal plan sometimes referred to as a care plan, is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices. (HSCS 1.15)

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 5.

2.

The provider must ensure that children's needs are met.

By 4 November 2019 the provider must ensure that where outside agencies and other professionals are involved with children and families, there is a clear record of how the service supports the child.

In order to achieve this the provider must ensure that

- where strategies are identified by outside agencies and other professionals these are consistently implemented,
- information must be recorded,
- where required staff are trained to ensure that they have the ability to support children,
- This information should be reviewed so that the child's progress can be assessed and if necessary further support accessed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "If I am supported and cared for by a team or more than one organisation, this is well-coordinated so that I experience consistency and continuity".(HSCS 4.17).

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 4.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

A few days prior to the inspection, changes had been made to the baby room to create a calmer environment, with natural resources. The assistant manager had supported the staff with this. Once fully embedded in practice, this had the potential to improve outcomes for children.

Children had access to the large garden at times throughout the day. This provided opportunities for children to enjoy outdoor physical play and have fresh air. This could be further enhanced by staff understanding the importance of a high quality outdoor learning environment, which helps children to actively explore nature.

The environment indoors and out lacked a range of experiences and resources to allow children to experience challenge and to stimulate enquiry through play. The experiences offered did not follow national best practice guidance and opportunities were missed in providing experiences for children. The group's quality assurance manager was beginning to work with staff in the 2 - 5 room to make improvements to the environment. See recommendation 1.

Parents spoken with during and after the inspection raised concerns about a dog which was regularly in the nursery. They raised concerns about the dog having to walk through the nursery to gain access to the office, which meant that the dog could come into contact with children. We discussed this with the quality assurance manager and suggested that a risk assessment was written and that parents were informed.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should ensure that resources and activities are available which meet the needs of all children using the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity."

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Since the last inspection, the nursery had experienced another turnover of staff. There was one staff member still in post since the inspection in March. On the days of the inspection, there were two members of staff working at the service and two agency members of staff. As noted throughout this report, the inconsistency of staff was having a negative impact on the outcomes for children and the quality of experiences offered.

There was low morale in the staff team and as a consequence children were not experiencing positive outcomes and a positive environment.

From our findings at this and previous inspections, we suggested that children would benefit from staff training on child development as well as the knowledge and understanding of national guidance and best practice. For example, Building the Ambition, Pre-Birth to Three and the Curriculum for Excellence. This would improve experiences and outcomes for children. A recommendation was made about this at the last inspection and is carried forward. See recommendation one.

A recommendation had been made at the last two inspections about staff having regular support and supervision. This had still not been put in place for staff. The new deputy manager had just begun to carry out support and supervision with staff but where staff had indicated that they required support, no plan had been put in place. This meant that staff were not supported to improve the quality of their practice. See recommendation two.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1.
The provider should ensure that staff receive training on child development and best practice documents to allow them to offer improved experiences for children.

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

2.
The provider should ensure that a staff supervision and appraisals procedure are developed and implemented by the manager so that they enable staff to reflect on and improve their own practice.

To ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (HSCS 4.24)

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The service did not return an action plan after the last inspection within the timescale. We requested an action plan which was then submitted to us but action had not been taken to address the issues raised. This demonstrated a poor understanding about the seriousness of the inspection findings and a lack of accountability. We were concerned at the lack of action taken to meet the requirements and recommendations from the previous report. None of the three requirements or the four recommendations made at the previous inspection were met.

A quality assurance manager had recently been employed by the nursery group to raise standards within the group of nurseries. Action to address requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection had only recently begun as a result of the newly appointed quality assurance manager. She was supporting staff within the nursery to make improvements. Staff told us that they had found this positive and supportive. A requirement had been made at the previous two inspections about the service having an effective quality assurance system with planned action to support the improvement of the service. At the time of the inspection this was not in place. See requirement one.

A member of staff had been employed to work between two nurseries as the manager's assistant. The manager had not followed the services recruitment policy or safer recruitment guidelines when recruiting them. When staff are employed without the correct checks being carried out, this has the potential to put children at risk. We discussed with the manager the importance of following the guidance 'Safer recruitment through better recruitment' and the service's recruitment policies. See requirement two.

Although additional staff had been employed there was no clear line of delegation in the managers' absence. Staff were unsure about their roles and responsibilities. Parents were also unclear about who was responsible for running the service in the absence of the manager. See recommendation one.

The service had received support from the council's peripatetic teacher and quality improvement officer. We saw that this had some impact but in order for this to be sustained and outcomes for children to be improved, the service needs appropriate leadership support.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 2

1.
In order to ensure that children and parents experience a service which has a culture of continuous improvement, the provider must by 4 November 2019 ensure that there are robust and effective quality assurance procedures in place.

This should include but not be restricted to, the manager:

- having enough time to manage the service and support staff;
- monitoring and quality assuring children's e-learning journals and care plans;
- ensuring staff supervision and appraisals take place regularly;
- having an overview of staff's skills, knowledge and ability to provide a quality service for children: and
- developing systematic and rigorous procedures for self-evaluation, auditing and monitoring all areas of the service using local and national guidance and which lead to clear plans for improving the service.

This is to ensure that 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'.

This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 3 and 4 (1)(a).

2. The provider must ensure that children are safe and protected. The provider must ensure that any future employees are recruited in a safe manner in line with best practice and that all relevant checks are carried out.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I am confident that people who support me have been appropriately and safely recruited'.

This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 9.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1.
Children and parents would benefit from a clear management structure. This should include clear delegation of responsibilities when the manager is absent.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed'. HSCS 4.23

Grade: 2 - weak

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

In order to meet children's needs the provider must by 30 June 2019 ensure that personal plans provide a holistic and current view of the child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan must be reviewed and updated with parents at least once every six months, or sooner if required or requested, in line with current legislation.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'my personal plan sometimes referred to as a care plan, is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices. (HSCS 1.15)

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 5.

This requirement was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

Although personal plans were now in place for children, they lacked information and were not consistent.

Not met

Requirement 2

In order to meet children's needs the provider must by 30 June 2019 ensure that where outside agencies and other professionals are involved with children and families, there is a clear record of how the service supports the child. Information must be recorded to ensure that staff have the ability to support children and families. This information should be reviewed so that progress can be assessed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "If I am supported and cared for by a team or more than one organisation, this is well-coordinated so that I experience consistency and continuity".(HSCS 4.17).

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 4.

This requirement was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service was not liaising with other professionals and implementing strategies identified to support children.

Not met

Requirement 3

In order to ensure that children and parents experience a service which has a culture of continuous improvement, the provider must by 1 August 2019 ensure that there are robust and effective quality assurance procedures in place.

This should include but not be restricted to, the manager:

- having enough time to manage the service and support staff;
- monitoring and quality assuring children's e-learning journals and care plans;
- ensuring staff supervision and appraisals take place regularly;
- having an overview of staff's skills, knowledge and ability to provide a quality service for children: and
- developing systematic and rigorous procedures for self-evaluation, auditing and monitoring all areas of the service using local and national guidance and which lead to clear plans for improving the service.

This is to ensure that 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'.

This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 3 and 4 (1)(a).

This requirement was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

There was no up to date current quality assurance systems in place.

Not met

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Staff supervision and appraisals procedure should be developed and implemented by the manager so that they enable staff to reflect on and improve their own practice.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 years. Standard 13 - Improving the service.

This recommendation was made on 10 May 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation is not met. It is amended and carried forward into this report. Refer to Staffing.

Recommendation 2

The provider should ensure that staff receive training on child development and best practice documents to allow them to offer improved experiences for children.

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

This recommendation was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation is not met. It is amended and carried forward into this report. Refer to Staffing.

Recommendation 3

The provider should ensure that resources and activities are available which meet the needs of all children using the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity."

This recommendation was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation is not met. It is amended and carried forward into this report. Refer to the environment.

Recommendation 4

The provider should ensure that a depute is appointed who has the skills, time and support to manage the service in the absence of the manager. This should include clear delegation of responsibilities when the manager is absent and information sharing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed'. HSCS 4.23

This recommendation was made on 13 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We saw that although changes had been made to the management structure, there were still not clear lines of delegation and staff and parents were not clear on the role of the assistant manager.

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

Date	Type	Gradings
26 Mar 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 2 - Weak
16 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
23 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 2 - Weak
26 Aug 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
28 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 2 - Weak Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 2 - Weak
25 Aug 2014	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 2 - Weak
20 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
11 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
15 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
5 Nov 2008	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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