

Walker Road School Nursery Day Care of Children

Walker Road
Torry
Aberdeen
AB11 8DL

Telephone: 01224 879720

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

17 September 2019

Service provided by:

Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:

SP2003000349

Service no:

CS2003014526

About the service

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

Walker Road School Nursery operates from areas within the primary school building in the Torry area of Aberdeen. The premises consist of an entrance area, large open-plan playroom which is divided into two classes. Each side has toilets for children with nappy changing, shared kitchen, office area and storage. The service has shared use of the fully enclosed outdoor area. Since the previous inspection the outdoor area has been upgraded providing an interesting area for play with more natural resources.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service operated from Monday to Friday during term time and currently provides a morning or afternoon session.

Included within the service aims were to:

- create a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment for all
- encourage curiosity and explore our amazing world and our part in it.

We carried out an unannounced inspection of the service on Tuesday 17 September 2019. During the inspection we observed daily practice and talked with the children who were comfortable to talk with us. We spoke with parents as well as the senior team and nursery staff members. We observed staff practice and checked documentation relevant to the inspection.

We check services are meeting the principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (also known as GIRFEC). This is Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

We sent out 25 care standards questionnaires which we had asked the service to give to parents and received 14 completed returned before the inspection. We noted that parents were happy with the care provided.

We sent out emails to those who supplied their address and received two replies. We also telephoned a parent before we visited the service.

We noted various written comments from parents which showed us their views and opinions, three of which were:

"Excellent nursery, I have no complaints whatsoever. My child has definitely enjoyed her time here. Staff are brilliant. Sometimes not enough staff or too much staff changes; but overall excellent nursery and staff".

"I have seen so many changes in my child since starting the nursery, all positive changes. She loves the nursery and all the teachers. It's a pleasure seeing her so happy".

"The staff have been so good with my daughter - she has built a very close bond with two teachers in particular and they will be there after the summer so that will help her settle in again. My daughter was very shy when she started but I have noticed such a big difference in her it's been a joy to see. I think that's a credit to the nursery".

We talked with a total of nine parents and carers on the inspection day who told us they were very happy with the service provided. They commented on the outdoor area and liked that children were outdoors daily in all weathers. Parents thought highly of the staff describing them as "lovely", "really helpful" and "easy to talk with".

Parents were overall happy with the communication, stating they felt well-informed about their child though we shared comments from the Care Standards Questionnaires regarding updates with staff during the feedback session. Two described how staff had supported them with their child and had been helpful with their specific needs. Everyone thought the range of activities was varied and there was always plenty for the children to choose from.

We observed the children during the day. We saw them choosing from a wide range of age-appropriate activities. Children were relaxed and happy and had positive relationships with the staff.

We asked if they liked coming to Walker Road School Nursery and they confirmed that they did. They told us they liked playing outside in the garden, liked having snack and one told she especially liked the play-dough.

Children told us:

- "My best thing is the water tray and we can pour it"
- "I like playing with my friend"
- "I like the play-dough but it gets messy so we have to clean it all up".

We shared all comments from the questionnaires, emails and interviews with the senior team and nursery staff during the feedback session at the end of the day.

Self assessment

The service was not asked to complete a self-assessment before the inspection. We looked at the service's audit systems and development plans during the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found a warm, caring and happy atmosphere within Walker Road School Nursery. We saw happy, busy children who were relaxed and comfortable in the care of the friendly staff. We saw staff welcoming children and families into the setting and parents told us they felt included.

Parents we asked told us they were very happy with the care and support their child received. They especially liked the staff, that the children were outdoor in all weathers and the interesting range of activities. Several told us they liked the key worker system as they knew there was one member they could talk with who really knew their child, which they found reassuring.

Since the previous inspection the service have worked on all areas identified within that report and we could see evidence of how these improvements had impacted on outcomes for children. Staff knew the children well and could describe how they met their individual needs.

We looked at the care plans and noted some needed more information about specific needs and we asked the staff to review this and amend accordingly. Staff strived to ensure the health and wellbeing of the children was put first and agreed they would give attention to those care plans that needed more detail.

We noted staff were aware of their role in keeping children safe. Staff had attended child protection training and could describe how they would act should they be concerned about a child.

Children had access to a healthy diet through the nutritious snacks provided. Snack time was a social affair with staff sitting at the table with children and having fun whilst talking about fruits that were good for us. We noted children were encouraged to try new fruits at snack time.

Staff were very good role models with regards to behaviour and manners. Children were also encouraged to try things for themselves, to share and be kind with their friends. Staff were very nurturing towards the children and treated everyone fairly and with respect.

Children had daily access to fresh air and exercise with 'free-flow' indoor-outdoor play promoted. However, due to the layout of the school building they used a system where children were accompanied in or out, which worked well. We saw children playing outside in the improved playground, enjoying a wide selection of interesting and stimulating activities.

We noted there was a quiet 'corner' available for those who needed 'quiet time'. Staff supervised the areas well which ensured children could play safely and happily. It was nice to see staff joining in with play for example, having meals in the home corner and making play-dough.

Children had free choice of all activities which were laid out so they could select independently and take the items to their chosen area to play. We noted 'Loose Parts' play and natural resources both indoors and outside. Staff stood back and allowed children to explore and investigate at their leisure, offering advice and support when needed. Children were encouraged to be independent and we heard: "well done" used when praising them for their achievements. It was also nice to see nursery was included with the 'Big Noise' music programme.

Since the previous inspection planning was an area they had reviewed and we found they had made a good start to: 'Planning in the moment'. We discussed this and agreed they should continue working on planning ensuring they were completing meaningful observations and evaluating play and learning.

They were using the: 'Focused child' system where keyworkers focused on two children for a week. Staff liked this system stating they felt they were really building a better picture of the children and better able to identify and support their individual care and learning needs. We discussed how they shared this with parents and saw they were using interactive learning diaries (ILDs) which was described as: "work in progress".

We also noted they were continuing to support children who did not have English as their first language and how they included their parents with this.

We noted the school had been working on numeracy and literacy and had included this within their improvement plan. We noted this was an area they would continue to promote within nursery with the children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found children spent time in a welcoming and nurturing environment which was well-supervised by the caring staff. The area was spacious and carefully laid out to create 'areas' for play. Despite the large space staff had created smaller areas where children could play in a small group or by themselves. They had opportunities to meet together in the larger group at times for example during the music session: 'Big Noise'.

Staff were good at placing themselves where they could supervise children ensuring their safety. Children were encouraged to tidy away after themselves to keep toys in good condition and ensure the area was safe for everyone. We saw a risk assessment regime was in place and staff were aware of their role in ensuring equipment, furniture and resources were well maintained, in a good clean condition.

Children had access to a good range of activities, which parents liked. It was nice to see the children playing with the selection of natural resources and being creative using their imaginations. We saw them enjoying playing in the bark area looking for bugs. Children were encouraged to be aware of risk and take care, for example: "be careful when jumping".

Children had access to outdoors all day and we saw them going out whenever they wanted (being accompanied) and those who wished played indoors with their friends. Parents told us they liked that children played so often outdoors in all weathers saying it was good for them to have fresh air and exercise, especially in this area where many flats did not have gardens.

Parents we asked thought the environment was safe and secure both indoors and outside. When asked what they liked best about the nursery the children gave us various replies including: "playing outside", "playing with the water" and "mixing play-dough".

There were some areas we discussed during the feedback session and asked the service to look at. This included:

- some items in the first aid kit had expired which staff told us they would replace.
- we discussed safe storage of items in the toilet areas ensuring these were in covered containers.

We also learned that they had plans to further develop the outside area and have more "Loose Parts" and natural resources. The service would also take advice from the local authority on developing the environment in line with current guidelines when moving to providing the 1140 hours extended session.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Children were cared for by kind, caring staff who put the children at the heart of the service. Staff were happy in their role and enjoyed working within the nursery. We noted the staff team worked well together and held regular meetings to discuss the service and how they were supporting children. These regular meetings were used to discuss all aspects of the service, plan activities and evaluate. There was a large staff team, therefore, frequent meetings allowed them to keep updated with all aspects of the service.

We saw staff had built up positive relationships with parents. The parents told us staff were very good in their role and their children were happy in their care.

Staff could describe how they cared for the specific needs of the children who attended. We saw that staff listened to the children and valued their news and stories. We heard them laugh and joke with the children and treat everyone with respect. We saw positive relationships were established between staff and children. We noted staff were keen to take time to get to know new children and their parents in order to provide the support needed.

We looked at registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and noted all were registered. There was a staff induction regime for new staff which ensured they were confident when they first started.

We looked at staff training to support them in their role. This included: 'core' training: child protection awareness, infection control, food hygiene and first aid. Staff told us this had helped them ensure children in their care were safe and secure. We noted staff had better training opportunities which they welcomed stating this helped them support the children's early learning and care more effectively. We found staff were keen to improve their own professional learning and development which in turn would ensure they were better equipped to support the children and families.

Since the previous inspection the depute head teacher had held reviews with all staff (appraisal) and had developed a format for staff to complete before their appraisal meeting. We noted staff received a copy of this and were responsible for keeping this and a record of their own continuous professional development.

Areas we discussed they planned to work on included:

- the depute head teacher now plans to further develop the staff professional review and development regime in order to better support staff and support them in their role.
- we discussed how the senior team should develop a matrix of staff training so that this was easy to keep track of and when core training was due to be refreshed this would be easier to track.
- we also agreed staff should continue with plans to attend training to support them in their role caring for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Walker Road School Nursery is well managed by the committed and caring depute head teacher who is very well supported by the head teacher. We noted that staff felt the senior team provided strong support for them and were always approachable and helpful. The parents we talked with during this inspection process considered the service was well organised and managed.

We found the service was committed and had an ethos of improvement and that staff were encouraged to comment on the improvement plans and generally how the service was operating. We saw the improvement plan contained a clear focus on areas they wished to develop and how this would support best outcomes for the children.

We looked at evaluation and noted this was ongoing using specific tools for example: 'How good is our early learning and childcare' (HGIOELC). We noted the service received support visits from the local authority quality improvement team which supported them with evaluation. Overall we noted considerable work had been done on all recommendations made in the previous inspection report. We saw that their improvement plan was being worked on and regularly evaluated. Evaluation was effective, targeted and the service was keen to ensure this was maintained in order to better support the children who attended.

The depute head teacher shared how she monitored the service and we agreed this would support staff in their work and ensure positive outcomes for children. Quality assurance was another area the service had been improving. The service was currently working hard on how the parents had various opportunities to comment and make suggestions and be involved. This included opportunities during parents' evenings, suggestions box, as well as questionnaires. Equally the senior team were keen to ensure all staff were involved and taking an active part in evaluation.

Children were involved in evaluating their learning using the: 'Planning in the Moment' (see quality theme 1). We noted evaluation of learning and activities via floor books and also in their interactive learning diaries. We also heard children being asked for their opinion during the inspection, which showed us children's ideas were valued and respected.

Areas we agreed they would work on included:

- continue to work on all areas identified on the school improvement plan and their own action plan regarding the Care Inspectorate recommendations
- depute head teacher to continue with plans to further monitor the service
- some files needed to be archived within the nursery office cabinet
- to update and include current contact details for the Care Inspectorate contact centre 0345 600 9527.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - 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

Recommendation 1

To ensure each child's needs are met and they are appropriately supported to progress the manager and staff should:

- a) Develop and implement appropriate personal plans for children. The plans should reflect children's current needs and provide clear guidance to staff on how they will meet each child's needs.
- b) Ensure plans are developed and reviewed in consultation with parents/carers and other professionals, where appropriate, to ensure they are effective and are meeting children's needs.
- c) Ensure staff are knowledgeable and competent in meeting the needs of children and are using this to effectively meet each child's needs.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "my care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19).

This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been met.

We saw each child had a plan in place detailing how their care and support needs will be met. See also comments within the body of the report. All plans were regularly reviewed and updated as needed.

Recommendation 2

To support children to progress and achieve their potential staff should develop their skills and knowledge of:

- a) observation, assessment and planning
- b) effective interaction to support and extend learning.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: "I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me" (HSCS 1.27).

Resources to support staff with observation and assessment can be found at:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Effective-observation-leading-to-effective-assessment>

This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This had been met.

The manager and staff had worked on this area since the previous inspection. Staff were well supported by the senior team and we noted considerable work had been completed with regards to observation, assessment and planning.

See body of report for full details.

Recommendation 3

To ensure children receive high quality care, support and early learning experiences the provider should ensure staff access a range of training, development opportunities and best practice documents. Staff should be supported to implement their learning from these to ensure improved outcomes for children.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: "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 3.14).

A range of best practice documents can be found at: <http://hub.careinspectorate.com>

This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been met.

We noted staff had attended training to support them in their role and were able to tell us how this training had benefited them and given them confidence in their abilities.

We noted staff were well supported by the senior staff team and received regular support. We also noted the staff team supported each other and had regular meeting where all areas could be discussed.

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	
28 Sep 2018	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate Not assessed 3 - Adequate Not assessed
4 Jun 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good
14 Jun 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
1 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
24 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

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