

# St. Sylvester's Nursery Day Care of Children

Abbey Street  
Elgin  
IV30 1DA

Telephone: 01343 569 228

**Type of inspection:**

Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**

2 October 2019

**Service provided by:**

St. Sylvester's Nursery

**Service provider number:**

SP2003001905

**Service no:**

CS2003008890

## About the service

St. Sylvester's Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 44 children aged from 2 years to not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 12 may be aged 2 to under 3 years. A maximum of 40 children may be cared for when the children attending are all aged 3 years to not yet attending primary school.

The service has been registered since April 2002.

The service operates Monday to Friday from a church hall located in the centre of Elgin, close to shops and some local amenities. The hall is partitioned into two playrooms for the different age groups. There is a small, secure, outdoor play area that can be directly accessed from the building. The service also had access to the local church garden for active outdoor learning experiences.

This was a continuing engagement inspection involving the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland.

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 GIRFEC; safe, healthy, achieving, active, respected, responsible, and included (also known as SHANARRI).

The aims and objectives of the service include:

Provide a wide range of open ended resources that inspire children's creativity and imagination, taking account of guidelines such as BTA and Curriculum for Excellence. We will stimulate children's play and learning by providing activities that will engage children and encourage investigation and exploration.

We will ensure that activities provided promote children's independence, helping to build on confidence and life skills. We will take account of age and stage of development in the provision of these activities, ensuring that they are inclusive to all children.

Our staff will develop good relationships with the children and provide a warm, welcoming environment with caring adults that know the children well and take account of their individuality, allowing them to provide experiences that support progression across all areas of development. Our staff will take account of local and national guidance to ensure that children are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Responsible, Respected and Included. (SHANARRI)

We will engage in effective communication with parents/carers and other stakeholders to ensure they feel included and informed about the centre. We will take part in regular consultation to help support developments in the centre and to gain feedback on what we do.

We will look towards the wider community and how we can build further relationships and that will open up further experiences and opportunities for the children.

We will take part in effective self-evaluation using How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC) to help us review and reflect on the provision and to identify where we are doing well and where we need to have further improvements. We will use this self-evaluation to develop strategies to take forward and further develop.

## What people told us

There was a total of 24 children present during the inspection. The friendly and attentive interactions of the staff helped children to be happy and comfortable. Children were being encouraged to be independent as they moved around freely in a safe and welcoming environment.

Seven parents returned completed Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs). We spoke with two parents face-to-face. Parents were happy with the service overall; they felt that their child was well cared for and learning well. They really appreciated the friendly and welcoming approach of all the staff. Specific comments included:

'my child has come on loads and loves it'

'I am happy with the quality of care my child receives'

'my child has become more confident, staff update us every day of how they are getting on'.

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We discussed areas for improvement at the inspection.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Children experienced a welcoming and friendly environment that resulted in them being relaxed and assured. Children were being encouraged to have an understanding of emotions, to share and develop a sense of fairness. Staff were beginning to use language related to SHANARRI (wellbeing indicators) with the children during discussions and wall displays. However, greater association with the indicators during shared learning, activities and helper roles with the nursery, for example, would help children to have a tangible and meaningful understanding of their own wellbeing.

Through observations and discussions, we acknowledged that staff knew the individual care and support needs of the children well. Personal information, including the child's preferences and needs were recorded at point of registration. Where children had been identified as needing additional support, personal plans were being reviewed and provided a more holistic approach to children's needs, such as strategies and next steps. However, a sample of other personal plans did not detail medical needs or early identification of needs and any communications/actions. This was discussed with the manager with a view to a better coordinated approach being established. **(See areas for improvement 1)**

Children were able to make free choices about their play from a wider variety of open ended (no fixed purpose), real and creative materials that better supported discovery and exploration. We saw a small group of children played well together for a period of time in the role play kitchen and with a selection of cardboard boxes and blankets. However, at times noise levels rose dramatically which resulted in an element of disruption, particularly for the youngest children. This was not conducive to children being able to concentrate and persist in their play. Children contributing their own ideas more widely within the setting, would provide greater opportunities for them to lead their own play and learning. **(See areas for improvement 2)**

Clear line management responsibility was in place for child protection so that staff had appropriate support and guidance. Staff had an understanding of safeguarding procedures as they had completed local training. Documentation was in place to support the safe management of medication. We advised that a record of training given should be maintained for the severe treatment of allergies and allergy plans/protocols reviewed by a health professional as directed.

Children's physical and emotional wellbeing was being promoted as snack consisted of healthy foods that complied with children's dietary and food preferences. Children were able to choose when to have snack (flexi-snack); they sat together in small groups and chatted with each other in the company of staff. Children helped themselves to utensils and clearly enjoyed being snack helpers. We suggested that children being involved in the preparation of the snack would extend learning opportunities, such as cutting up the fruit.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 2

1. Personal plans should consistently provide a holistic and current view of the child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan should be reviewed and updated with parents at least once every six months, or sooner if required or requested, in line with current legislation. This would assist with meeting children's individual needs.

This is in order 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 my 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)

2. The provider and manager should continue to support staff so that they are fully informed of current early learning and childcare guidance so that more responsive, child-led learning experiences are created.

Reference: Building the ambition - [hub.careinspectorate.com](http://hub.careinspectorate.com)

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling.' (HSCS 1.30)

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for in an environment that enabled them to feel welcome and comfortable. They were able to move around the play space independently and safely. Children were learning about the importance of personal hygiene and how to keep healthy as they washed their hands after using the toilet and before having their snack. The service was clean and free from hazards.

Staff ensured that children were treated appropriately should an accident occur as they had completed first aid training. Accidents and incidents were being appropriately recorded and information was exchanged with the parent/carer to help promote the wellbeing of the child.

The play room was bright and welcoming for the children, natural and open-ended (no fixed purpose) materials were situated in various areas. For example, children were able to chop and pretend to cook with real foods and real utensils, a builders' area included large wooden blocks, planks, measuring materials and kids' hard hats. The space had been arranged with a view to children being more independent in their play and making their own choices. At times the acoustics of the hall meant that it could be very noisy. The open thoroughfare down the centre of the room at times led children to run up and down. So that suitable measures are in place to provide a balance of familiar and unwanted noise, the manager and staff continue to evaluate the space used by the children.

The service had a small outdoor play area that was directly accessed from the pre-school room. Children enjoyed being out in the fresh air, playing in the mud kitchen, digging with trowels and using trucks to transport chipping stones, using chalk to make patterns/draw. Staff had identified the outdoor play space as an area for development, in recognition that it lacked inspiration and meaningful experiences, that also enabled children to access and manage risk. Children would also benefit from the expansion of outdoor play, choosing whether they wanted to be inside or outside, supporting self regulation and individual preferences.

### Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

### Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

Staff were friendly and welcoming towards the children that helped to create an environment where children were comfortable and assured. They recognised the importance of supportive and positive relationships with the child and their family so that children's health and wellbeing was promoted.

Staff were experienced in childcare and held a relevant qualification; core training such as child protection and first aid helped children to stay safe. Staff told us that they had concentrated on making the indoor environment better for the children. Staff were receptive to taking forward new ways of working, to experiment with a view to improving quality. They had appreciated and valued the advice and guidance from CALA (Care and Learning Alliance) and the local authority. Whilst there had been some training opportunities, it remained unclear what impact it was having on individual development and the difference it was making to outcomes for children. Staff would continue to benefit from more in-depth opportunities to be reflective and to establish cohesive methods of planning/assessment that supported child led learning and challenging play. Staff continued to gain confidence in leadership roles under the peripatetic management arrangement. **(See areas for improvement 1)**

The consistent staff team worked well together, their enthusiasm and motivation was conducive to children being cared for in a nurturing and responsive environment. Staff enabled children to make choices and used kind words in a calm and unhurried manner so that they had time to absorb information. Staff generally positioned themselves well so that they were able to step into conversations and offer quiet and unassuming support. We saw that children were keen to tell a staff member how they were making chips and curry in the house corner and what they needed to build a house in the construction area. However, there were times when children would have benefited from staff having a wider awareness of what the children were doing to encourage greater levels of involvement and concentration.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1.  
Children should be supported to achieve their potential by effective management that promotes confidence in leadership roles, and provides on-going development and training of the staff team. This could be achieved through:
  - a) the development of a central training plan that identifies individual and group learning needs that is effectively monitored.
  - b) an evaluation of training as to how it has improved outcomes for children.
  - c) a focus on practice that is discussed and shared between all staff.

This is in order to ensure that 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) and 'I am confident that people are encouraged to be innovative in the way they support and care for me.' (HSCS 4.25)

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of management and leadership

## Findings from the inspection

The peripatetic manager was working towards a relevant qualification and had experience of early learning and childcare. The manager maintained regular contact with staff with a view to providing direction and embedding a culture that valued staff and supported them to improve their skills and knowledge.

Changes to the environment had clearly enabled children to make wider choices in their play that was having an impact on their learning and development. However, it was not particularly clear how they led the learning activities and influenced planning. There was confirmation that the local authority would continue to provide support and guidance to the manager and staff in respect of this.

Parents told us that staff were friendly and approachable; those that had used the service previously felt that the changes made to the environment had been positive. There was time to talk with staff at the beginning and end of the sessions and they were always updated. There were almost no details about the manager within the service, such as staff notice board or complaints procedure; we suggested that making the peripatetic arrangement clear would be particularly beneficial for parents new to the service. There had been recent changes to the voluntary management committee (provider) that consisted of parents; clarity of roles were being established although the chairperson having knowledge of early years was considered beneficial. It was anticipated that effective communication between the provider, staff and manager would help to ensure a shared vision for the service continued to be established.

A focus for change in relation to the environment had improved experiences for children in leading their learning. However, a programme of robust monitoring and self evaluation across all aspects of the setting had not yet been established. It was recognised that this was in part, due to recognition that the service was on a journey following a significant period of instability and changes of leadership. The manager and staff were referred to the framework – How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC) and Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), My support, my life for such purposes. **(See areas for improvement 1)**

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. The provider and manager should establish a continuous, manageable and effective system of self evaluation, that seeks the views of all those involved to improve outcomes for children.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve.' (HSCS 4.8) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

**Grade:** 3 – adequate

## 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

Personal plans should provide a holistic and current view of the child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan should be reviewed and updated with parents at least once every six months, or sooner if required or requested, in line with current legislation. Information to assist with the child's transition from home to nursery and between playrooms could be developed. This would assist with meeting children's individual needs.

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

**This recommendation was made on 20 March 2018.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's personal plans did not contain all required or current information to meet the children's individual needs. Therefore, this recommendation has been continued.

#### Recommendation 2

The provider and manager should ensure all staff are fully informed of current early learning and childcare guidance to enable and support a more responsive, child-led learning environment.

National Care Standards - Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 13: Improving the Service.

**This recommendation was made on 28 November 2018.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

The recommendation was in progress and is therefore continued.

#### Recommendation 3

Children should be able to enjoy an environment that has a wealth of interesting opportunities and encourages them to be imaginative, inventive and creative. This could be achieved through:



- a) play rooms that are well thought out and organised to promote greater choice.
- b) a wider range of resources/play equipment, that includes real and natural materials, and an abundance of loose parts, inside and outside.
- c) spontaneous and free flow use of the outdoor play area.

Further guidance can be found in the documents:

- building the ambition - national guidance on early learning and childcare.
- my world outdoors - sharing good practice in early years in how services can provide play and learning wholly or partially outdoors.
- our creative journey.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, '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.' (HSCS 2.27)

**This recommendation was made on 28 January 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

Significant changes to the environment had taken place that included open ended resources.

#### Recommendation 4

Children should be supported to achieve their potential by effective management that promotes confidence in leadership roles, and provides on-going development and training of the staff team. This could be achieved through:

- a) the development of a central training plan that identifies individual and group learning needs that is effectively monitored.
- b) an evaluation of training as to how it has improved outcomes for children.
- d) a focus on practice that is discussed and shared between all staff.

Useful resource:

The Scottish Social Services Council - Step into Leadership

This is in order to ensure that 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) and 'I am confident that people are encouraged to be innovative in the way they support and care for me.' (HSCS 4.25)

**This recommendation was made on 28 January 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

The recommendation remained in progress and is therefore continued.

#### Recommendation 5

The provider and manager should ensure that a continuous, manageable and effective system of self evaluation is established, that seeks the views of all those involved to improve outcomes for children.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve.' (HSCS 4.8) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

**This recommendation was made on 28 January 2019.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

The recommendation remained in progress and is therefore continued.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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 Nov 2018	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 2 - Weak
20 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
21 Sep 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
9 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
10 Jan 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
14 Dec 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
2 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
12 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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