

Ashgrove Children's Centre

Day Care of Children

Gillespie Place
Aberdeen
AB25 3BE

Telephone: 01224 482293

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

17 January 2020

Service provided by:

Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:

SP2003000349

Service no:

CS2003016385

About the service

Ashgrove Children's Centre is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide care to a maximum of 52 children aged from 0 to those not yet attending primary school. In addition, the service may also care for 8 school aged children during term time and 12 school aged children during the holiday periods.

The nursery is situated within Ashgrove Children's Centre and has its own large playroom with toilets. There is a fully enclosed outdoor area directly off the playroom. The service is close to local amenities, including shops and a school.

The aims of the service include: -

- Children feel welcomed into the nursery and will have the opportunity to access a wide variety of learning opportunities both indoors and out.
- Our environment will be nurturing, welcoming and offer children choice to engage in their learning, where they can play alongside others as well as on their own.
- Child led learning will be supported through high quality interactions with staff who are well trained and motivated in supporting the joy of child's individual learning.

Staff will engage positively with parents and carers to ensure that relationships are built on trust and respect, in order to enhance and support children's learning opportunities. If issues arise, we will engage with parents and carers to ensure that positive outcomes are reached.

The Care Inspectorate 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 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. These are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

There were up to nine children present during the inspection. Most of the children were confident and well settled at the nursery. Children who were still settling were thoughtfully supported by staff. Positive nurturing relationships had been formed between children and the nursery staff, who children readily approached for guidance, comfort or reassurance. The children we spoke with told us that they enjoyed coming to nursery and what they did there.

Three parents returned completed Care Standard Questionnaires (CSQs) to us before the inspection. They indicated that they were happy with the quality of care provided to their children. We also spoke to four parents as they collected their children. Comments included:

'My child loves it here, the staff are very good and approachable.'

'Staff supported my child to settle well and their confidence had grown since coming here.'

'Staff would do anything for the children.'

'The outdoor induction was very good – children were able to go and do their own thing.'

'Staff know children very well and are very approachable.'

'I wouldn't change anything about the service.'

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 processes. 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	4 – Good
Quality of environment	4 – Good
Quality of staffing	4 – Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 – Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were welcomed into the setting and time was taken to chat with parents. This provided the opportunity to share information and supported children to feel settled and relaxed. Staff supported children through kind, nurturing and inclusive interactions and were responsive to their individual needs. This encouraged children to form positive attachments with staff and supported the development of their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff knew the children well and were able to tell us about children's preferences and personalities as well strategies as in place to meet their needs. This knowledge was reflected in the children's personal plans and we saw staff consistently using agreed strategies to support children. The information held was regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it was relevant for each child.

Staff had undertaken observations of children to assess their development and identify next steps to support their achievements. This was used to inform the planning of activities or resources to extend children's learning. We discussed with the manager and senior staff how the next steps could be further developed to ensure that they showed how staff would support children to meet their goals. This will ensure that children's progress is fully supported. A new system was in place for planning which included focusing on particular children each fortnight. We discussed the importance of evaluating this system to ensure it identifies children's achievements and needs. Staff and parents told us how this had promoted further parental involvement, supporting consistency when setting goals for the children.

The nutritious snacks available supported children to be healthy. Clear information was discreetly displayed for children with allergies, supporting staff to meet their health needs. Staff sat with children, taking the opportunity to support their discussions. This encouraged the development of children's social skills and promoted positive relationships with their peers.

Children were encouraged to be independent, for example when changing into outdoor clothes, making dough or during their snack, with staff offering support when appropriate. This allowed children to develop skills and build their confidence and resilience as they were encouraged to keep trying simple tasks until they succeeded.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The environment was warm and inviting to the children and their families. There was comfy seating in the reception and separate parent rooms available, to support positive working relationships with parents. There was a range of information available to parents, about the nursery and other services available to them. This included the service's policies, national guidance documents and information about activities and plans. The sharing of this information supported parents to be informed and feel included and respected.

Resources and equipment were thoughtfully arranged to invite children to play. Children were able to play together or alone, supporting them to develop their interests. Most children were engaged in their activities during the inspection, staff told us the level of engagement had increased after changes to the layout of the playroom. Children were able to lead their own play and extend it into other areas with support from staff. For example, when playing in the construction corner children were able to access measuring tools to measure the height of model figures. They were then able to extend this by measuring and comparing each other's height.

At certain times some children were less engaged in their activities and the resources available. We discussed ways that staff could promote further engagement for all children. We suggested that staff ensure they continue to evaluate the provision as the children and their needs change. This will further promote children's progression through ensuring that there is enough challenge in the activities and resources offered.

There was direct access to a large enclosed play area from the playroom. Children were encouraged to use this to allow daily access to the outdoors and support physical activity. Waterproof jackets and trousers were available to children supporting them to access the outdoors in colder or wet weather. Since the last inspection it had been decided to expand the outdoor area by sharing it with other services in the building. This increased the resources available including more open ended and natural materials which encouraged children to explore and investigate. However, during the inspection some children did not access the outdoor area. We discussed with staff ways that daily use of the outdoors could be encouraged while maintaining children's choice.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The staff worked well as a team and together provided a calm and relaxing atmosphere for each other, children and their families. They treated each other, children and parents with respect and fairness, respecting the needs and characteristics of the individual. Staff took the time to listen to children, valuing their views and interests, this supported children to feel respected and promoted their confidence.

Interactions between staff and children were patient, kind and supportive, helping children to settle and build their confidence. Staff showed an understanding of when interventions were needed to support children. They worked well as a team and ensured that there were enough staff in the different areas to enable them to offer support to children when needed. This allowed staff to promote children's progression.

All staff were suitably qualified to carry out their role and were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC are responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

Staff had attended core training such as first aid and child protection, which contributed to their ability to keep children safe. They were keen to develop their knowledge and skills further. Additional training had been attended which increased staff confidence in identifying areas for concern and using chronologies to record these and other significant events in children's lives. Further training in assessing and planning for children had been used to support the implementation of a new planning processes.

Staff were aware of some of the national guidance available to support their practice. This included documents such as Our World Outdoors, Building the Ambition and Space to Grow which had been used to evaluate the environment. We suggested that wider use of a range of guidance materials would support staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas where further development would benefit children's experiences.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The service is provided by Aberdeen City Council. The manager also has responsibility for one other service in the local authority area.

There were a variety of methods in place for parents to provide feedback. These included allowing time before and after sessions, formal meetings and the use of Whats App messaging. The manager and staff were keen to support parents' involvement in the service. There was a range of opportunities to become involved in the service, such as stay and play sessions and suggestion boards. Parents told us they felt confident to raise any concerns with the manager or staff.

Staff told us that they felt supported by the manager and were confident to approach them with any issues or for support. Regular team meetings provided the opportunity to share learning and experiences with their colleagues. One to one meetings between staff and the manager had been established to allow the opportunity to address any practice issues and set development goals.

Some work had been carried out towards implementing a system of quality assurance. As part of this the senior practitioner had begun to evaluate one area of practice against the document How Good Is Our Early Learning. We suggested that the system for quality assurance needed to be further developed. It should include monitoring of staff practice and how children's needs are being met. See recommendation 1. This will support the manager and senior staff to identify areas where further development is needed to ensure children receive high quality care and experiences.

An improvement plan had been written by the manager and staff team. It was frequently referred to by staff and comments added as developments were made. This supported staff to feel part of the changes and to make suggestions. However, there was not enough detail in the plan to support the service to move forward. We discussed this with the manager and senior early years practitioner. We suggested that they include details of how they are going to reach the goals, time scales and a clear success criteria. See recommendation 1.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1.

To ensure that children receive high quality care, support and early learning experiences the provider, manager and staff should develop and implement a robust system of quality assurance for the service. This can then be used to inform the service's improvement plan. This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "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

Requirement 1

To ensure children are safeguarded the provider must ensure the manager and staff have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to protect children from harm, appropriate for the role in which they are employed. To achieve this, the provider must ensure by 19 April 2019:

- a) The manager and staff are competent in and knowledgeable about national, local and the service's own child protection procedures and GIRFEC.
- b) The manager and staff are competent in completing chronologies and child protection records and use these to assess the level of risk to children and that any identified action is taken timeously.
- c) Effective procedures to assess the manager and staff competency of child protection and GIRFEC is implemented and used on an ongoing basis.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20).

It also complies with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of users), Regulation 7 (2) (c) (Fitness of managers) and Regulation 9 (2) (b) (Fitness of employees) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

The provider, manager and staff may find the following documents useful to support them in meeting this requirement:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/109557/sg-national-child-protection-guidance.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/468617/practice-guide-to-chronologies-2017.pdf>

This requirement was made on 15 March 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

Further training on child protection and in particular sexualised behaviour had been attended by the staff and manager. Training had also been attended by the team in ACE's and the support that can be offered. Training in the use of SEEMIs has been useful in supporting the completion of chronologies. The provider and manager have ensured that the most current guidance was used to review the services child protection policy. This has now been adapted to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Met - outwith timescales

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 receives appropriate care and support and their needs are met, the manager and staff should ensure

- a) personal plans are developed that reflect children's current needs and provide clear guidance to staff on how they will meet each child's needs.
- b) the personal plans are used by staff to effectively meet each child's needs.

This ensures 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 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Staff used agreed strategies to support the children within the service. Staff showed a knowledge of individual children and their needs and preferences as well as any agreed strategies to support the child. This knowledge was reflected in the personal plans and care plans for each child. This recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 2

To support children to progress and achieve their potential staff should be supported to undertake meaningful observations and use this information to effectively assess and plan for children's learning and development.

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).

The following link may be useful in supporting the service to meet this recommendation:

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

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Training on Observation and Planning had been accessed. Observations of children should continue to develop but were now focused and relevant. Next steps were being identified but were not always detailed enough to support children's progression. This has been raised as an area for improvement in the report. This recommendation is met.

Recommendation 3

To ensure all children received the support, interaction and attention they need to meet their needs, the provider and manager should ensure the right number of staff are in the service.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "my needs are met by the right number of people" (HSCS 3.15).

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

There were enough staff present to meet the needs of children and offer them support and through good interactions. This recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 4

To ensure children are safe and receive high quality care, support and early learning experiences the provider, manager and staff should ensure effective quality assurance systems are developed and implemented.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

The following resources may be useful to meet the recommendation:

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/201173/national-practice-guidance-on-early-learning-2014.pdf>

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/frameworks_selfevaluation/frwk1_niheditself-evaluationhgiclc/hgioelc020316revised.pdf

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Some work has been carried out towards this recommendation. However there is not a robust system of quality assurance in place yet. Therefore this recommendation has not been met and has been restated in the report.

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
30 Jan 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 2 - Weak
20 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment Not assessed Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
2 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
23 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
19 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
25 Jun 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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