

First Class Early Learning and Childcare Day Care of Children

Cunningham Building
Macaulay Drive
Craigiebuckler
Aberdeen
AB15 8QW

Telephone: 01224 321199

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 November 2020

Service provided by:
Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003000319

Service no:
CS2015334855

About the service

We carried out an inspection of First Class Early Learning and Childcare between 28 October 2020 and 17 November 2020. We carried out a short focussed unannounced site visit on 28 October 2020. Following this we used virtual technology including the use of video, telephone calls and emails to engage with staff and parents and assessed relevant documents that we requested from the manager. Feedback was given to the manager, deputy manager and a senior member of the Bright Horizons Ltd. management team on 17 November 2020.

This was a focussed inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

First Class Early Learning and Childcare is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 67 children not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Of those 67 more than 21 children are aged under 2 years and are cared for in the baby room.

The values and aims are:

"To provide first class care and education within a safe, nurturing and stimulation environment. With staff who are caring, motivated and responsive to the children and their families."

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

What people told us

We spoke to four parents by telephone and gathered feedback from parents through email. They told us that they were overall very happy with the service provided. Parents highlighted helpful and caring staff, good levels of important communication, special relationship between key worker staff for their child. One parent discussed anxieties around settling in procedures, we looked at this area and have commented within the report.

Parents comments included:

"I'm very impressed with how the First Class have adapted and handled the challenges they have faced. My child loves being outside and I'm pleased to see how much outdoor time they get. A large part of our decision to choose the nursery was the outdoor space and surroundings which I can see are well used."

"The drop offs and pick ups are handled really well and I feel they do a great job in making it as 'normal' as they can so the children see as less of an impact as possible."

"The staff have been excellent at feeding back lots of information in an efficient manner and I always feel they are up to speed with how my child has been that day and they tend to his needs well."

"Overall I'm very happy and look forward to some of the initiatives Caroline has spoken about implementing, such as a Zoom meeting. I would find this useful."

"My child attends First Class Nursery. I am truly delighted with the nursery at the moment. The staff are so kind and attentive to the children, despite what must be very challenging circumstances to be working in."

The range of activities that they do with the children - indoors and outdoors - is amazing and I think my child loves the variety. I would say the menu has improved since the children returned after lockdown in terms of healthy choices being offered, however I have noted there is less variety than there once was. However, I can't say this is a huge concern to me either."

"Since the return to the nursery we receive a daily diary with information as to what the children have done, what they've eaten, slept, nappy changes etc. I really like this and find it really informative. There is always a wealth of information contained therein, which is no mean feat for the staff to achieve."

"(Named staff) - keeps us parents informed and up to date on any concerns in and around the nursery and is very friendly and approachable."

"My only slight concern is that the staff situation still seems to be calming down following lockdown and staff seem to regularly change settings. I do think this is probably understandable in the context of staff returning from furlough and the re-organisation of staff following nursery closures, but I do hope that this settles down soon."

"Overall, I'm delighted with the nursery and feel very secure with my child being there."

"I just wanted to say how happy we are with our child's care. Everyone in the baby room is great and it is clear to see how well the staff know him. We love the daily diaries and it is clear to see how much he is enjoying himself, too. It is like a completely different nursery from when he joined in January and the staff have done a fantastic job since starting at First Class."

"My two children both attend the nursery. They have only been attending for a month now, but have settled in really well. They have taken positively to their own key workers and staff there. The staff have been very welcoming and friendly to us too. The children have been exploring new toys and learning a variety of things. Overall, we are very happy with how things are going at the nursery."

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	3 - Adequate
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

3 - Adequate

Quality indicator 5.1: Children's Health and Wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting.
- Effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances.

Staff knew their key children well and showed an understanding of their needs during this time of COVID-19. Parents spoke to us about how they appreciated the individual key worker approach and how much staff knew their child. During our visit we observed staff provide nurturing care and support to the children. Positive changes had been made to settling in procedures in response to COVID-19, for example, introducing staggered starts for children joining nursery after the lockdown period. We asked the staff to be extra mindful of any anxieties that parents may feel at this time and how they will support children and families new to the service.

A range of positive communication methods had been put in place to help support the care of children. Parent daily diaries were used mostly for the younger children in nursery. These worked well for parent's, who were grateful to receive information in this way, due to lack of daily conversation. Emails and newsletters provided parents with clear and concise information about changes to the nursery due to following national guidance surrounding COVID-19. A new welcome pack had been implemented for new children, we suggested that the newsletter was added to this to help support parent's understand new policies and procedures.

All staff had recently completed child protection training which meant that they were up to date with signs and symptoms of abuse and what to do if they had a concern. We spoke to staff about how this had supported their COVID - 19 practice and found that some were less aware of the extra pressures children and families may be under and how to identify these during COVID-19. It would benefit children if all staff were more confident in this area of practice.

Changes to practice meant that children were confident and happy to return to nursery after a period of absence during lockdown. Staff had contacted all families which gave key workers the opportunity to get to know any new information about children and how best to care for them. 'All about me' sheets and other relevant personal plan documentation were completed during this time. Although staff knew children well, overall plans did not reflect what was happening in children's lives during their time away from nursery. Some positive approaches such as photographs from home were not implemented consistently for all children. We spoke to the management team about other specific examples of where personal plans did not reflect the child's up to date and individual needs. The management team agreed, as they had also identified this as an area of development.

Children were supported to understand the changes in their world around them and to their routines in an age appropriate way. Older children had been introduced to several story books looking at feelings of worry, understanding Coronavirus, and why we hand wash. This had been extended through play by using puppets

and other activities that supported the children to understand and explore. The nursery's 'CandyFloss' health and safety mascot was used well throughout to help support children through different routines. This supported children to feel settled and familiar with new routines such as handwashing.

Quality indicator 5.2: Infection Prevention and Control Practices support a Safe Environment for Children and Staff.

- Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Staff spoke to us about ways in which they kept up to date with relevant guidance and infection prevention and control. Staff spoke confidently about receiving updated policies and information directly from the manager. They all advised that this helped them feel confident in how to keep a safe environment during this time of COVID-19.

Additional cleaning procedures had been implemented to help reduce the risk of infection. This included the addition of a designated staff member allocated to cleaning hot spot areas such as door handles. Staff in each play room played a role in ensuring each room was clean, well maintained and complied with the hygiene standard expected. Managers conducted daily walk around checks each morning to ensure the environment was of the standards expected. The service had implemented several cleaning checklists to complement new policies. These approaches have had some positive effect on maintaining hygiene levels. However, the checklists and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure they were more meaningful and have the desired impact.

During the site visit we highlighted number of improvements in relation to the environment and infection prevention and control practices which we brought to the managers attention. For example, the children's drinking water station and hand washing station were located directly beside each other, presenting possible cross infection. Older children washed their hands in groups which meant that they could not be supervised well. Staff and children's hand wash sink areas were cluttered with items presenting possible cross infection, walls and skirtings had chipped paintwork meaning they could not be hygienically cleaned. We formally wrote to the service on 30 October 2020 confirming a full list of areas that required attention. We received an action plan and a risk assessment on the same day which provided evidence of the actions staff had taken to address the areas identified. We were satisfied that all areas raised had been addressed by the time feedback was given.

A room was available for anyone to isolate in if they became unwell until they can go home safely. All staff were aware of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if a child or staff member presented with any of these. Staff were very aware of and observed social distancing practices with each other and parents. Parents were asked to stay two meters apart outside during times of arrival and departure. These social distancing measures helped keep children and staff safe.

Quality indicator 5.3: Staffing Arrangements are Responsive to the Changing Needs of Children during COVID-19.

- Staffing arrangements meet the needs of children and families

- Staff are well supported and confident.

A new manager had formally been in place since the reopening of the nursery. Other new lead roles had also been allocated such as a new lead practitioner and a new class senior. Staff have transferred from other Bright Horizon nurseries creating a new staff team structure. Some parents commented on how there had

been a number of changes since staff returned from furlough. Changes to management arrangements were beginning to have a positive impact on service provision and outcomes for children and their families.

Children were cared for by consistent staff who knew them well. They were aware that any cross over between classes of children should only happen when no alternative was available. They would carry out a risk assessment and would follow appropriate safety practices. As a result, children were happy and settled back into nursery. Staff worked well together and as a whole team. This meant that children were well cared for and well supported.

The nursery had been asked to complete their self evaluation of Key Question 5. We could see how all staff had been involved in this process, identifying strengths of service and where areas of improvement were needed. Staff understood the changes necessary to continue to improve, such as more child led activities. All staff spoke about how the new manager provided support and guidance in a way that included them at every stage. Staff and parents commented on the changes already made to improve the service.

All staff had completed a variety of core training modules before returning from furlough, however staff were not confident in their learning taken from these and how this had positively impacted on their practice. The management team now need to ensure that any training completed by staff has the desired and meaningful outcomes for children.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure quality care and support for children the manager and staff should ensure that personal plans and learning journeys:

- * are up to date;
- * hold enough meaningful information for staff to care for each individual child.

This ensures that high quality care is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child, "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 area for improvement was made on 13 September 2019.

Action taken since then

'All about me' sheets and other relevant personal plan documentation were completed during this time. Although staff knew children well, overall plans did not reflect what was happening in children's lives during their time away from nursery. Some positive approaches such as photographs from home were not implemented consistently for all children. We spoke to the management team about other specific examples of where personal plans did not reflect the child's up to date and individual needs. The management team agreed, and we could see that this was an area of identified development.

Not met

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to ensure children are supported to achieve their potential staff should:

- * undertake meaningful observations that identify children's learning;
- * identify suitable, challenging and appropriate possible next steps;
- * plan experiences that follow children's interests and enhance their learning.

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

Support guidance can be found here:

[https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Effective observation leading to effective assessment](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/Effective%20observation%20leading%20to%20effective%20assessment)

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2019.

Action taken since then

Due to this being a Covid-19 specific inspection we were not able to assess this recommendation fully.

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that children receive the right care, systems in place to record, store and administer medication:

- * need to follow guidance;
- * need to follow the service procedures;
- * need to have parental permission.

Medication guidance can be found here: <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/189567/childrens-service-medication-guidance.pdf>

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2019.

Action taken since then

We are satisfied that systems implemented to record, store and administer medication follow guidance. Clear information is recorded within medical forms and parental permission is in place.

Met

Previous area for improvement 4

Staff should be supported to use best practice guidance to critically evaluate their own practice and that of the nursery. This should be used to reflect on and make improvements to their practice to support them in providing consistently high quality experience for children.

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

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2019.

Action taken since then

Due to this being a Covid-19 specific inspection we were not able to assess this recommendation fully.

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 5

The provider and manager should ensure that quality assurance and monitoring of staff practice is robust enough to have a positive impact on the experiences of children.

This ensures that high quality care is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child, "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice." (HSCS4.11)

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2019.

Action taken since then

Due to this being a Covid-19 specific inspection we were not able to assess this recommendation fully.

Not assessed

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	3 - Adequate
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	4 - Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	3 - Adequate
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	4 - Good

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Compass House
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