

Abbotswell Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Faulds Gate
Kincorth
Aberdeen
AB12 5QX

Telephone: 01224 872714

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
20 January 2021

Service provided by:
Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000349

Service no:
CS2003014400

About the service

We carried out an announced virtual inspection of Abbotswell Primary School Nursery between 6 January 2021 and 20 January 2021. 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. We used virtual video calls, 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 Head Teacher and Senior Early Years Practitioner using video technology on 20 January 2021.

Abbotswell Primary School Nursery has been registered since April 2002.

The service is provided by Aberdeen City Council. It provides a day care of children service for a maximum of 40 children at any one time, aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school. The service will comply with the following staffing: Age of children staffing ratios - 3 and over 1:10. Two adults to be on duty at any one time. (Only adults in contact with children for the majority of the session should count towards the ratios). The service operates from a dedicated nursery area within Abbotswell Primary School.

The aims of the service set out to ensure that everyone in the school community feels happy, safe and secure, tries their best, experiences success, feels welcomed, supported and included.

What people told us

Parents told us they were happy with the service and how they had worked closely with them and their child. Parents highlighted safe procedures for arrival and departure times, positive methods of communication and sharing of information, individual support from staff during difficult times for their family, feeling safe about having their child at nursery and how much their child enjoyed going to the nursery.

Parents comments included:

- "Nursery kept us up to date with information and procedures that have to be adhered to as parents. Ensuring regular hand washing for my child and trying to keep as normal a nursery experience as is possible just now. Staff involved me and my child in activities by regularly updating my child's focus record, discussing activities done at pick up time and through the class blog. Outdoor settling in session worked well with a designated area for parents to sit whilst my child was playing in the nursery garden. My child was shown their tray and bathroom indoors. Dropping off and picking up at the garden gate works really well. I actually much prefer this than coming in through school to use the old indoor entrance. Staff make good use of the notice board to put up useful information."
- "The staff at Abbotswell Nursery have been great throughout the pandemic, my child has really enjoyed their time so far at Abbotswell. The staff have been regularly updating the nursery blog with pictures and activities the children have been up too."
- "When I had my child's induction to nursery, we had it outside in the nursery playground, they didn't want to leave! When we arrive, there are cones for us not to enter in the nursery playground and the staff sign us in from a distance. The children enter in and wash their hands straight away. Before the kids leave, they

wash their hands. All in all, the nursery have done a great job at keeping us all informed and I have felt safe putting my child to nursery."

- "My child has been attending the nursery since September. I have nothing but positive things to say about the nursery. The staff are lovely and have supported our family. My child has a lovely time and always tells me about all the different things they have done. Nursery have been amazing through the pandemic keeping us informed and following strict health guidelines as far as I can see. My child has dietary requirement and they have been very accommodating of this, always providing an alternative and if unsure always check with me. Lovely nursery."

- "All safety protocols and procedures having been put in place. Staff have involved us in Google meets. Settling in wasn't really an issue with my child as they were used to the nursery setting with their older sibling, now in p1, attending nursery previously. Arrival and departure has been outside and socially distanced between other parents. They have followed government guidance and kept parents/carers up to date with the guidance. They keep us up to date using ILD and 'Marvellous Me' app. Also, any email correspondence."

- "The staff at Abbotswell Primary School Nursery have handled the Covid-19 situation very well. It feels very safe as the children are dropped off at the gate to the outside space/garden area. This has the advantage of being able to be socially distant and I can still speak directly to the staff about any issues that come up. The staff are good at providing information by text or on the school website too."

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?	5 - Very Good
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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?

5 - Very Good

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.

Children and families were well supported in areas of health and wellbeing. Staff had a nurturing and adaptable approach to provide this support through changing circumstances.

Staff used imaginative and fun ways to introduce changing routines and experiences to the children, involving them whenever possible. Child friendly posters and a class charter helped staff and children to talk together about new routines, experiences and feelings. Children named some of the new equipment now required such as 'Betty Butt' the outside hand washing station. This helped children feel a sense of ownership over changes that had to be made.

Children were being cared for in consistent groups with the same staff. Consideration had been given to children having familiar faces of friends and staff, this helped to offer reassurance and support their wellbeing. Where this was not possible staff made time to say hello and see children from a safe distance which helped children feel safe and secure.

Staff had an understanding of child protection, they had gained a shared insight into the potential adversities that children and families may have experienced as a result of COVID-19 and lockdown. They were clear about the approaches they would follow to safeguard children.

Staff remained in close contact with families during the lockdown period supporting them well, building trusted relationships. Staff identified areas of individual support to families and children and worked with them closely to access help and support from other agencies in the community. This level of support continued as children returned back to the nursery full time. Parents commented on how helpful, valuable, and caring staff have been. This helped support children's health, safety and wellbeing.

Ongoing communication with families recognised the difficulties of social distancing. Nursery blogs, phone calls, weekly google meets and interactive learning diary were some of the methods staff used to encourage fun learning activities and keep parents up to date during lockdowns. Information for return was provided by a 'welcome back' booklet to help parents understand the changes due to COVID-19 before returning. This enabled parents to prepare their children for the changes in routine when they returned to the service.

Parents were asked to provide current information about children to make sure that children's needs were met to keep them safe, happy, and achieving. Sensitive settling in procedures were arranged with parents to support children on their return to the service. Where children required extra support to settle back, staff worked with families to support their return. This reassured parents and further supported children to feel confident and welcome.

Staff recognised the importance of outdoor play for children and the additional benefits at this time. Most

children played outdoors for the whole session. Staff have worked well to develop the outdoor space to provide meaningful, exciting experiences for children using their garden and school grounds.

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 took the necessary precautions and a range of approaches to reduce the spread of infection as set out in guidance. Prior to reopening, management had created a COVID-19 risk assessment and the provider had updated their Infection Prevention and Control policy. This was shared with staff and families and set clear guidance and expectations.

Enhanced cleaning procedures were in place. Resources had been divided into two sets, for morning and afternoon groups of children. Any toys and equipment that could not be divided in this way was quarantined for 72 hours between uses. Extra time had been factored in for staff to carry out cleaning duties between sessions. Staff had worked together to establish an effective routine that allowed for all equipment both indoors and out to be cleaned and sanitised after each group. Touch points such as door handles, and light switches were cleaned regularly throughout the day by janitorial staff. These steps were supportive to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Safe arrival and departure times were in place outdoors. Staff had worked to develop this for longer term use throughout COVID-19. Signage for parents was clear and parents were aware of the guidance to follow. A welcoming arrival area had been created outdoors with a canopy, notice boards and displays of children work. This supports ongoing communication with families and gave children a sense of achievement in being able to share their stories with parents.

The nursery was well ventilated as children played mostly outdoors and free flow was available into the class room if children chose to play indoors. Staff were all aware of social distances measures and worked together to maintain a safe distance from each other helping to keep children safe.

Children had been supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing was always supervised by a member of staff. Staff had used fun ways of introducing this such as naming new equipment and giving 'betty butt' a thermal blanket to keep her water warm. Staff worked with those children who required a little extra support encouraging a sense of achievement.

Staff were clear on the signs and symptoms relating to COVID-19 and that neither children or staff should attend the service if they displayed any of these. Staff had advised us of the correct procedures to follow keeping in line with the guidance issued.

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.**

Staff were aware of guidance to be followed to maintain a safe environment and reduce the risk of spread of infection. Staff told us that they felt confident about the procedures and that policies and risk assessments were easily accessible and could be referred to any time. The management team kept them well informed about any updates and changes.

The service was appropriately staffed to meet the additional demands of COVID-19. Staff worked in groups which proved consistency for children helping them feel secure. Additional staff was made available within the groups when required to meet the changing needs of children attending. Staff time was planned across the day to ensure that additional tasks could be carried out without compromising on the care and experiences for children.

Staff reflected that recent training in 'emotion works' had been beneficial in supporting their confidence in helping children be aware of, and manage their emotions. Staff used emotion 'check ins' with children and each other to provide support where needed.

Staff were clear about their roles and discussions with them indicated that, they were well motivated, and keen to share ideas and help each other. They spoke about their roles with enthusiasm and shared how happy they were to be back working with the children. Staff were keen to speak about the varied support they have provided for individual children and families and were proud of what they had achieved.

Staff were being well supported by the management team and valued the support that was being given at both a professional and personal level. Staff felt able to share ideas and voice personal worries and felt supported by each other and the management team.

The staff team worked together well to evaluate new procedures and make changes when needed to ensure effective infection control practices and support for children. Staff had all been involved in self evaluating their service and identifying areas for improvement. Staff were empowered to act on and make these changes when needed. They kept positive outcomes of children at the heart of any improvements.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

To ensure children receive high quality early learning experiences, care and support the provider must ensure the service is effectively led and managed by 30 September 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child:

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed.' (HSCS 4.23)

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 3: Principles, of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Regulations 2011.

This requirement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

A new senior team had worked together with staff to identify clear roles and responsibilities. Working together, they now had a clear overview of how the service was performing and key areas of development required. All staff are involved and support the over all progress of the nursery. Improvements and changes have been made to practice impacting on staff confidence to provide a quality service to children based on positive outcomes.

Met - outwith timescales

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

In order for children to receive meaningful care the head teacher and staff should ensure that:

- personal plans clearly set out how children's needs will be met
- staff consistently follow the guidance set out in these plans

- personal plans and staff practice are reviewed to ensure individual children's needs are being effectively met.

This is to ensure 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); and

'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met and my wishes and choices are respected.' (HSCS 1.23).

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children are safeguarded the manager and staff should have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to support children's safety and wellbeing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I am protected from harm, neglect abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

Guidance can be found here:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1280/national-guidance-for-child-protection-in-scotland-2014.pdf>

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Staff had an understanding of child protection, they had gained a shared insight into the potential adversities that children and families may have experienced as a result of COVID-19 and lockdown. They were clear about the approaches they would follow to safeguard children.

They have worked with families during COVID-19, to provide extra support contact with other agencies within the community that can provide support.

Met

Previous area for improvement 3

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 is to ensure that high quality care and support 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 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 4

In order to encourage children to learn through play and achieve their potential, indoor and outdoor areas and equipment should be extended to include more natural, open-ended play equipment and opportunities.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me.' (HSCS 1.27)

Support guidance can be found here:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 5

Staff should use national guidance to reflect on their current levels of practice and develop more effective ways to support children in the following ways:

- How to observe, assess and plan for children's learning
- Lead their own learning
- Develop skills in language, curiosity and thinking.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

Supporting guidance can be found here:

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement>

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Not assessed

Previous area for improvement 6

In order to improve outcomes for children and support continuous improvement the Head Teacher and senior staff should develop robust quality assurance processes. This should include:

- the use national quality indicators and best practice effectively and in a reflective way
- regular and meaningful monitoring and evaluation of progress
- identifying clear areas of development with a focus on the impact and outcomes for children

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.' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2019.

Action taken since then

Not assessed

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	5 - Very Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	5 - Very Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	5 - Very Good

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