

# Old Station Nursery Day Care of Children

Melrose Station  
Palma Place  
Melrose  
TD6 9PR

Telephone: 01896 823 892

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
3 March 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Zara Hedley trading as Old Station  
Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2009010548

**Service no:**  
CS2009231888

## About the service

Old Station Nursery is registered to provide a day care service to a maximum of 41 children at any one time between the ages of three months and 12 years, of whom no more than 15 may be under two years.

The nursery is accommodated within the converted railway station buildings close to the centre of Melrose and local amenities. There are three play rooms within the service. The baby room caters for babies and toddlers, while the nursery room, which is made up of two connecting play rooms, is for 2-5 year olds and children up to 12 years attending out of school care or the holiday club. The nursery has an outside play area a short walk from the building.

Aims of the service included:

"The service will provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment providing all aspects of care and educational development".

This inspection both included a visit to the service and use of technology for virtual inspection.

## What people told us

We spoke to two parents during the inspection. They spoke positively about the relationships between staff and children and the care offered. Parents told us they valued the personalised approach to settling in. Feedback obtained by the service showed that parents felt confident about bringing their children to nursery at this time. They indicated that they felt informed by the service about arrangements in place in response to COVID-19 guidance.

We spoke to four children during the inspection. Their comments included:

" I like playing with the sand and the doll house."

" My favourite is batman, he fights the bad guys".

" I like playing outside the best".

"I'm having ham, cheese and cucumber for lunch".

## 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? | 2 - Weak |
|--|----------|

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?

2 - Weak

### 5.1 - children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during covid-19

We found the service to be operating to an adequate level in this area. Children experienced warm and supportive care from staff who knew them well. They chatted to children as they played and showed they were interested in their ideas. As a result, most children were observed to be settled in the environment and understood the need for their changed experiences. Children played with sensory play materials, used the role play area and built with construction toys. Babies enjoyed exploring a range of natural materials which helped stimulate their senses and curiosity.

Staff interactions were positive and kind, helping children feel at ease. Children experienced a positive transition back to the service with particular attention given to their wellbeing. Staff now need to develop further their skills in supporting children's independence and learning. Activities did not always meet the learning needs or interests of children. Most older children required more rich, challenging, and motivating play opportunities to support their developing skills. This should include more frequent outdoor learning experiences for all children. During the inspection, not all children had access to the outdoors for energetic, physical play to support their wellbeing. Younger children spent a considerable portion of the morning restricted to buggies while out in the local area with little opportunity to be physically active. We discussed with the manager that the outdoor space should be considered to maximise its daily use. These key areas of practice should be improved. A recommendation about this was made at the previous inspection and has therefore been carried forward as an area for improvement.

Settling in and transition plans took account of children's individual needs and preferences. Personal plans were updated with relevant information about children's needs and development. The impact of COVID-19 on children was also communicated by some parents. This helped staff to understand their unique experiences. Staff now need to use this information more effectively to plan personalised support strategies and monitor children's wellbeing. We have therefore asked staff to continue to improve approaches to planning for children's care.

### 5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.

During COVID-19, the application of strict infection control procedures are important to keep people safe. We found that staff practice was weak, and improvements were required to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for children. The service had recently fully reopened following a period of lockdown restrictions.

Staff maintained a safe physical distance from each other and wore face coverings when attending to parents at the nursery gate. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) was used while performing tasks such as nappy changing. Ventilation was maintained within the playrooms with access to fresh air which helped limit the risk of infection. Parents indicated that they felt informed about practice related to COVID-19 and were given the information they needed.

Overall, general cleanliness needed to improve. Equipment, toys and play areas required additional cleaning to make them pleasant and hygienic for children. Floor coverings were damaged in some areas making them difficult to clean.

Surfaces and sinks in the nursery room kitchen were not visibly clean, and the recycling bin was full and overflowing. The soap dispenser was cracked, making it difficult to clean. Clean, fresh cloths should be available for cleaning surfaces. Soap was not available in all staff bathrooms.

We observed handwashing practice. Younger children were supported to wash their hands on returning from a walk and before eating. Staff made this enjoyable and followed good practice guidelines. Older children required significantly more support to follow good handwashing practice and minimise the risk of infection. Staff did not support children well. They should ensure that children wash hands at the appropriate times according to best practice guidance. This will help minimise the risk of infection and keep children safe.

General cleanliness in the nursery room bathrooms needed to be improved. There was sand on the nappy changing table which the manager told us was difficult to clean. Bins for paper towels were unlined and an open sink accessible to children contained the service's dirty laundry. In the bathroom, a bottle of cleaning fluid was left within the reach of children which we asked the manager to remove. Children's sleep mats were not stored hygienically. These weaknesses in practice presented a potential risk to children in relation to safety and cross-infection.

We have made a requirement about these concerns. We discussed with the manager that we needed to see quick, continued and sustained improvement in respect of infection control. This will help reduce the potential risk of infection and keep children safe.

### **5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during covid-19**

We found the service to be operating to an adequate level in this area. The service was appropriately staffed to provide continuity of care for children. Parents indicated through their feedback that they felt positively about the relationships between children and staff. We found this to be evident through our observations. Staffing arrangements and routines had been adjusted to allow for additional tasks to be carried out without impacting children's care. For example, improvements in lunch time staffing arrangements allowed staff to sit with children and enjoy a relaxed mealtime.

Staff demonstrated a positive ethos towards their work and were supportive of each other. Discussions with staff and the manager indicated a need for improved clarity about roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to management and leadership. The provider and manager should ensure staff are clear about responsibilities and remits.

The manager used team meetings, informal communication and digital technology to support staff and give them an opportunity to share their views. As a result, staff told us that they felt informed and well-supported by the manager. Training needs were reviewed in line with current guidance and individual roles. For example, the manager had attended COVID-19 training specific to early learning and childcare. Additional training in relation to COVID-19 was also provided for staff before returning to work, giving them the opportunity to review their knowledge and understanding. Staff need more support to reflect on their training opportunities to ensure practice and outcomes for children improve as a result.

Despite the range of training opportunities and a system of monitoring, we found that the service was not fully following best practice in relation to COVID-19 national guidance. Staff training and overall quality assurance was therefore not effective. We spoke to the manager about this and asked her to address these concerns as a priority to ensure children experience a safe and hygienic early learning and childcare environment. We have made a requirement about this.

## Requirements

1. By 9 March 2021 the provider must ensure that children's health, welfare and safety needs are met. To achieve this, they must:

- Ensure children are cared for in a safe and hygienic environment
- Ensure that staff understand and implement current Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19) and NHS guidance in relation to infection prevention and control.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 – 1(a) and (d) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

2. Children and parents should experience a service which has a culture of continuous improvement because there are robust and effective quality assurance procedures in place. They should be confident that their service is well led and managed.

To achieve this the provider must ensure that by 31 March 2021, systematic and rigorous procedures for quality assurance and monitoring all areas of the service using local and national guidance are implemented which lead to improvement in the service. This should include a process to ensure there is an overview of staff practice and a focus on compliance with national guidance in infection prevention and control.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 – 1(a) and 15(b) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

## Areas for improvement

1. We have asked the manager to review and improve children's play experiences. Children should experience interesting, rich and motivating learning opportunities to support their developing skills and promote purposeful play. Children should also have increased access to outdoor play to support their interests and wellbeing.

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

"I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors (HSCS 1.25).

As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly and explore a natural environment." (HSCS 1.32).

## 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 support children's health, wellbeing and learning the provider should ensure they have access to high quality outdoor play.

Ref: Health and Social Care Standards 1.25 "I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors."

**This area for improvement was made on 12 December 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

The service has not yet fully met this recommendation. A secure outdoor area has been created for children with access to loose parts and space for physical play. An area of this is for the younger children with appropriate resources. An additional small outdoor area has been created directly off the playroom for older children. Children could choose to use this area throughout the session. During the inspection, most children did not have access to the outdoor garden area for energetic physical play. We discussed this with the manager who agreed that a plan for more effective use of the outdoor area is needed. We have therefore carried forward this recommendation as an area for improvement.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure care and support is consistent, staff must be suitably deployed across the service. This should include adequate staffing prior to and during lunchtime in the baby room to provide positive experiences for children, and ensure their development needs are met.

Ref; Health and Social Care Standards 4.16 "I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity."

**This area for improvement was made on 12 December 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

The service has taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation. Observations showed that children were settled in their play, had developed positive relationships with staff and enjoyed a calm lunchtime experience. Staff were suitably deployed to meet the support needs of children.

#### Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children are safeguarded effectively the provider should ensure that safe recruitment procedures are implemented and that all staff are subject to the necessary Protecting Vulnerable Groups checks prior to working in the service.

REF; Health and Social Care Standards 3.20 "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities."

This area for improvement was made on 12 December 2019.

#### Action taken since then

The service has taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation. We reviewed the recruitment files for new staff. Records indicated that safer recruitment processes were followed to safeguard children.

## Detailed evaluations

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|--|--------------|
| How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?                                   | 2 - Weak     |
| 5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19               | 3 - Adequate |
| 5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff | 2 - Weak     |
| 5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19       | 3 - Adequate |



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