

## Great Western Pre-School @ Kingswells Day Care of Children

Kingswells Village Centre  
Kingswood Mews  
Kingswells  
Aberdeen  
AB15 8TB

Telephone: 01224 745 364

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
23 June 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Lorndale Aberdeen Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2013012192

**Service no:**  
CS2013321322

## About the service

We carried out an unannounced inspection of Great Western Pre-School Nursery @ Kingswells during May and June 2021. This included a short, focused site visit to the service on 20 May 2021.

In addition, we used Microsoft Teams and emails to engage with the manager, staff and parents as part of the scrutiny process. We also assessed relevant documentation we requested from the management team. Feedback was given to the management team on 23 June 2021.

This was a focused 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. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

Staff and children were very welcoming to our inspectors and comfortable in discussion with us during this inspection visit.

Great Western Pre-School @ Kingswells was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 29 May 2014. The current registration includes the following conditions:

To provide a care service to a maximum of 100 children under 16 years of age. A maximum of 20 of these places may be used to provide an out of school care service. The following room maximums should be adhered to within the overall maximum:

In Room 1 a maximum of 15 children 0 to 2 years

In Room 2 a maximum of 11 children 0 to 2 years

In Room 3 a maximum of 18 children 2 to 3 years

In Room 4 a maximum of 11 children 18 months to 3 years of whom a maximum of 6 to be under 2 years OR a maximum of 12 children 2 to 3 years

In Room 5 a maximum of 18 children 30 months - to not yet attending primary school

In Room 6 a maximum of 26 children 3 - to not yet attending primary school.

The service is located in Kingswells, Aberdeen. It is very close to the primary school and local amenities and has good transport links to the city.

The aims of the service included the following:

- We will provide children with a safe, happy, caring and stimulating environment, in which to develop their individual skills and talents.
- We will deliver learning opportunities for children and parents to come together, enhancing parenting skills and where appropriate accreditation to increase skills to access employment.
- We will welcome children and their families of all races, languages, beliefs and backgrounds and strive to provide all children with positive self-images and values and to help them feel included.

## What people told us

We received detailed feedback from a number of parents and carers of children who attend the service.

Some general comments included the following:

"Overall I am very happy with the nursery staff."

"We have found the support of the nursery to be invaluable during the Covid-19 period."

"This has been a challenging period for the nursery but I would like to commend the management and staff members for their response. All have been really professional, positive and put the needs of the children front and centre. Their response has exceeded my expectations."

Staff:

"I feel that Great Western Pre-School is a well run nursery with staff who are caring and clearly love their job.....I think the staff have coped so well with all the recent changes and guidelines and the fact my children joined mid pandemic, yet were instantly settled and happy, reflects the quality of the staff."

"I think the staff do a wonderful job of supporting the children."

"Staff are friendly, approachable and supportive."

Meals and snacks:

Some parents and carers felt that the snacks and meals offered to children could on occasions be more healthy. More detailed feedback was provided to the management team. One parent stated that they would want their child to be offered a more substantial alternative than a sandwich if they did not like the main meal provided.

The management team advised that all food prepared and offered to the children was home made. They will communicate further with parents and carers to make this clearer. The food provided on the day of the site visit was appetising, attractively displayed and well received by the children.

Opportunities for outdoor play:

Although one parent commented that their child was outdoors for much of the time, feedback from other parents and carers was that children were not able to access outdoor play at the nursery on a daily basis.

We spoke with the management team about opportunities for children to access outdoors and they stated very clearly that all children were able to access outdoors on a daily basis. Due to changes made in relation to minimising the risk of transmission of Covid-19 children were no longer able to play outdoors during drop off and collecting times. Therefore parents and carers would not see their children playing outdoors, something that would have happened prior to the pandemic. Again, the management team indicated that they would look to reassure parents and carers in relation to outdoor play opportunities.

Communication:

Parents and carers fed back varying experiences in relation to the quality of communication. Some parents reported staff spend a lot of time speaking with parents at handover and others felt the feedback was limited to passing on information about naps, nappies and food taken, with very little feedback about play and learning experiences. One parent commented upon the fact that confidentiality could be an issue due to the need to provide handover information at the gate. Parents and carers felt that the zoom sessions were positive however, some indicated that they didn't get many opportunities to be part of a zoom session.

One parent felt that their child's interactive learning diary was not updated very regularly. They commented that "this has been disappointing given parents/carers are not allowed to enter the setting at all for, or since, settling in sessions."

Parents and carers did feel the nursery was very good and keeping information about their child up-to-date and used this information and positive communication to support transitions.

Feedback from children:

Children talked about how they liked making bracelets. One girl showed us that she cut the wire herself. Some of the girls showed us their bracelets when finished. One boy told us that he liked playing with the dinosaur swamp and had made a volcano (which he showed us). Some of the children wanted to show us their photos on the rainbow and the sun up on the wall.

## 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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

**Quality indicator 5.1: Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during Covid-19**

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 presented as being warm and caring in their interactions with the children. They used an encouraging and positive tone with children and children were comforted when crying.

The service worked hard to keep in touch with families during lockdowns and to support the transition back to nursery. This was particularly successful during the second lockdown when virtual class meetings took place centred around fun activities, such as a teddy bears picnic to encourage participation and engagement. The team recognised when there were families that needed extra support and ensured that there was regular communication to offer support and advice.

Staff had a very good overview of individual children and their needs. Clear plans were in place to support children who had specific needs. Staff had worked in partnership with parents to look at how to support children and strategies put in place were working well. The service worked in partnership with key external agencies, such as speech and language therapy to help provide targeted support where this was required. There were clear personal plans in place for all other children.

We found that staff had a good understanding of child protection and their role. The service must make sure that they follow their child protection procedure fully at all times.

The playrooms were very well resourced with an extensive range of loose parts and natural resources to support children to use their imagination and problem solving in their play. Children were encouraged to make choices and be independent. We saw, for example, some children select wire from a selection, self snip, select from a choice of beads and make bracelets which they were very proud of.

Children benefitted from extremely well resourced and thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces which worked very well to support outdoor learning. A number of parents fed back to us that their children did not have sufficient time outdoors. The management team reassured us that children accessed outdoors every day and advised that they would look at how they could evidence this to parents and carers. The management team further stated that opportunities for outdoor play was one of the key strengths of the service. We saw children fully engaged in varied and challenging activities outdoors as part of our observations. Being outdoors helps to control the spread of Covid-19 and contributes to children's positive mental and physical wellbeing.

**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.

A Covid-19 risk assessment and Covid-19 action plan were in place. Both were very detailed and we could see that it was updated as guidance changed. It also included all the key links to the guidance. A number of changes had been made to the environment to support a safe environment. These included each class having a designated dropping off and collection area with times staggered to reduce congestion and parents and carers wearing masks at these times. Children were cared for in bubbles and there was no mixing of children or staff across the bubbles. Mobile hand sanitisers were in place through out the nursery, including outdoors. The class upstairs changed from one bubble to two. The service chose to double up on all the resources for those children to ensure that they continued to have the same experiences available to them. Playrooms had windows and doors open to allow for ventilation, apart from in one room which was fed back to the management team.

The staff described the correct procedure to follow if any child developed symptoms or became unwell within the service. We saw that appropriate action was taken swiftly by the service. These measures helped to limit the spread of infection and keep children healthy and safe.

We observed handwashing taking place across the nursery, appropriately supervised by staff to ensure that children did this effectively. Children were very knowledgeable about how to wash their hands properly and this was also commented upon by parents.

During the site visit we found that staff personal protective equipment was not always being used properly. Staff were wearing single use face masks for multiple uses. Some staff were putting the face mask into their pocket or in a small zipped bag when not in use and others continued to wear them around their chin. This practice increased the risk of transmission of infection. We also found that staff with long hair did not have it tied back apart from at mealtimes where they were serving food and supporting children with eating. Some staff also did not keep nails short and free from nail varnish which again increased the risk of transmission of infection. These issues were raised with the management team who took very prompt action to address them.

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

The service was always appropriately staffed to meet children's needs. The nursery had not had to break bubbles as staff sickness could be managed due to overstaffing of the building. This also allowed staff time to ensure additional tasks including cleaning are able to be carried out to a high standard. We could see through our observations that the environment was kept very clean and children continued to enjoy very positive high quality play experiences.

It was positive to note that there were very consistent staff teams. This supported continuity of care for children and would have had a positive impact on children's ability to re-settle into nursery following periods of lockdown.

Staff presented as motivated and committed to their work. Many of the staff had worked for the organisation for a long time. Staff were happy and this helped to create a positive, relaxed and comforting environment for the children.

Staff were very clear about their role in relation to ensuring children experience high quality care. They appreciated the challenges to families due to lockdown and were able to well support families that were struggling. They made a clear commitment to continuing to connect with families during period of lockdown where they undertook phone calls, organised activity based zoom calls and set up zoom calls so families

could see their child if they were in nursery and be reassured. Parental feedback was very positive about staff but there were mixed responses about the quality of communication.

We saw evidence of staff using their initiative. An example of this was wanting to keep the zoom calls going with parents even though the children were back at nursery. This was because parental feedback had been very positive about these sessions, enjoying an insight into their children's day at nursery.

The management team told us that every staff member returning to work received a building orientation, a risk assessment and a one-to-one discussion with their line manager. Individual staff needs were considered and supported as part of the risk assessment. Staff found the management team very supportive. Examples were provided of staff being supported very well during periods where they were having to self isolate.

Staff had undertaken relevant Covid-19 training. Management advised that they were really starting to look at wider training again now, supporting staff learning and development targets.

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - 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	4 - Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	5 - Very Good



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