

Great Start Childcare Ltd Day Care of Children

2 Colquhoun Road
Milton
Dumbarton
G82 2TH

Telephone: 01389 765 551

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 August 2021

Service provided by:
Great Start Childcare Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2013012154

Service no:
CS2013320163

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

This service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 23 December 2014.

Great Start Childcare Ltd is run by Great Start Childcare Ltd. The early learning and childcare service operates from a stand alone building in the Milton area of West Dunbartonshire. The service is on a bus route and is near to local schools and shops. The service had the sole use of the premises and outdoor play area.

The service was registered to provide a daycare service for 105 children from birth to primary school age, broken down into the following age groups:

- Children 0-2 years: 22
- Children 2 years to 3 years: 28
- Children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school: 55.

Service aims include:

- To provide a safe, happy, caring, stimulating and secure environment for our children where everyone feels valued, included and respected.
- To create a nursery which feels like home and to create an extended family environment.
- Ensure that our provision is continually improving and evolving to meet the needs of children and families as we strive to become a centre of excellence. Provided opportunities for reflection, self-evaluation, professional dialogue to improve outcomes for children and families.
- We will create a community of staff, families and other professionals who will be actively involved in the nursery and contribute to children's learning.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. GIRFEC is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy, and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection carried out by two early learning and childcare inspectors.

What people told us

We received feedback from five parents through email. All parents were happy with the service and the care their child received. One parent who commented that Great Start Childcare was a "good nursery" and that "staff are caring and helpful" had a concern about communication and exchange of information. Individual comments included:

"Our experience here with our wee boy has been great. He started just before he turned 1, giving him settling in time before I returned to work after maternity leave. He attends 3 days a week and has absolutely loved his time there. The activities and experiences available are varied and his vocabulary continues to grow.

The staff couldn't be more helpful, answering any questions or listening to my worries. They always take my son's needs into account and I feel that they really know him. We have recently had to switch to a dairy free diet and the staff have been great at facilitating this with regards to his breakfast, lunch and snacks. They always take care of him and discuss anything we need to know when picking him up at home time.

I have absolutely no concerns about my wee boy attending this nursery and have recommended them to a few friends who are looking for somewhere for their children to attend".

"My daughter has been attending Great Start since she was 8 weeks old. She is now 2 years old and I love having the confidence that the correct care is being carried out to my daughter and that she has fun, makes friends, and has trust worthy, talented teachers. The sheer amount of skills and confidence my daughter has adapted from being at Great Start has been paramount. Her speech is tremendous as well as her ability to share, count and understand her peers and teachers. Overall, I would not have my child at any other nursery as the work that Great Start do is incredible and I have full trust in every single practitioner within the company. A truly great place"!

"I am so glad I chose Great Start for my son, since day one he has been welcomed by loving and caring staff. He has now been here for 2 years and I have never had any issues.

With all the recent changes with management and owners at Great Start the transition has been so simple and smooth. I personally feel like these changes have not affected my child or myself in a negative way what so ever. I feel fully updated with these changes and I know there is support there for me with any questions or concerns I may have. My son has always loved his time at nursery and I love the family vibe from here too. All the staff are fantastic and are always there to support our family.

The way they have dealt with Covid has been phenomenal. As this is new to everyone the nursery management team have done a great job ensuring everyone is safe and cared for during these times. There are a lot of new rules and changes regarding Covid but it has not changed the atmosphere or happiness within the building. Everyone shines a positive light. I would like to end this feedback with a huge thankyou to every member of staff at Great Start Nursey, for all their dedicated hard work".

"I have been personally delighted with Lisa and her team. Lisa knows each child individually and can tell you exactly what kind of day they had and how they are getting on each time she meets you. This was very refreshing, a personal touch I never experienced at his previous nursery. Each member of my son's teaching team talk confidently about how he is getting on, this was restricted to his key worker and senior at his last nursery.

In the 3 months my son has attended Great Start I have been particularly impressed by the curriculum, their enhanced focus on physical, messy/sensory and outdoor play as well as having regular themes like football day and attending visits like the local park. In the two years my son attended his previous nursery he was never taken out with the building grounds on a learning visit and I was never as engaged with his activities and learning experiences as I am now. I have no negative comments I have been very pleased with my son's experience to date".

Self assessment

The service completed and returned a self-evaluation Key Question 5 operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 in advance of the inspection.

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	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We observed children outdoors in a caring, positive learning environment where they were supported to reach their potential. Children's physical and emotional wellbeing was promoted by a warm and enthusiastic staff team, who knew the children well. Children were happy and active throughout the inspection visit, freely accessing play areas and activities on offer. We observed positive responses from staff which supported children to develop key skills. Children were confident at approaching staff for help and reassurance at appropriate times. As a result, children were developing positive attachments with the staff team.

We found friendships were encouraged and supported through positive interactions from staff and implementation of promoting positive behaviour. We observed opportunities for all children to play cooperatively, share and take turns which in turn promoted social skills.

There was an inclusive culture and a focus on working with parents to ensure that they were well-informed and involved in their child's care.

The service communicated daily with parents at handover times, and we viewed evidence that parents were given information about what their child had eaten at snack and lunch. Staff used e mail, zoom meetings and the service facebook page to engage with parents. Parents were recently invited to a parents' night to share and exchange information about their child's learning and development.

The service had recently changed to using profiles to record children's learning and development, having previously used online learning journals. We looked at these alongside children's personal plans and found

that they gave a good overview of children's current needs. Staff used information gathered from parents to plan appropriate care and support for children. There was some good evidence of quality learning experiences based on children's early developmental milestones. However, some information recorded by staff needed to be clearer and more precise, for example, next steps for learning. (See recommendation 1).

Transitions for children and families were well managed. There was a clear service settling in policy and welcome information. Parents had opportunities to communicate and share information with staff and their child's keyworker to ensure that their child's transition was smooth and successful.

We were satisfied that the service had implemented appropriate Covid-19 procedures to support a safe environment for children and staff. For example, effective social distancing measures were in place for adults when required, such as moving around the environment. Staff had Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to reduce the risk of spreading infection. We found children were supported to understand the need for good hygiene and we observed handwashing taking place by all staff and children regularly throughout the session.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The management team and staff should ensure that clearly identified next steps are recorded for each child. This will give clear information on children's individual learning and support each child's keyworker in identifying individual next steps in learning for each child in their group.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: '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)

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The premises provided a welcoming environment and evidence of children's learning was displayed throughout. We found the playrooms to be clean, bright and well ventilated, ensuring a comfortable environment for children and staff. We observed children making some independent choices: for example, we saw children riding bikes, using the mud kitchen and making playdough. Resources were cleaned at the end of the session, along with table tops and surfaces. A cleaner came into the service at the end of the day and robust cleaning was undertaken to ensure a clean and safe environment. We found risk assessments and procedures were in place and updated as needed. Staff told us they were kept up to date with guidance by management and they also took responsibility for reading updates that were issued.

All children had daily access to a natural environment outdoors. This area had recently been further developed with an enhanced layout and additional resources, for example: new sandpit, mud kitchens and playhouse. The outdoor area for children aged under three was still under development. Children also enjoyed investigating the local area through taking nature walks to surrounding areas. We found this was developing an exciting range of learning opportunities where children could run, climb, balance, explore and investigate. Staff were supporting children to think about and manage risky situations allowing children to develop their skills in problem solving and be more willing and confident to try out new experiences.

Toilets and changing facilities for children and the service laundry were clean and well organised. Children's bedding was washed on a daily basis and soft furnishings in rest areas were sanitised each day.

We found accident and incidents were recorded and shared with parents, records sampled confirmed that appropriate treatment was given to children when required.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Throughout the inspection, staff were welcoming and engaged well with the inspection process. We found staff were working well together creating a warm, nurturing environment for children and families. We observed good communication throughout the team and nice interactions enabling children to feel safe and secure. Staff regularly shared relevant information supporting them to meet children's individual needs.

Staff felt supported by management and were knowledgeable about the improvement plan and areas for improvement. They spoke positively of changes over the past year and looked forward to further developments while showing commitment to improvements within the service. Staff were very supportive of each other and this was reflected in the strong sense of teamwork and friendship amongst staff. Staff commented very positively on the opportunities for wellbeing support and the ongoing support from the service manager.

We found systems were in place to carry out appraisal meetings with staff. These helped to set targets for staff to meet and to identify their training needs to further assist them in their role within the service. All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and if required were working towards an appropriate qualification for their registration. Staff showed commitment to their professional development and learning, demonstrating some knowledge of current best practice. Staff had accessed some effective training with subsequent learning beginning to influence change and improvement. Management should continue to support staff to access training and self-learning to embed the initiatives that provide positive outcomes for children.

Staff knew children and their families well and understood the importance of building trusting relationships. We found relationships with parents to be positive, staff valued the connections they had with families and endeavoured to involve them more in the future life of the centre. Parents commented positively on the staff team and the care and support their child received. Parents told us they feel involved in their children's learning and staff regularly ask for information on their children's current interests and what they would like to learn.

We found effective systems were in place to safeguard children. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge and awareness of how to keep children safe and protected. The team received regular child protection training to help them keep children safe and protect them from harm. This approach ensured that children were valued, safe, and secure.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We found management engaged well during the inspection process, taking on advice and support, demonstrating a commitment for improvement. We acknowledge there has been a change in management, and we recognise that the manager has worked hard to develop the service over the previous year, nurturing relationships with staff and parents. The manager has been a very positive influencing factor in the service.

The management team was confident in their abilities and approach when working in partnership with families. Management was available throughout the day to enable parents to communicate and update the service with key information about their child. We found that management, along with staff and parents, were reviewing and had implemented clear policies and procedures to support the daily operation of the service. Management had gathered views from parents and reported changes accordingly. Parents and staff told us management were approachable, visible, and supportive as well as available to discuss any concerns.

Management was receiving very good support from the local authority and the National Improvement Hub to drive forward improvement and promote positive outcomes for children. We found that management had developed an improvement plan identifying service priorities. We can see some progress had been made on priorities identified, for example: developing opportunities for children to access high quality outdoor learning environment. Management should continue to monitor priorities to support areas of improvement and outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

The management team and staff should ensure that purposeful individual observations and clearly identified next steps are recorded for each child. Staff should ensure that spontaneous observations are carried out, where appropriate. This will give clear information on children's individual learning and support each child's keyworker in identifying individual next steps in learning for each child in their group. Children's personal plans should be reviewed every six months, or when appropriate with parents.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: '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 recommendation was made on 7 October 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had made progress with this recommendation but should continue to make improvements in this area.

Recommendation 2

The outdoor area should continue to be developed to support positive outcomes for all of the children. The management team and staff should continue to develop opportunities for children to regularly access a high quality outdoor experience throughout the year. This development is supported by national policy and guidance.

This ensures the quality of the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.' (HSCS 1.31);

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27)

This recommendation was made on 7 October 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been addressed.

Recommendation 3

Action points should be developed from staff meetings to clearly identify whose responsibility it is to take issues forward. This will result in tracking of actions and recording any improvements made.

This ensures staffing is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well.' (HSCS 3.19)

This recommendation was made on 7 October 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been addressed.

Recommendation 4

The manager should improve the quality assurance processes through:

- (i) building staff confidence in continuing to use "How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare?" guidance as a tool for self-evaluation.
- (ii) support self evaluation discussions using "Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life."
- (iii) using the recommendations made in this report to support improvement
- (iv) carrying out observations of staff practice
- (v) ensuring all staff are involved in the systematic evaluation and discussion of the effectiveness of their work and the work of the service.

This is to ensure that management and leadership 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 recommendation was made on 7 October 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been addressed. We asked the manager to continue to monitor quality assurance and self-evaluation processes to support continued improvement.

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
10 Mar 2020	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
12 Feb 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
7 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
9 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings

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