

# Albyn School Nurseries Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
21 September 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Albyn School Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003562

**Service no:**  
CS2003016175

## About the service

Albyn School Nurseries is provided by Albyn School Limited. The service is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 125 children. A maximum of 40 children aged two to three years and a maximum of 85 children aged three years to not yet attending primary school.

The service registered since 1 April 2002.

The nursery operates from the Oliver Wing within Albyn School. The nursery is located close to local shops, parks and a playing field which the older children access regularly.

The nursery aims "To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment, allowing each child to feel happy and secure, gaining in confidence and independence."

We wrote this report following an unannounced visit, which took place on 8 September 2021 when we completed observations of the care provided. We used virtual technology, telephone calls and emails to gather further information, review documents and speak to staff and parents. Feedback was given on 21 September 2021. The inspection was carried out by two Care Inspectorate inspectors.

We are testing our new ELC quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare. This inspection was included as part of the test. We have evaluated the service based on key questions and quality indicators linked to the framework. As this was a test, we will not be publishing the evaluations. More information about the quality framework and methodology can be found on our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## What people told us

There were 68 children present at the time of the inspection. Indoors and outdoors, children were all engaged playing with their friends in a well-resourced and stimulating environment. Children were confident and happy to chat with us as they played. During imaginative play, children commented:

"I've made a car for Pikachu. Pikachu has crashed his car down the slide!"

"I'm going to sleep at my grandma and grandad's house."

"I'm 4, nearly 5!"

"Do you like my new shoes, they really make me run fast!"

"I'm making a house with a mouse trap because we don't want a mouse in the house!" as the child 'painted' his wooden creation with water and a paint brush.

We invited all nursery parents using the service to participate in this inspection. We received views from 15 parents of children who attend the service.

All parents were very positive about the quality of care their children received. They were extremely complimentary about the service's level of communication and the strong relationships that staff had established with their children. One parent commented, "They (staff) make childcare look effortless and enjoyable and I think that's only possible if you genuinely enjoy what you do."

## How good is our care and learning?

### 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children were cared for by warm and nurturing staff during their time at nursery. Staff knew children and their families well and meaningful, trusting relationships had been established. Children were well settled and confident with staff and in the routine of the nursery. Staff used effective ways to promote children's care and nurturing experiences to support their emotional health and wellbeing. When necessary, staff interactions provided encouragement, comfort or reassurance to children.

Management and staff had created a welcoming and very positive ethos, which laid the foundations for good, communicative relationships with children and families. Communication, such as verbal handovers, ensured families felt included in their child's care and were kept up-to-date.

Children experienced well-planned, smooth transitions into nursery, supporting children to become more confident and included.

Mealtimes were pleasant and sociable experiences. Food was healthy, with alternatives offered when necessary. One parent, who participated in the inspection, commented how they would like to see less sugary desserts. Pre-school children dined in the dining hall and were confident with this routine. The younger children ate in their respective playrooms. When possible, staff sat beside the children, encouraging and supporting them when necessary. Children overall, enjoyed relaxed and unhurried mealtimes, while allowing for intermittent cleaning in line with Covid-19 policies.

Fresh water was available throughout the day to keep children hydrated.

Children were provided with opportunities to rest, in accordance with parents' wishes and individual need. Nurturing staff ensured children were kept safe and comfortable as they slept.

Personal plans were in place for each child along with support and/or care plans, where necessary. These detailed information to enable staff to provide children with consistent, continuous and individualised care. Staff spoke confidently about the care and support needs of their key children. Most parents we spoke with knew the goals their children were working towards.

Comprehensive plans had been developed for children with identified areas for support. These were in line with GIRFEC - Getting it Right for Every Child - Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) or guardian(s) to work with the services that can help them, and had been updated with details of children's progress. Staff knew the children's support needs very well. They were confident in discussing strategies used to support children's progress which we observed being used during our site visit.

Safe systems for the storage, review and administration of medication were in place and known to staff. Information on particular conditions with the agreed course of action to be taken were sourced, in the event children attending the service experienced allergies or needed long-term medication. This information would support and guide staff to take appropriate action when required to do so and contribute towards keeping children safe and well.

Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times. They washed their hands effectively following guidance when at the sink. However, some children were given hand wipes after eating, despite having direct access to hand washing facilities. This is not within current guidance. The manager agreed to

review and implement practice accordingly. Children eating in the dining hall also used wipes to ease access to the hall for the upper school, washing their hands when back in their playroom.

## 1.2 - Children are safe and protected

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. The child protection policy was known to staff and provided them clear guidance to follow. Staff attended regular child protection training and demonstrated a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and the systems in place for reporting and recording any concerns. A designated child protection officer (CPO), who was confident in her role, was in place and known to staff.

Chronologies were being used to record significant events in children's lives which may have influence their welfare. This contributed to ensuring that children got the right support at the right time.

The nursery had established links with other agencies, for example, health visitors and occupational therapists. Their involvement with children attending the service ensured they could continue developing successfully and achieve their potential.

## 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were actively involved and confident in leading their play and learning. A wide and varied assortment of activities, indoors and out, enriched children's play and learning, promoting language, numeracy and literacy skills. Playrooms were well ventilated and the atmosphere comfortable, calm and relaxed.

Children were always at the heart of planned or spontaneous play experiences. Observations and discussions with the children formed their individual learning plan, which took into account children's goals and identified next steps. Challenge was provided for children to encourage motivation, stimulation and progression.

Prior to the pandemic and as restrictions ease, children will continue to access their sports field and local shops. This will promote children's confidence, sense of belonging in their community and boost their health and wellbeing.

## How good is our staff team?

### 4.1 - Staff skills knowledge and values

Staff interaction was positive. Their warm and caring approaches towards children, enabled them to feel valued, loved and secure. Staff demonstrated how well they knew children as individuals and spoke confidently about their individual care and development needs.

Effective team working cultivated a warm and friendly atmosphere, where staff were communicative, courteous and respectful of one another. This comfortable and relaxed environment supported children's learning. Staffs sensitive, fun interactions and use of questions supported and extended children's learning, helping them to achieve their individual goals.

"I think the staff really pay attention to the kids." (parent comment).

Staffs passion in their roles was evident. They were committed to providing good outcomes for children. Staff undertook research independently. Their awareness of best practice guidance enabled them to build on the quality of learning experiences for children. Staff attended their desired training to ensure children benefitted fully from their current knowledge and understanding. Staff embraced opportunities to take on leadership roles, enhancing their confidence and inclusion within the service.

"She supports the interest of my child by researching tools to explore the interests as well as providing the resources." (parent comment).

Management encouraged staff to lead their own learning and provided an array of training opportunities; through inhouse, online or external agencies. Staff completed review sheets following training to measure the impact on their practice. They were encouraged to revisit these after a period of time to ensure their training had impacted positively on learning and teaching and outcomes for children.

Prior to the pandemic, staff attended regular support and supervision meetings. Staff were supported personally and professionally and were able to discuss and identify where further training or professional learning was required. Informal opportunities, such as team meetings were used to share learning or exchange information. We suggested that effective use of formal support, supervision and monitoring within the playrooms is re-established as appropriate within Covid-19 restrictions.

#### 4.3 – Staff deployment

Staff were clear and confident in their roles and understood their responsibilities. They communicated well with each other and worked effectively as a team. This ensured children were well looked after and that the daily routines ran smoothly. Staff had built trusting relationships with both children and families.

Staff were appropriately deployed throughout the service. There were sufficient numbers of staff to support children's health, safety and wellbeing needs.

There was a clear routine to the day and staff understood how best to support children in following this without causing unnecessary disruption to their play experiences. We found staff were skilled in describing the needs and interests of individual children and how they ensured that, as far as possible, these areas of interest and individual needs were met.

Staff were proactive in recognising where gaps in adult to child ratios may exist. They worked flexibly as a team, promoting continuity of care for children, especially those undergoing transition or being supported over lunch times. Staff recognised and planned for busier periods, such as hand-over and mealtimes, limiting disruption for children.

Management ensured families and children felt included in the service. They were kept well informed and were introduced to new staff caring for their child, paving the way to forming positive relationships.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

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