

# Little Staggies ELC Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 January 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Little Staggies ELC Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019013402

**Service no:**  
CS2019377651

## About the service

Little Staggies ELC is a full-time day care of children service provided by a private company. The service operates from purpose built premises on the outskirts of Dingwall. The nursery is managed by the service provider. There are three playrooms each with direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 20 December 2019 and can provide a service to a maximum of 48 children at one time. Of those 48 no more than 9 are aged under 2; no more than 15 are aged 2 to under 3; and no more than 24 are aged 3 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school.

## What people told us

The children present during the inspection visits were observed as being comfortable in the care of the staff. There was a good rapport between the children and staff which allowed for natural and open communication. Being outdoors was popular with all the children we spoke with.

During the inspection, we were able to speak with three parents. They advised us that they were happy with the standard of care their children received. Parents stated that they were happy with the levels of communication and the feedback they received about their child's day at the nursery. One parent appreciated the level of support their child had received while attending the nursery.

## Self assessment

We did not request a self-assessment from the service as part of this inspection. We assessed the service's improvement plan and quality assurance processes as part of our evidence gathering.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality indicator as adequate. We identified some strengths which just outweighed the weaknesses which impacted on children's outcomes.

During the inspection we saw that the children were settled and familiar with the staff looking after them. Staff were nurturing and supported the basic care needs of the children. Interactions were warm, caring and nurturing. Where appropriate, staff gave children praise and encouragement as well as offering hugs and reassurance which allowed children to feel safe and secure.

Following the previous inspection, a requirement had been made in relation to the development of personal plans. This requirement had been partially met and will be continued. The service had developed a personal plan for each child who attended the service. However they were not all fully completed or contain all the essential information to ensure staff met the individual needs of the children attending. The personal plans had not all been reviewed on a regular basis in conjunction with parents. This meant that staff did not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the specific care needs of each child attending and information was not always used to ensure consistency and continuity in care routines. We discussed with the manager the need to continue to develop and review personal plans to ensure that all staff had access to the necessary information to meet children's needs and ensure positive outcomes. **(See requirement 1)**

All staff were aware of all children attending the nursery who had medical conditions or specific allergies. Some staff had completed relevant training to ensure that they were able to meet these medical conditions and allergies should the need arise. We discussed the need to ensure protocols linked to administration of all medication should be displayed where staff can readily access this important information.

We saw some staff engaging with children in a nurturing and child centred fashion to support activities of their choosing, such as reading books or building tracks. Staff praised the children on their knowledge of the story and skills at building the tracks, helping them to feel valued and their achievements recognised.

Whilst we noted some staff engage in high level discussions with children to support enquiry and imaginative play, we also observed some missed opportunities for staff to extend and build on children's play and learning by using effective questioning techniques. Staff had recently received input on observing and recording children's progress and it is envisaged that this training will support improvement across the service.

The nursery provided meals and snacks. During the inspection we observed lunch time. The quality of this experience for the children, varied in each of the playrooms. The children in the three to five room were able to have lunch at a pace which was right for them. These were social events where the staff sat with the children and chatted with them. The children received appropriate levels of support and independence skills were promoted. However in the other two rooms, lunch was a poor and disorganised experience for children and delivered in a task driven manner. This meant staff were sometimes distracted and not alert to what was going on. There were also limited experiences to promote children's independence, language, and communication skills.

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 1

1.

By 2 May 2022, the provider must ensure each child receives appropriate care and support and their needs are met.

To do this, the provider must ensure that children's information, including full names, contact details, addresses and medical information is recorded clearly within children's personal plans. Plans should also consider any circumstances which may affect a child's care, learning and development and identify appropriate strategies to meet the child's needs, support progress and to help children to achieve their full potential. Personal plans must be signed by parents and reviewed every six months, or sooner as necessary.

This is in order to ensure that 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); and In order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for care services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 5 Personal Plans.

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment has been evaluated as good. We found that there were a number of important strengths which outweigh the areas for improvement. These strengths have a significant positive impact on children's experiences and support positive outcomes.

The rooms were well maintained, clean, bright and welcoming. The nursery offered appropriate levels of space and toilet facilities to meet the needs of the children who attended. Each of the three playrooms had direct access to an outdoor space which gave the children opportunities for fresh air and active play and also ensured the premises were appropriately ventilated. Both the indoor and outdoor environments offered a good range of learning experiences. Children were able to direct their own play and activities in a way that they chose.

Children attending the service were kept safe through the various systems the manager and staff had in place. Staff explained that they completed daily visual checks before the children arrived as well as at the end of the day. We sampled the risk assessments the service had in place and found that the manager and staff were vigilant in their care of the children.

Areas previously highlighted for improvement linked to infection control had been met. Storage in the toilet area had been improved and the area used for personal care was now much improved in that storage areas and surfaces were now able to be easily kept clean.

The room for the pre-school children contained natural and open ended resources. We saw children who explored happily and were engaged in their play. Consideration had been given to the variety of activities and experiences on offer to stimulate the children's curiosity and imagination. Resources were well matched to the developmental stages of the children and promoted their learning. Children were able to independently select resources of their choice and lead their own play. Staff routinely reviewed children's use of resources and areas to make sure that children were engaged and challenged.

The manager acknowledged that the toddler room and baby room lacked sufficient open ended and natural resources to engage and stimulate the children's play and learning. These rooms would benefit from continued review to support improved opportunities to promote play using objects in treasure baskets or from real life objects to promote enquiry and stimulate children's senses and imaginary play.

The playrooms, especially the baby room, lacked cosy and comfortable nurture areas where the children

could go if they needed to remove themselves from busy areas to have a rest. We discussed ways in which the indoor spaces could be developed to provide some cosy and homely areas for the children.

Outdoor play and learning was popular with all the children. Staff in each of the playrooms supported and encouraged the children's learning outdoors. We observed the children having lots of fun and taking part in a variety of activities both individually and in small groups. The children had access to a range of creative resources to support their imaginary play and physical development, for example a climbing frame, water play, mud kitchen and open ended resources. We discussed ways in which the outdoor area could be further developed to promote multi-sensory outdoor play as well as stimulating children's natural curiosity. We explained to the manager and staff where they could access best practice such as; 'My world outdoors,' 'Loose parts' and 'Space to Grow' to get ideas as to how they could improve the area.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

We identified some strengths in this quality theme but these were just outweighed by weaknesses. Therefore, the quality of staffing has been evaluated as adequate.

Staff were motivated and committed to providing a positive experience for children in their care. They were warm and nurturing towards children who were given hugs and comfort when needed. This enabled children to feel valued and cared for. Children enjoyed spending time with staff and were comfortable in their company.

The manager stated that recruiting and retaining staff to vacant positions had been a challenge. As a consequence, the manager was routinely having to work directly on the floor to maintain minimum staffing ratios. We suggested that the manager should review staff deployment within the service to ensure that there were experienced staff in each of the three playrooms. This would provide less experienced staff with opportunities to observe established good practice from their peers and lead to further breadth of improved experiences for the children.

Staff were able to access training offered by the provider and other external sources. For example, they had recently attended training on the recording of focused observations. However, they were unable to evidence how training had impacted on their practice and the experiences and outcomes for children. Staff would benefit from continuous opportunities to reflect on and further improve their practice and skills to promote consistently positive outcomes for children. During the inspection, we signposted the manager and staff to useful training resources as well as relevant best practice guidance.

There were regular staff meetings which provided an opportunity for all staff and the manager to discuss the day to day running of the nursery, share practice guidance and information. Staff appreciated being able to meet as a team. Meeting minutes highlighted that the focus of the meeting were generally tasks as well as some training. However, there was little opportunity for the whole team to be involved in reflecting on current service provision and how children's experiences could be improved. The manager should make greater use of these meetings to fully involve all staff in the ongoing self-evaluation of the service as well as the development and review of the improvement plan.

The manager needs to put in place a more formal and robust system to monitor and support staff practice. There was only limited informal monitoring of staff practice. Individual support and supervision meetings had not taken place for some months. A clear system for support and supervision would allow for the review and evaluation of individual staff practice, the opportunity to discuss and review the impact on training attended as well as the identification of training needs which would ensure that children were receiving high quality care and support.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

We identified some strengths in this quality theme but these were just outweighed by weaknesses. Therefore, the quality of management and leadership has been evaluated as adequate.

The manager and staff fully engaged in the inspection process and appreciated the guidance and the signposting to various websites and best practice offered by the inspectors. The manager and the staff demonstrated their commitment to the service and were motivated to make improvements to ensure positive outcomes for children.

There was an improvement plan in place which identified the priority action points the manager and staff would be working on. However, there was limited evidence that children and families were involved in the process of identifying the priorities. There was also limited evidence of staff's involvement in identifying the priority areas and the ongoing review of the improvement plan. As a consequence, an ethos of inclusion and respect was not evident.

Consideration should be given to having a clearer focus on children's play experiences, learning and progress when identifying future priority action points. The manager was also encouraged to be more proportionate, using specific measured achievable realistic targets when developing subsequent improvement plans. **(See recommendation 1)**

Effective quality assurance systems were not in place. There was not a formalised system to review practice to identify strengths and further areas for improvement within the setting. This resulted in gaps in service delivery which impacted negatively on the quality of experiences children received. Although some monitoring of staff practice had taken place, it was not robust enough to secure progression and there was no evidence of how it had benefited children .

Not all staff had attended support and supervision meetings. This did not ensure that individual staff were supported to identify their strengths and learning needs. As a result, training and development opportunities for staff did not always result in quality play experiences for children. The manager acknowledged the need to establish a more formal system to monitor staff practice and to provide effective support and supervision for each individual staff member.

Within the nursery, there were some opportunities for the children to provide feedback and suggestions as to how the service could be further developed. The children were encouraged to be involved in decisions relating to the day to day running of the service. This supported children to feel included and respected. We were able to look at the mind maps and floor books readily available within the nursery to support this.

We found more opportunities were needed for the service to gather the views of the children's families. We asked the manger to develop further systems to engage parents more in evaluating the service and use the information gathered to inform future improvements. This would help support parents to feel included and influence change.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. To support children's wellbeing and promote the continued development and improvement of the service, the manager should ensure that a routine and robust quality assurance system is in place.

This is to ensure 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)

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

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

### Previous requirements

#### Requirement 1

In order to meet children's needs, the provider must ensure that children's information, including full names, contact details, addresses and medical information is recorded clearly within children's personal plans. Plans should also consider any circumstances which may affect a child's care, learning and development and identify appropriate strategies to meet the child's needs, support progress and to help children to achieve their full potential. Personal plans must be signed by parents and reviewed every six months, or sooner as necessary.

This is in order to ensure that 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); and In order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for care services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 5 Personal Plans.

**This requirement was made on 19 April 2021.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

There were now personal plans in place for each child attending the service. However some of the personal plans were not fully completed and were not always reviewed on a regular basis. We discussed with the manager and the senior EYP the need to ensure that all personal plans were routinely reviewed in conjunction with parents. We also signposted the manager to Care Inspectorate guidance on Personal Plans.

This requirement had not been fully met and will be continued.

**Not met**

#### Requirement 2

By 12 April 2021, in order to ensure the health and wellbeing of the children attending, the service should ensure that all snacks and meals provided are nutritious, well-balanced and take account of current guidance.

This is in order to ensure that the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning.' (HSCS 1.33); and In order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instruments 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a) health, welfare and safety of service users.

**This requirement was made on 19 April 2021.**



## Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has been met.

The provider had appointed a cook to support the provision of in-house meals and snacks for children. Meals promoted healthy eating and children were provided with a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables with dips at snack time. Work was ongoing to involve children and families in menu planning. Setting the Table best practice guidance was being used and the manager explained that they would continue to review children's experience at snack and meal times

**Met - outwith timescales**

## Requirement 3

By 12 April 2021, in order to ensure that the risk of infection is reduced the provider must:

- a) make provision for increased ventilation throughout the building and increase opportunities to play outdoors frequently throughout the day to support children's choice and access to fresh air and exercise;
- b) Review with staff, housekeeping arrangements including the role and timing of the dedicated cleaner to ensure protective bubbles are not compromised.
- c) Ensure the service meets the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and Environmental Health in respect of the provision of meals on the premises.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (HSCS 1.32); and

In order to comply with Regulation 10(2)(c)(Fitness of premises) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Regulations 2011.

**This requirement was made on 19 April 2021.**

## Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement had been met.

The manager and staff had increased children's access to the outdoors. There were opportunities for free flow to the outdoor play area throughout much of the session and children were able to go outdoors when they wished. The manager and staff also ensured that the rooms were all well ventilated.

We noted that staff were engaged in ongoing cleaning of high touch points and the dedicated cleaner continued to support infection control measures as is necessary.

The provider confirmed that they were now registered with the local authority as premises where food is prepared. The new cook had been appointed with a cook safe qualification. The service had been decorated and was deemed to be clean and infection control measures in place.

**Met - within timescales**

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

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

### 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).

### Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

### Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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