

Thrive Childcare and Education Corner House Nurseries Gillsland Day Care of Children

2 South Gillsland Road
Merchiston
Edinburgh
EH10 5DE

Telephone: 01314 474 050

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 November 2022

Service provided by:
Bertram Nurseries Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003002955

Service no:
CS2015336532

About the service

Thrive Childcare and Education Corner House Nurseries Gillsland is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 58 children aged three months to those not yet attending primary school, with a maximum of 18 children under two years.

The service operates from a large detached villa in the Merchiston area of Edinburgh. The premises consist of three floors with children accommodated on all levels. There is a large outdoor space, which is separated into three garden areas for each age group of children.

The service is close to local transport links and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 14 November 2022 between 09:40 and 18:20. We returned to the service on Wednesday 16 November between 10:40 and 17:55 to complete the inspection. Feedback was provided over a videocall on Thursday 17 November 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and 19 of their parents/carers
- spoke with staff and the management team
- observed practice and children's daily experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Most children were supported by staff who knew them well.

Older children had positive opportunities to be curious and creative. This enabled them to develop problem solving skills and explore their own ideas.

Babies benefitted from sensory play in a calm and relaxed playroom.

Communication with parents was effective and parents were included in their children's experiences.

Staff felt supported and valued by the management team, who showed a commitment to making improvements in the service.

The mix of staff skills, knowledge and experience needed to improve to ensure all children experienced consistently positive care and support.

Mealtimes needed to improve so that all children experienced a social and unhurried experience.

The quality of the environment was inconsistent. Improvements were needed to ensure consistently positive experiences for all children.

Quality assurance processes needed to be further developed to ensure key aspects of the service improved. This included, but was not limited to quality assurance of staff professional registration and health and safety aspects such as heating and food safety.

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, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

1:1 Nurturing care and support

Families cultures, backgrounds and interests were supported and celebrated by the service. One parent said, "The staff did an amazing job including the celebration of our festival. They put in the effort to learn about it, did activities involving it... Overall, I really love the inclusive and fun-based learning environment they have created in the nursery". Children and families were included and valued, which created a positive, welcoming ethos.

Children's personal plans included key information to help staff know children well and plan for their needs. Most parents spoke positively about being involved in planning for their children's care and support. Staff respected children's personal routines and preferences, which promoted children's wellbeing. Routine changes and family updates were recorded in personal plans meaning staff had the information they needed to help children feel comfortable and supported. Moving forward personal plans should continue to develop to ensure the information in them is consistently used to enhance children's care and support.

Most children were nurtured and supported by staff who knew them well. One parent said. "One thing I find particularly reassuring is that all staff seem to know my son, not just his workers. And not just his name, they really know him."

Staff interactions were often positive, for example at sleep times children were reassured and comforted. This supported children's overall wellbeing. However, there were times when children's need for nurture was not met. For example, inspectors had to alert staff to a child who had been standing alone and looking sad for an extended period. Staff were aware that this child needed additional reassurance but did not consistently notice when this was needed. Also, for some children with English as an additional language, the support provided was less effective. For example, words and phrases provided by parents were not consistently used. This led to children becoming unsettled within the day, particularly during periods of transition or when staff were making requests such as nappy changing. To ensure all children experience consistent and nurturing care, the service should further develop staff skills, knowledge and practice through effective training, learning and mentoring opportunities (see area for improvement 1).

The mealtime experiences were not always nurturing and supportive as some staff missed children's cues and did not plan well for these periods of the day. For example, young children were asked to wait for lunch while others ate in the same room as them. This was a challenging expectation for young children to understand and manage. While some children had lunchtimes which were calm and supportive, others were rushed. Some staff became task focused, which did not support a positive experience. To support all children to have nurturing and supportive mealtimes staff practice and decision making needed to improve. Some older children were encouraged to develop new skills as they collected their plates and self-served their food. More consistent opportunities for all children to prepare food, self-select and serve, would help build their confidence and develop skills for life (see area for improvement 2).

1.3 Play and learning

The introduction of home link resources such as curiosity bags and a lending library supported parents to be involved in their child's play and learning. Children could share familiar experiences at home, which promoted a sense of inclusion and fun.

Some children were able to lead their own play and develop their ideas, which supported them to learn new skills and have fun. Older children had positive opportunities to problem solve, be creative and develop literacy and numeracy skills through a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences. For example, an interest in space was evident in the experiences offered to older children. Sensory play was supporting the youngest children to engage through their natural curiosity and inquiry. This enabled children to explore and try new experiences.

Some staff made effective use of language to extend children's thinking skills. For example, some loose parts play was supported by staff who used interesting questions that enabled children to think critically. However, overall staff needed to develop a better understanding of how to support children and enrich play and learning experiences. At lunch times and when playing outdoors staff were often task focused or observing play but missed opportunities to support creativity or positively extend experiences. At times, children's play and learning was not enriched as staff interactions needed to improve (see area for improvement 1).

Planning cycles were developing well and were responsive to children's interests and life experiences. The management team had worked hard to develop staff understanding of how to effectively observe and record children's learning and plan for next steps. Many observations in learning journals and within planning cycles identified children's strengths and highlighted appropriate challenges to support their development. While progress had been made in relation to the recording of children's learning and planning cycles, at times the experiences provided and interactions of staff did not reflect the quality of the written materials.

Play was at times interrupted by the actions of staff, lengthy waiting times and daily routines. This led to children's play being unnecessarily stopped and meant some children became unsettled. Also, children's opportunities for outdoor play should be improved. During the inspection, many children only played outside once during the day and for some children they did not go outside at all. Staff should review routines and further improve children's right to regular outdoor play. This is to ensure children have maximum opportunities for play that supports their needs and promotes their learning.

The service was making effective use of the local community with walks and visits to local parks. This enabled children to learn about the world around them and be part of the wider community.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure all children experience positive interactions and consistent, nurturing care, the provider should support the service to further develop staff skills, knowledge and practice through effective training, learning and mentoring opportunities.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS, 3.14).

2. To ensure all children experience a lunch time that is calm, nurturing and supportive the management team and staff should continue to improve the mealtime experiences.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible (HSCS, 1.35) and 'If appropriate, I can choose to make my own meals, snacks and drinks, with support if I need it, and can choose to grow, cook and eat my own food where possible' (HSCS, 1.38).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

In most areas the environment was homely and welcoming. Within the service, painting and re-flooring had taken place. This work had brightened some rooms, making them welcoming spaces for children. Some areas were still being developed and decoration was ongoing. The service should continue with the programme of works to support children to always experience a welcoming environment.

Some play spaces such as the baby room and main playroom for older children were interesting, well-resourced, and developmentally appropriate. This supported children to have positive play experiences. However, children using the top floor did not always experience a well-furnished, comfortable, inspiring space. There was a lack of inviting, cosy spaces for them to use. Improvements were also needed to enhance the type of play opportunities and the quality of resources available in this space. Although, children enjoyed materials such as dough, water and sand the experiences provided were not consistently inspiring or inviting. Some areas were under resourced, while others appeared cluttered meaning children did not use these areas well (see area for improvement 1).

Sleep arrangements for children on the top floor did not promote a sense of nurture. Children slept in the middle of a large room which was not cosy and calming. The service was developing the top floor and adjusted sleep arrangements during our second visit. However, while improvements are being made the management team and staff must find ways to make the environment as inviting as possible. This is to support children to have high quality experiences in a comfortable and interesting space (see area for improvement 1).

Children's safety outdoors was supported as staff communicated well and provided effective supervision. They discussed children's movements and deployed themselves in different areas. Head counts and registers were used to monitor children in the outdoor spaces. These measures helped provide a safe outdoor environment for children.

There was a system in place to monitor maintenance and recent work in the garden showed that improvements had been made to support outcomes for children. Parents spoke positively about the garden being developed and how this was a welcomed improvement.

Quality assurance processes in relation to some areas of the environment needed to improve. There was the potential for children to be cold as the early morning temperatures of the building were not always comfortable. Also, children playing outdoors had access to a toilet and nappy changing facility based on the ground floor of the building. However, this room did not have any heating. This meant when children were getting changed the room could be cold and uncomfortable. To ensure children are comfortable, the service should improve monitoring processes so that all areas of the service are effectively heated (see area for improvement 1 in How good is our leadership?).

Some infection, prevention and control measures were effective. For example, staff encouraged children to wash their hands when coming in from outside. However, improvements should be made to ensure consistent practice. For example, at times younger children did not always wash their hands before eating. This had the potential to spread germs at mealtimes. Improvements were needed to enhance the monitoring of infection, prevention and control practices to help promote children's wellbeing (see area for improvement 1 in How good is our leadership?).

There were ineffective procedures for monitoring food temperatures at the point of delivery and when serving food to children. Records showed that some food had arrived at the service below the recommended temperature limit. For this situation, there was no information to show what staff did to ensure the food was safe to be served. To ensure children's food is managed in a safe way, improved quality assurance processes are needed in relation to the management of catering and serving of meals (see area for improvement 1 in How good is our leadership?). The service was employing a cook, the management team were hopeful this would support improved catering arrangements.

Areas for improvement

1. To improve all children's play experiences, the management and staff team should develop the environments and resources to ensure they are consistently comfortable and interesting, and motivate children to play and learn.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling (HSCS, 1.30) and 'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices' (HSCS, 5.21)

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management team showed a commitment and drive in supporting staff to develop and share a positive vision for the service. The management team were committed to developing an ethos where children experienced positive outcomes. Developments to the garden and improvements in staff confidence showed the management team's ability to lead and manage improvements.

Regular team meetings enabled staff to share ideas, receive guidance and reflect together. Staff told us they felt valued and welcomed these opportunities. The management team motivated staff to have high aspirations for improvement, and this was clear within some playrooms that were well developed. Further work was needed to ensure all children experienced consistently positive outcomes.

Parents and children had regular opportunities to give feedback. These processes were beginning to support them to influence improvements in the service. Many parents shared that their feedback around the garden was leading to improvements and children were looking forward to having an improved play space.

The improvement plan reflected the needs of the service and showed the management team were realistic

about the needs of the team and the required improvements. Processes for self-evaluation were beginning to lead to changes and improvements. However, this was not consistent across all staff practice and environments. Staff had opportunities to reflect on practice, but this needed to further develop to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children.

While quality assurance processes were in place, these were not always robust and effective. During the inspection, evidence showed that quality assurance needed to be further developed to ensure some key aspects of the service improved. For example, the system to check the professional registration of staff had not found several issues, including staff who had been removed from the register. The identified issues within the environment (see key question: How good is our setting?), also required robust quality assurance to ensure improvements were made, and progress was sustained. The management team were receptive to discussions about quality assurance and the work needed to support improvements in the service. To ensure key aspects of the service improve, the service should implement effective quality assurance processes and improvement planning approaches that recognise strengths while effectively addressing areas for improvements (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure key aspects of the service improve, the service should implement effective quality assurance processes and improvement planning approaches that recognise strengths while effectively addressing areas for improvements.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (HSCS, 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were positive in their approach to supporting each other and children. This helped to promote a warm and welcoming ethos. Most parents said they felt well informed about staffing changes which supported them to feel confident in the care provided to their children. Parents said children were welcomed into the service by staff who were warm and friendly. A few parents said they would like more information about staff holidays or when staff left. This would ensure that all parents feel informed.

Although the service was maintaining adult to child ratios, at times ineffective deployment and staff decision making about tasks and breaks meant there were missed opportunities to promote high quality outcomes for children. Across both inspection visits staff lunch breaks impacted on the availability of staff at a key time in the children's day. This resulted in some children's lunchtimes becoming task driven rather than calm, social experiences. The management team should further support staff to manage key points of the day with effective decision making and well-planned deployment. This should support children to have improved experiences (see area for improvement 1).

The quality of children's experiences were at times inconsistent as staffing arrangements did not always take account of the mix of skills, knowledge and experience within the staff team. For example, some staff

needed to improve their understanding of how best to support children and confidently implement strategies of support. Also, some staff missed opportunities to engage children in meaningful play. For example, some children were asked to play quietly and their access to play materials was restricted as other children were sleeping. Staffing arrangements did not always reflect the needs of staff and children resulting in some rooms providing less positive experiences than others. Further consideration should be given to the mix of staff skills, knowledge and experience needed to promote consistently positive experiences for all children (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1.

To promote consistently positive experiences for all children, the provider should support the management team to effectively review the deployment of staff responsively across the day and when forward planning. Staffing arrangements should be well-planned to ensure there is the correct mix of skills, knowledge and experience available within each playroom.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS, 3.14) and 'If I am supported and cared for by a team or more than one organisation, this is well coordinated so that I experience consistency and continuity' (HSCS, 4.17).

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 ensure parents and carers are fully included in the life of the service and their children's experiences communication strategies should be improved.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 20 April 2021.

Action taken since then

Communication with families had improved. Various communication strategies were used such as, emails, noticeboards, parent's evenings and an online application. Most parents told us they felt well-informed and included in the service. Many parents said that communication was effective, and they received enough information about their children's experiences. One parent said, "I receive information from the setting via email or if it's urgent then by phone... the setting is good at giving notice if there are room closures, events and what's going on throughout the month. I feel comfortable enough to be able to speak to my child's keyworker or various members of staff about my child's development or in general about the nursery".

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To enable staff to reflect on and improve their own practice and to support positive outcomes for children, staff support and supervision procedures should be developed and implemented by the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS, 3.14) and 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 20 April 2021.

Action taken since then

Staff were supported to reflect on their practice and were keen to improve outcomes for children. Support and supervision arrangements were developing. Staff told us they had discussed their work with the management team and received feedback on their practice that helped them to develop. As part of the area for improvement in relation to continuous improvement staff support and supervision should continue to be embedded to enable further reflection opportunities and ongoing improvements in staff practice.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support a cycle of continuous improvement within the service the approach to quality assurance and the support and monitoring of staff practice should be improved. This includes but is not limited to ensuring effective quality assurance is carried out in relation to Covid-19 measures and practices within the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS, 3.14) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 20 April 2021.

Action taken since then

The service had introduced quality assurance processes, but these were in the early stages of having an impact. Evidence showed some key aspects of quality assurance still needed to improve. More work was needed to ensure all children experienced consistently positive outcomes. To better reflect the current service, we have adjusted this area for improvement within the key question, 'How good is our leadership?'

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.