

Buchanhaven School Nursery Day Care of Children

Hope Street
Peterhead
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Telephone: 01779 403 665

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 November 2023

Service provided by:
Aberdeenshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000029

Service no:
CS2003015718

About the service

Buchanhaven School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service will comply with the following staffing:

- Age of children ratio for adults to children aged three years and over – 1:8.
- Where children aged three and over attend facilities providing daycare for a session which is less than a continuous period of four hours in any day, the adult:child ratio may be 1:10 providing individual children do not attend more than one session per day.
- A minimum of two adults to be on duty at any one time. (Only adults in contact with children for the majority of the session should count towards the ratios.)

The service is accommodated within Buchanhaven Primary School, located in the coastal town of Peterhead, Aberdeenshire. Children are cared for in one large playroom with an integrated kitchen and toilets. There is a small quiet room for small group activities and rest. Children have direct access to an outdoor play area and also make good use of the local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 1 and 2 November 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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
- contacted nine of their parents/carers
- spoke with staff and management
- spoke with visiting professionals
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children and their families benefitted from an inclusive ethos where everyone felt welcomed.
- Children were supported with kindness, care, and nurturing approaches that supported their overall wellbeing.
- Children experienced positive mealtimes which were unhurried, relaxed, and well supervised.
- Children were happy, engaged learners who had fun through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments were well maintained, attractive, and structured to support all children's stages of development.
- The service was well led and quality assurance, including self evaluation and improvement plans, were in place to support continuous improvement of the service.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children and their families were greeted by welcoming staff. Opportunities, such as the termly wellbeing walk, planned activities at the local library, and stay-and-play sessions, helped promote good relationships and working together. A few parents felt communication at arrival and pick-up times could be better with more information about their child's day.

Children experienced nurturing and loving care which supported their overall wellbeing. Staff were responsive to children's physical and emotional needs, helping children to feel safe and secure. A child who was cold was given a cosy jumper and a child who fell was comforted with a cuddle. Children who required support with their personal care were treated with dignity and respect.

Children's health and wellbeing was well supported by information collated in their personal plan. All parents contacted 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' they were involved in developing and reviewing their child's personal plan. Strategies to help children transition between activities were used consistently by skilled and competent staff. This included using pictures and a visual timetable to help children understand and follow routines.

Children experienced positive meals and snacks. Snack was unhurried with opportunities to prepare fruit, chat, and build friendships with their peers. Lunch was well organised and a sociable experience for children. Most children enjoyed the food on offer and were able to self serve and choose what they wanted to eat. Water was readily available during the day to help keep children hydrated and well.

Children's safety and emotional security and wellbeing was supported through sensitive arrangements for sleep routines. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of sleep for children's development and routines were reflective of their families wishes. Children were well supervised when sleeping and were cosy and comfortable on a sleep mat in the quiet room.

Children were kept safe and well by knowledge staff in the safe administration of medication. Medication kept on the premises was stored safely and information was reviewed regularly by parents.

The manager and staff demonstrated a very good understanding of adverse childhood experiences and implemented support to help build children and family resilience. They understood the importance of building strong relationships with families to gain their trust and enable working together. Support included sharing information around local food banks and providing families with support for warm clothing.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were actively and meaningfully involved in leading their play through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality play experiences. They enjoyed playing independently, as well as interacting with staff in small group activities. They had fun pretending to be firemen, playing games, and reading stories. This helped develop skills in understanding, thinking, and investigation through creative and imaginative play and contributed to busy and enthusiastic learners.

Planning approaches to support children's learning and development were child-centred and responsive to children's interests. Observations were used to identify next steps and plan activities reflective of children's age, stage, and development. As a result, children were progressing well and were happy and confident.

Staff interactions were positive to support children's play and learning. Experienced and skilled staff were responsive to children's ideas and used effective questioning to extend their thinking, widen their skills, and consolidate their learning. For example, a few children playing with torches were encouraged to create shadows on walls and discuss why the shadows appeared and disappeared.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of children feeling safe, secure, and happy in order to learn. Children were well supported to understand their own feelings in order to understand the feelings of others. Promoting positive behaviour was embedded in practice, helping to create a positive ethos and supportive learning environment.

Literacy and numeracy development was embedded in the play experiences. There were opportunities for early mark making and early reading skills were promoted through the recognition of environmental print and books. Children enjoyed reading stories and singing rhymes with staff in the comfortable and attractive reading area. Some children enjoyed a small group activity, Talk Boost, which encouraged their language development through listening and talking. There were some resources for children to measure and become familiar with numbers, estimation, and the language of numeracy.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their local community. They regularly went for walks or used the community bus to visit local amenities.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children were cared for in a welcoming, clean, and well maintained building. Refurbishment of the premises meant the playroom was bright and spacious with plenty of room for children to explore freely. The use of neutral colours promoted a sense of calm. The entrance to the building was tidy with space for children's coats and shoes. Although small, the entrance was attractive with information displayed for parents. Doors were locked to help keep children safe in the building and prevent any strangers entering.

Children were encouraged to understand the impact and consequence of risky and unsafe behaviour and to make informed decisions about the risks taken during their play. The Care Inspectorate campaign to keep children safe was embedded in practice and shared with staff and children. In doing so, children's activities were not compromised and they were supported to enjoy challenging and fun play experiences.

The playroom was well resourced and supported children's age and stage of development. Children had fun playing in the messy area and enjoyed making glitter and glue pictures, as well as exploring water play. Staff were vigilant in keeping the floors dry and safe to help prevent tripping and falling. The roleplay corner was resourced as a fire station and children had fun dressing up and playing with hoses. A range of loose parts, including natural materials, supported imaginative and creative play. Children benefitted from using real tools on the work bench enabling them to create wooden models they were proud of. The story area looked inviting with a comfy sofa and rug for rest and relaxation. Staff told us they hoped to further develop this area with stimulus, such as story spoons.

Children benefitted from opportunities to play outside. The outdoor play area was very well organised and staff made best use of the space to promote problem solving, creative play, and an understanding of the natural world. Despite the inclement weather, a few children had fun using water to extinguish pretend fires. Children could choose to enter the garden via a chute landing in the sandpit. This added excitement and fun to children's outdoor experience, as well as supporting their physical development.

Children's health was promoted by staff's understanding of infection prevention and control. The setting was clean and tidy and we observed good handwashing before and after eating.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

The manager of the service was very passionate and committed to provide good outcomes for children and their families. They had worked very hard to develop positive relationships with other agencies to ensure families were provided with the support they needed. Staff told us the manager was very helpful and fair in their approach. This led to a positive ethos with everyone working closely together.

The vision, values, and aims of the setting reflected the aspirations of the service and were fully embedded in practice. The service aims included to create meaningful opportunities for children to achieve success in a happy, safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment.

The importance of using the views of parents and children to inform the planning and development of the service was recognised. Parents were involved in termly reviews with staff and were invited to attend stay-and-play sessions and trips and visits to fully involve them in their child's learning. Questionnaires to parents were used to gather opinions and, as a result, a suggestion box had been introduced. Parents told us they were asked for feedback which contributed to working together to influence positive change.

Strong leadership within the service promoted a culture of continuous improvement. The manager of the service was very committed to initiate change by involving and recognising the contributions of staff. Self evaluation was embedded in practice, linked to guidance, and used to identify where improvements could be made. These were reflected in the service improvement plan which focussed on key areas, such curriculum development and planning approaches.

Children benefited from effective quality assurance systems that impacted positively on their experiences and outcomes. Staff were encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring safety and good outcomes in key areas, such as in the kitchen and in the preparation of lunches. Regular audits of medication and of any accidents which took place in the service helped keep children safe and well. Observations of staff practice, team meetings, and regular support and supervision helped support staff with their professional development. This helped deliver very good outcomes for children and families.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff. A supportive induction process for new members of staff helped them grow in confidence and feel fully equipped in their role. A mix of staff skills and experience helped ensure children's experiences across the day were positive.

Parents told us staff were friendly, helpful, and mainly consistent. There was a positive ethos of attendance within the service and a few staff had worked within the organisation for a number of years. This supported high quality outcomes for children.

Children were supported by staff who worked well together. They were very welcoming and staff told us they were happy at work. The day-to-day routines were well organised and staff were confident in their roles and responsibilities. They were encouraged to take responsibility to support quality assurance and to help develop play and learning experiences for children. This contributed to an ethos where staff felt happy, appreciated, and motivated to initiate change.

Staff deployment worked well to support the needs of the children. Good communication between staff ensured children were still provided with the support they needed when staff were engaged in other activities. There were enough staff at key times, such as during lunch and at arrival and drop-off, to supervise, engage, and keep children safe and well.

Skilled and knowledgeable staff supported children's care, wellbeing, and learning. Staff were enthusiastic to undertake training which included developing their understanding of autism and supporting children with additional support needs. This was evident in their very good practice when supporting with transitions and in their communication. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of safeguarding children and in infection prevention and control procedures to help keep children safe and well.

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

The manager and staff to ensure that children are effectively supervised and supported at snack time to improve children's experiences and outcomes in health, safety, and wellbeing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35); 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15); and 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 12 March 2020.

Action taken since then

Children enjoyed an unhurried and relaxed snack experience. A rolling snack meant small groups of children could eat at a time of their choosing. They were well supervised and supported by skilled staff who used snack well as a learning opportunity.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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