

The Ladybird Development Group Day Care of Children

St. Gerardine's School
St. Gerardine's Road
Lossiemouth
IV31 6JX

Telephone: 01343 814618

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 30 May 2017

Service provided by:
The Ladybird Development Group a
Scottish Charitable Incorporated
Organisation

Service provider number:
SP2015012638

Care service number:
CS2015343704

About the service

The Ladybird Developmental Group is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 15 children aged from birth to not yet attending primary school. The provider is a voluntary committee operated under a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 19 May 2016.

The service operates Monday to Friday and recently moved to adapted premises attached to St. Gerardine school. Facilities include a multi-sensory room (snoezelen) and a soft play area. It has its own secure entrance and a large secure garden to the rear accessed by a ramp from the main playroom.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), 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) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC; safe, healthy, achieving, active, respected, responsible, and included (also known as SHANARRI).

The aims and objectives of the service include:

- to work towards a provision which encourages every child to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included
- provide a broad range of appropriate pre-school experiences in line with The Curriculum for Excellence
- provide a high level of childcare using the National Care Standards
- identify and provide relevant training for staff, including that to meet the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements
- respect and involve parents in the care and education of their children.

What people told us

There was a total of 12 children present during the inspection. We observed the children having lots of fun at the swimming pool, soft play facility, park and library. Children were supported by staff to take part in group activities, including welcome / registration, music & dance and story time.

Five parents returned completed Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs). We spoke with two parents face-to-face and a parent by telephone. They all told us that they were very happy with everything, staff were very friendly and caring and kept them well informed, their child was able to try different things and develop new skills.

Specific comments included:

- 'we are very pleased it's a brilliant service'
- 'absolutely amazing staff'
- 'I can't thank and praise them enough'
- 'Ladybird do wonderful work with the children'.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children experienced a welcoming, caring and nurturing environment that clearly resulted in lots of enjoyment and smiles. Children were able to join in various activities which captured their interest and took account of their individual needs and abilities, whilst providing challenging and new experiences. Together time at the start and end of the session, music and movement and story time, aided closely by staff, helped children to have a sense of and get to know each other. Children were being encouraged to have an understanding of their emotions, spatial awareness and playing/learning together.

The one to one support of staff and a well implemented key worker system helped to ensure that each child received sensitive and responsive care, to support their overall development and wellbeing. For example, we overheard staff talking gently and singing to the children when attending to their personal care needs. The use of eye contact and gestures; British sign language/sign along also enhanced inclusion through visual means of communication. Parents told us that the friendly and warm approach of the staff helped them and their child to establish trusting relationships. Staff knew each of the children very well and liaised closely with families and other specialist agencies, directly within the service and at child care reviews. Children's best interest was placed at the heart of decisions, as in the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) national approach.

Snacks consisted of healthy foods and complied with any dietary and religious needs; parents provided a packed lunch as needed. Snack and mealtimes provided a social, peaceful and positive learning experience; staff sat with each of the children, helping them to learn independence skills associated with eating and drinking.

Children took part in outdoor activities so that they had lots of fresh air and active play that promoted their physical and emotional development. For example, walks to the park where they were able to climb and balance. Children also played in the garden during a session, where they were able to be active and explore.

A child protection policy was in place, the management team and staff had an understanding of safeguarding procedures, training had been undertaken. The in-depth knowledge the staff had of the children also enabled them to be alerted to changes or signs of stress.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The playrooms were brightly decorated and inviting, windows provided lots of natural light. Space was well planned so that children could move around safely, freely and where able, independently. There was a variety of play resources and activities, including sensory and creative play. The service had very recently moved to dedicated premises attached to the school building and the arrangement of furnishings and resources would be adjusted/changed as needed. There were also plans to further develop the soft play area, sensory room and outdoor play area.

The premises were clean and well maintained, entrances/exits were secured, affording protection to the children. Risk management was in place and due to the nature of the service it took account of the individual needs of each of the children whilst at the service and during activities within the community, such as swimming and walks to the park.

Children's health was further promoted as there was always access to a trained first aider, ensuring that children were treated properly should an accident occur. Infection control procedures took account of good practice guidance. For example, all children were learning about the importance of personal hygiene and how to keep healthy as they washed their hands after using the toilet and before having their snack.

Parents told us that the nursery provided great experiences for their child both within the service and wider community. They were very happy with the new facilities, especially the easily accessible and large garden. Parents' individual comments included:

'experiences are brilliant and always looks at my child's needs/progression such as pencil control, they love the sand pit in the garden, visits include re-bound therapy and the beach'

'my child has developed lots of new skills, communication and confidence'

'I am sure they will get the benefit of the space in the new premises'.

Children clearly enjoyed playing outside, they could run and explore, whilst under the watchful eye of staff, who continued to provide guidance and encouragement. Children climbed on the wooden pirate ship, played in the sand, painted pebbles and watered the sunflowers. Natural resources were in the process of being introduced, such as a messy kitchen, vegetable patch and flower beds. Staff intended to make the best use of their new garden to benefit the children through a wider variety of plants and materials that would further encourage children to touch, taste, admire and listen. Good practice documents such as 'My World Outdoors' and 'Loose Parts Play' (<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/>) may continue to be useful for such purposes.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Staff were very friendly and welcoming towards the children, creating an environment where children were happy and assured. The sensitive and responsive interactions of qualified and experienced staff meant that they worked closely with each of the children to help them achieve their potential. Staff were well motivated and their natural enthusiasm, dedication and caring approach, made a real difference to the children's learning and development.

Staff told us that they felt valued and well supported by the manager and that they were able to influence the service and use their initiative. Formal supervision between the manager and staff also enabled staff to discuss their individual and professional development needs. Staff had undertaken training both as a staff team and on their own, such as: solution orientated approach, improving communication skills of children with Downs Syndrome and autism awareness. Staff worked very well together and used lots of kind words in a calm and unhurried manner so children had time to absorb information. Staff acknowledged each other's skills and strengths, for example, outdoor play/natural resources and funding support/grants, in recognition of the benefits to the children.

Weekly staff meetings provided a conduit for sharing, discussion and reflection of practice and service development. We suggested that a more formalised minute of staff contributions, reference to best practice documents and an action plan would assist with monitoring the development of both individual staff and the service.

Parents told us that they were very happy with the way staff shared information with them, their skills and knowledge created a wonderful, caring and safe place for their child. Specific comments included:

'staff are brilliant and so friendly, I can't thank them enough'

'staff do wonderful work with the children, our child has come on so much, they will bend over backwards to help, even calling professionals and helping to chase appointments'

'all the key-workers are exceptional at what they do for the children, I can't praise them enough'

'absolutely amazing staff, very skilled and experienced, my child always comes home with a smile and seems extremely comfortable around his key workers'.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The high aspiration of the manager, helped to provide strong leadership and clear direction of the service. They took a 'hands on' approach, being readily available to both staff and parents/carers, as they also worked within the setting. The well experienced manager had established a clear overview of the strengths of the service and aspects for improvement through consultation with parents/carers and staff.

Staff were well led and worked effectively together and were clear about their roles/responsibilities, so that a shared vision for the service had been established. Staff spoke highly of the well established team ethos, their valued support from the manager and the very experienced administrator.

The manager recognised the benefits of involving staff, parents/carers and children in the day-to-day life of the nursery, seeking their views and suggestions in relation to improvement, with a view to enhancing experiences for children. We noted that parents/carers were beginning to use the recently introduced electronic learning journal for their child, as a means of feedback. Evaluation questionnaires had also resulted in positive comments about the service. Parents had been advised of the results and how the service would/had responded to the few suggestions made. We suggested that the questionnaire may benefit from a revamp, perhaps taking account of SHANARRI (wellbeing indicators - GIRFEC) and the use of open questions. A management committee included parents that had used the service previously and many parents supported fund raising/open events that were organised, helping them to have an overview of the service.

The service improvement plan had incorporated the views of staff and the needs of the children with specific reference to the recent change of premises for the group. The outdoor play area, sensory room and soft play area were priority areas for development/improvement within the forthcoming academic year. Staff meetings and committee meetings would continue to be a conduit for monitoring/evaluation.

Parents told us that the manager and staff always listened and valued their opinions; the daily communication diary and on-line learning journal for their child also helped with information sharing. Overall parents were very happy with the quality of care provided.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very 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

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.

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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