

Forfar Early Learning and Childcare Centre Day Care of Children

Taylor Street
Forfar
DD8 3LB

Telephone: 01307 492 330

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 April 2022

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Service no:
CS2020379181

About the service

Forfar Early Learning and Childcare Centre is a daycare of children service. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 135 children at any one time, from age 2 years to those not yet attending primary school. Of those 135 no more than 38 may be age 2 to under 3 years. The outdoor space has been taken into account when agreeing this maximum number of children. Children must have access to the outdoor space at all times.

The service is based in a residential area in Forfar and is close to local schools, parks, and shops. The service comprises of two playrooms, two sensory rooms, a library area, dining area and a large well equipped outdoor space.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 April 2022 between 09:30 and 15:45. Feedback was shared on 26 April 2022. Two early years inspectors carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with several children using the service and ten of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

What people told us

We spoke to several children and observed all children during our visit. This ensured that we gained a good insight into their play experiences both indoors and outdoors. Children were happy and were having fun throughout our visit, and they were all engaged in quality play experiences.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of this inspection. There was an in-depth improvement plan in place, which was regularly evaluated. The focus of this plan was supporting all children with any learning and development deficit and supporting children to meet their milestones.

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

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

Children were engaged in quality play experiences; they were having fun and there was a lot of laughter during our visit. Children were empowered, through quality resources, to lead and extend their own play. Staff were responsive and skilful during interactions to support children to further extended play experiences and interests. Children had opportunities to develop their independence and critical thinking skills and be creative. Children had created an obstacle course and they worked together to problem solve and make changes and improvements. The children were keen to show us their obstacle course and they talked about how to stay 'safe and not fall off'. Staff used nurturing approaches to support children through transition and to comfort children when required. This resulted in confident children, who felt safe in their environment and were having fun throughout their play and learning.

Children's learning and development was recorded in online journals which families could access. Observations were child centred and were written to the child rather than about the child and clearly showed specific learning and development. Next steps within learning were recorded and tracked by keyworkers. Families shared that they enjoyed viewing their child's observations of play and they would leave comments and on occasions share learning from home. In the moment planning was skilfully used by staff to provide rich play experiences and extend interests.

The staff knew all children well and had formed positive attachments with them. Children with additional support needs were well supported and staff had a good knowledge of strategies in place to meet their needs. Individual support plans were in place for children with additional support needs and these were regularly reviewed and updated. Staff attended team around the child meetings and took forward any actions arising from these meetings. This ensured that children's needs were met to a high standard.

Lunchtime was a valuable social experience where children interacted with each other as well as with staff. Children having hot meals went to the serving trolley to be served their lunch and were supported to safely walk back to their table with their meal. Staff sat with children during lunchtime and quality interactions took place throughout. Children were empowered to develop their independence and life skills, which was in the process of being further developed to encourage children to serve their own salad and vegetables. The lunchtime experience was carried out at a relaxed pace and children could return to their playroom when they had finished to continue to take part in quality play experiences.

A knowledgeable staff, who had the appropriate skills and training, supported each other to keep children safe from harm. The staff were confident and had a sound understanding of the child protection policy and procedures in place within the service. Staff discussed the need for confidentiality and who they would report any concerns to regarding a child. This resulted in a staff team who would recognise signs of abuse and would be responsive to ensure the health and welfare of children in their care.

Children's medication was stored safely and securely and was clearly labelled with a photograph of the child. Medication consent forms had been fully and accurately completed by parents and these included emergency information and precautions where required. Consent forms were reviewed termly with families and an audit was carried out to ensure all checks were completed. Management was in the process of reviewing this audit process to make it more robust to ensure children's health and wellbeing needs were fully met.

Infection prevention and control measures were being well managed within the service and children had a good understanding of when to wash their hands which minimised the risk of spread of infection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

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

The children were welcomed in to a natural and nurturing environment. The nursery playrooms were well laid out to allow children to move freely between activities. High quality resources and well-equipped areas, offered challenge, creativity, and investigation. Children were supported and encouraged to explore the environment and develop their skills using a wide range of open ended and natural resources. Children chose what they would like to use in craft and messy areas, which developed their interests and promoted achievement. Interactive boards were well used and provided the opportunity for children to develop their digital IT skills. Wall displays were at the child's level and the child's voice was evident throughout. They highlighted children's learning and included questioning to offer challenge, problem solving and support critical thinking. Sensory rooms were calming and inviting to support children who needed a quiet space to relax. Quality small group activities also took place in these sensory areas.

There was free flow access from both rooms to a safe, secure, and well-resourced outdoor environment. Children made effective use of this area and were engaged in high quality play experiences throughout our visit. Children experimented and explored in the large sand area in the middle of the garden where they controlled water that could flow through the sand into reeds at the other end. Bug hotels and a wormery supported children to learn about the circle of life. Mud areas and loose parts encouraged children to be creative and develop their imaginations. Planting and growing took place in large tyres outdoors. Children had the opportunity to prepare meals using their home grown produce which developed their understanding of the seed to plate concept. This high-quality outdoor area supported children to be active, stay healthy and develop their play and learning through quality play experiences.

Children took part in regular trips within their local community. Some children recently visited their local Tesco and were shown around the bakery department and were given the opportunity to bake their own hot cross buns. Children also visited local parks and used the running track at the local school. These opportunities developed children's knowledge of their local area and people's roles within their community.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

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

Children were well supported by an enthusiastic and motivated staff team who were passionate about providing quality outcomes and play experiences. The staff had a wealth of knowledge and experience and used each other's strengths to further develop their practice and skills. Staff were keen to take part in a range of training experiences. All staff shared with us that specific training to support nurture and attachment had impacted on their practice and supported them to further develop within their roles. Leadership training had supported senior members of staff to progress further within their current roles, which in turn had supported the whole team to provide positive play experiences for children.

Staff felt well supported by a visible management team and by each other. They felt valued, listened to, and shared that they could raise concerns or make suggestions. Staff were keen to support new members of staff and often acted as mentors during induction periods and when staff were undertaking qualifications. Newly recruited staff took part in an in-depth induction process which provided them with the opportunity to develop an understanding of policies and procedures which were in place within the service. New staff also had the opportunity to gain a sound knowledge of all the children they would be working with. This ensured that all staff had the knowledge to fully meet children's needs and provide positive outcomes.

All staff had regular review meetings throughout the year to support their wellbeing, professional development, and individual training needs. Staff shared that the management team were flexible and supportive to meet their professional and personal needs and support the team's wellbeing. Appraisal meetings will be carried out annually in addition to the regular review meetings.

Staff shared that full team meetings took place during in-service days, but regular small group meetings took place throughout the year. Planning meetings led by the senior early years practitioners took place frequently to support each team to reflect and evaluate on children's learning. Floor books and observations of the children's play were used to discuss children's learning, interests and any actions or next steps. This ensured that staff had a good overview of each child's stage of learning and development and next steps to provide appropriate play and learning opportunities.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

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

A visible and supportive management team provided a wealth of experience and knowledge to ensure high quality outcomes for children. Management had collaborated with the clerical officer to develop an informative website which provided families with all the relevant information and documents they may require. Regular newsletters were shared with families to keep them up to date with what had been happening in the nursery and upcoming events. Families shared that they were very happy with the in-depth communications that they received from the nursery.

The service's approach to quality assurance was detailed and in-depth to support ongoing improvement. A quality assurance calendar was in place which was reviewed, updated, and evaluated regularly. A monthly calendar showed relevant tasks to be completed and who was responsible for these. Benchmarking tools including Realising the Ambition and A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare were used to support regular self-evaluation and challenge questions. Management used the PDSA (plan, do, study, act) improvement tool to support further and ongoing improvements, reflection, and evaluation within the service. Families shared that they felt involved and included in the quality assurance process through daily chats, regular communication and the 'You Said, We Did' approach that the service used.

An improvement plan was in place which focused on supporting all children with any learning and development deficit and supporting children to meet their milestones. Aims had been developed within the plan along with timescales and tasks to be completed. Relevant quality indicators and the health and social care standards had been used to develop and support the plan and measure progress. Children, staff, and families' voices were all evident within the plan which was regularly reviewed and evaluated to show progress, achievements, and areas to continue to develop.

Management had empowered staff to take forward specific areas for improvement within the service through working party groups. Staff were responsible for working in and taking forward these groups. They regularly reflected and evaluated on their work, progress and achievements within the digital technology, outdoor learning, and family learning working groups. These working party groups should continue to be developed and extended to support further improvement within the service.

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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