

Inspection report

Little Acorns Day Nursery Day Care of Children

Royal Cornhill Hospital
Cornhill Road
Aberdeen AB25 2ZT

Inspected by: Jan Davidson
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 1 May 2009

Service Number

CS2003001643

Service name

Little Acorns Day Nursery

Service addressRoyal Cornhill Hospital
Cornhill Road
Aberdeen AB25 2ZT**Provider Number**

SP2003000363

Provider Name

NHS Grampian

Inspected ByJan Davidson
Care Commission Officer**Inspection Type**

Unannounced

Inspection Completed

1 May 2009

Period since last inspection

14 months

Local Office AddressNorth Region
Johnstone House
Rose Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1UD

Introduction

Tartan Tots Nursery is provided by NHS Grampian and was registered with the Care Commission on 01 April 2002.

This service was registered to provide a care service for a maximum of fifty-four children at any one time, aged from nought to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery operated Monday to Friday between the hours of 7.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m.

The nursery is located within the grounds of Cornhill Hospital and provides care for children whose parents/carers are employed by NHS Grampian.

The service had applied for a Variation of Registration as Tartan Tots and Trusty Teds were to amalgamate as Little Acorns Day Nursery and operate from new purpose built premises located within the grounds of Cornhill Hospital. The transfer was to take place on the 08 June 2009.

The aims of the nursery are to:

- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating and secure environment
- Provide a range of learning experiences which include intellectual, social, emotional, physical and creative development
- Promote the welfare of children of children
- Develop positive relationships with parents and professionals involved in supporting the child.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - 4 - Good

Quality of Environment - 5 - Very Good

Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission's assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission's website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report

This report was written following an unannounced inspection which took place on the 01 May 2009. Feedback was given to the manager and depute manager following the inspection.

Before the Inspection

The Annual Return

The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission.

The Self-Assessment Form

The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by the Care Commission. This

contained information on areas of strength of the service as well as areas of development. Information was included on how service users and their families participated in the process.

Views of service users

A sample of 18 Care Service Questionnaires (CSQ) was sent out to parents inviting their views on the service, of which 14 were returned to the Care Commission.

Regulation Support Assessment

The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer (CCO) which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations and issues as part of the RSA.

LOW

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a low RSA score and so a low intensity inspection was required. The inspection was based on the relevant Inspection Focus Areas and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity.

During the inspection process

Staff at inspection

This inspection was carried out by two Care Commission Officers (CCO's), Karen Provan and Jan Davidson. Interviews were held with the manager and staff. Staff practice and their interaction with the children and families was observed as well as the indoor and outdoor environment used by the service.

Evidence

During inspection, evidence was gathered from a variety of sources, including the following:

- A review of a range of policies and procedures, records and other documentation, including the following:
 - Aims and Objectives
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Parent/carer questionnaires
 - Activity evaluations
 - Newsletters
 - Records of Cleaning
 - Weekly plans
 - Photographs
 - Infection Control Policy
 - Minutes of staff meetings
 - Records of accidents and incidents
 - Administration of Medicines Policy
 - Menus
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Risk Assessments

Discussion took place with the following staff:

- Manager
- Staff

Discussion also took place with

- Service users
- One Parent/Carer

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09

Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at:

<http://www.carecommission.com/>

All of the above were taken into account during the inspection process and reported on.

Thanks are due to the manager and staff for their cooperation and hospitality.

Fire Safety Issues

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection

There was one requirement made following the previous inspection:

1. The provider to ensure that good hygiene practices are maintained in relation to packed lunch food storage by removing packed lunch food items requiring refrigeration.

One CCO was in the kitchen as lunch was being served. The cook removed the pack-lunch items from the fridge and placed them in the children's lunch boxes.

This requirement has been met.

Comments on Self Assessment

The service completed a thorough self-assessment which provided information relevant to each of the 4 quality themes. The service highlighted areas of strength as well as areas for future development. Progression of service user/carer involvement was evident.

View of Service Users

The children appeared happy and relaxed and participated in a variety of activities, including sand, role and outdoor play.

View of Carers

A sample of 18 Care Service Questionnaires (CSQ) was sent out to parents/carers, 14 of which were completed and returned to the Care Commission.

Respondents to the questionnaires either strongly agreed or agreed they were happy with the quality of care which their child received at the service.

Comments included:

'My children really enjoy attending Tartan Tots. They always talk about their daily experience on the way home. All staff are good at welcoming my children and myself in the mornings but feel more information could be passed on by staff from other groups at the end of the day'.

'I have always been extremely happy with the care that my son, now almost 6, and my baby have had at Tartan Tots. I have absolutely no complaints and my son has many fond memories of it. The fact that they were, and are, so happy to be left there and look forward to going there, for me, say it all.

The only concern I have for the future is I have been informed through other parents, about the free choice attitude that the Care Commission have made nurseries adopt. I strongly feel that pre-school children need routine and structure and have to learn, from a young age, that there are certain things they have to do. This enables them to progress to school, where they must do what they are told.

'Being at Tartan Tots helped my son to develop into a mature, respectful and caring boy who is now flourishing at school and I believe much of this had to do with the structure he had as well as correct discipline in a kind and consistent manner'.

'The new build nursery will be fantastic for all the children'.

'My daughter is in the pre-school room and my son is in the baby room. In the 3.5 years we have had no complaints. The policies and procedures work well even in emergencies'.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The reception area of the service displayed a variety of information for parents to keep them abreast of nursery life. This included progression of the new building where the amalgamated services were to move in June 2009. Staff parents and carers were involved in any meetings which took place regarding the new facility.

The service devised and distributed questionnaires to parents/carers and invited them to grade the care provided to their children. The majority of grades recorded ranged between very good and excellent.

Feedback forms were also available which invited compliments, complaints, suggestions or comments.

Evidence confirmed regular correspondence with parents; the most recent asking for their co-operation in developing children's personal portfolios.

Newsletters were regularly published. The latest issue included an invitation for parents/carers to attend an information session regarding the new service.

Whiteboards were wall mounted outside each room where daily information was recorded for parents and carers.

Daily diaries were in use for the younger children and were especially useful when recording details of their transition to the next stage.

Children aged 3 - 5 years participated in 'mind mapping' a form of brainstorming used to seek views and ideas. Evidence of their suggestions were displayed and included in the weekly plans. Staff advised 'mind mapping' was to be extended to the younger children once the service transferred to the new building.

Social fundraising events e.g. a chocolate evening, was arranged which parents/carers and staff all attended and thoroughly enjoyed!

A digital photo frame was placed in the main reception/corridor area which provided parents/carers with a snap-shot of their child's day at nursery.

A respondent to the CSQ advised:

'Overall, I am very happy with the care and service. My daughter appears very happy at nursery'.

Areas for Development

The service had lots of examples where parents and children had influenced the care and support for the children. The management and staff should continue with these

developments.
(See Recommendation 1)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 3: We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service Strengths

The service submitted good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

Children attending the service were offered breakfast, lunch and tea, as well as two snacks.

Meals were provided by Cornhill Hospital and delivered to the nursery kitchens.

The service employed a cook who had attended Cook Safe and Food Handling training. She was responsible for distributing meals to the rooms and purchasing snack items.

The cook was observed to follow and record food safety procedures as she prepared for lunch.

Snack was rotated over a 4 weekly programme. Menus were displayed and reflected healthy choices. The manager advised meals were developed in conjunction with the hospital dietician. Food allergies were recorded and displayed; cultural preferences were taken account of. Parents/carers could, if they wished, supply their children with a pack lunch. These were stored appropriately.

Snack was a sociable time with staff and children chatting. The younger children sat at height appropriate furniture and enjoyed snack which consisted of muffins, pears, bananas and milk to drink. Children used cups appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Snack was served by staff who wore disposable aprons.

Children washed their hands and faces after snack with assistance from staff.

The baby room had a large, comfy sofa which provided an ideal area for staff to feed young babies.

The older children's snack time was a staggered process with children deciding when they wanted to eat. Children were encouraged to spread their muffins; margarine and knives were supplied at the table. There was a lot of lively discussion about bird feeders between the children and staff.

Staff poured drinks for the children.

The manager advised children aged between 18 months and 3 years baked weekly. They also shopped locally for their ingredients!

Good manners were encouraged throughout.

Children participated in the tooth brushing initiative; the nursery had maintained links with the dental department. Tooth brushes were stored appropriately; the boxes clean.

Staff were observed changing children's nappies; the procedure was displayed in the bathroom. Staff wore disposable aprons and gloves; nappies were stored appropriately.

Toilets and sinks were height appropriate for the children; liquid soap, paper towels and bins were supplied.

Staff advised they followed parents' wishes and children's routines regarding sleep and rest. Policies and procedures were in place to support the health, safety and well being of the children, and included supporting NHS guidance which was displayed for parent/carer information.

A comprehensive policy was in place in relation to the administration of medicines.

Records were maintained in relation to accidents and incidents. Parents were notified on such occasions and required to sign, confirming their awareness.

The appointed staff member dealing with first aid was named and displayed.

Cleaning records for toys and equipment were maintained.

Inspection Focus Area - Child Protection

The service had in place a Child Protection Policy which was made available to staff and parents/carers.

A yellow file contained all information specific to child protection and was stored in the staff room. This included copies of the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee (N.E.S.C.P.C.) guidelines and the Framework standards for child protection.

The manager advised Children's Charter leaflets were sent to parents. A copy was also displayed in the reception area.

A UN Convention poster on the Rights of the Child was displayed at child height in the main corridor.

Staff attended child protection training annually and demonstrated knowledge of the signs and symptoms associated with child abuse and the reporting procedures.

Areas for Development

The staff in the baby room wore disposable aprons when serving snack; however they served fruit to the children with their hands, not wearing disposable gloves or using spoons.

(See Requirement 1)

One child dropped her cup during snack, which was picked up by a member of staff and returned to her without washing it first.

(See Requirement 1)

Children washed their hands after snack and not before.

(See Requirement 1)

Children had acquired a level of independence and skill at snack time; this however, could be further extended by encouraging children to pour their own drinks.

(See Recommendation 2)

The margarine tub placed on the table was too large for purpose. The manager and staff should review the snack process to ensure small amounts of spreads are available to the children for their ease and to minimise the risk of infection.

Dirty nappies were bagged and disposed of in the same bin as that used by the children for paper hand towels. The bin also had a roll top lid which is not in line with current infection control guidance.

(See Requirement 1)

The Child Protection Policy contained all but one of the key pieces of information required by the National Care Standards. The policy should also include a statement regarding parents may not always be contacted in the first instance, should abuse be suspected.

(See Recommendation 3)

CCO Grading

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

1

Number of Recommendations

2

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The majority of parents/carers who responded to the service's questionnaires graded the environment as excellent or very good.

A respondent to the CSQ advised:

'Although the building is old and not really designed to be a nursery, I feel the staff have made as much use as possible of the space'.

Evidence confirmed management and staff had worked hard to consult and incorporate parents and carers views and ideas regarding the new provision. Parental help is to be encouraged when the garden development gets underway.

For further information, please refer to Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

The service had lots of examples where parents and children had influenced the quality of the environment for the children. The management and staff should continue with these developments.

(See Recommendation 1)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 3: The environment allows service users to have as positive a quality of life as possible.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The manager advised any building or equipment defects were reported to the NHS helpdesk, where their level of importance was prioritised.

The baby room provided a bright and spacious area for the children aged 0 to 18 months.

A small area had been cordoned off for the smaller baby's safety. Suitable equipment and play resources were laid on the floor and accessible.

A large, carpeted area provided the older babies with space for them to participate in all types of play, including physical. A separate area was used for snack and messy activities.

Equipment was placed on the floor and the children could choose independently.

Resource lists were displayed in the rooms.

The second room afforded the children aged between 18 months to 3 years ample space to participate in play of their own choice. Large equipment was in place for physical play; height appropriate storage was easily accessed for children's independent selection.

A separate area was used for messy play and snack.

The children aged 3 - 5 years had a large upstairs area which offered a wide range of play experiences. Children had the freedom to choose their activities; plenty of opportunities were available for craft, painting and drawing.

A notice board was covered with photographs, entitled, 'What we got up to this week'.

All staff interacted with the children and were always on hand to offer help, support and encouragement.

Examples of children's artwork were displayed. Descriptions of their work had been scribed for the older children. Evidence of mind napping was also exhibited.

The service displayed weekly plans for parent and carer information. Children's individual requirements were recorded

The service had access to a totally enclosed play area where the children had opportunities to dig, climb, cycle and 'scoot'.

Children accessed outdoors daily and in all weather climates. The service had invested in suitable outdoor clothes for children's use, to protect them from the Scottish elements!

A respondent to the CSQ stated:

'I think the secure outside space is great as they are outside often'.

The manager and staff described trips and outings to local amenities. The younger children often went to the local supermarket to buy afternoon snack!

Areas for Development

There did not appear to be many opportunities for messy play or craft for children aged between 0 to 3 years.

(See Recommendation 4)

There were examples of children's artwork on display; however, some of the artwork was very adult led.

(See Recommendation 5)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

2

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The questionnaires distributed by the service invited parents and carers to grade staff performance. The majority reflected grades of excellent and very good.

Respondents to the CSQ commented:

'My child looks forward to going to nursery - a reflection of the staff's hard work' and 'The staff are warm and caring, patient and have a good sense of humour'.

For further information, please refer to Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

The service had examples of where parents and children had influenced the quality of staffing in the service. The management and staff should continue with these developments. (See Recommendation 1)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The service operated with more than sufficient staff to meet the adult to child ratios and children's needs.

Staff rotas were displayed outside each room

All staff were either qualified or working towards a childcare qualification.

Evidence and staff confirmed they had accessed a range of accredited and non accredited training courses for their professional development.

Many staff members were established and had worked with the organisation for considerable periods of time.

The manager and staff advised of regular weekly and monthly staff and senior staff meetings.

The service had suitable arrangements in place to cover staff absence during sickness and holiday periods.

Staff were observed to be motivated throughout their practice.

The manager advised of recent Team building events and activities which had recently taken place enabling staff to work and socialise with those from 'Trusty Teds' nursery to ease their transition to the new service.

Staff supervision took place regularly; appraisals yearly. The manager advised of a new 'on-line' appraisal system which had recently been introduced. Staff had attended training in relation to this in March.

Staff were recruited and inducted through the NHS procedures. A Whistle blowing policy was in place.

Inspection Focus Area - Notifications

The manager was aware of the service responsibility in reporting to the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), any social care staff dismissed on the grounds of misconduct. She also understood her responsibility in providing the SSSC with any information it may require in the exercise of its regulatory functions.

Areas for Development

The provider should progress the appraisal system, using the Knowledge and Skills Framework.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

The service submitted very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

The questionnaires devised by the service asked parents and carers to grade and comment on the senior management. Feedback was extremely positive with the majority of grades recorded as excellent or very good.

The manager advised of a questionnaire she developed as part of her SVQ 4 qualification to seek parents/carers and staff views regarding her management performance. She found this of benefit to her and altered some of her practice.

For further information, please refer to Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

The service had examples of where parents and children had influenced the quality of the management and leadership of the service. The management and staff should continue with these developments.

(See Recommendation 1)

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Statement 2: We involve our workforce in determining the direction and future objectives of the service.

Service Strengths

The service presented very good evidence to support how they felt they met this statement.

Staff described an approachable manager who invited their contributions regarding the service.

Staff meeting agendas confirmed staff suggestions were taken into consideration, discussed and where appropriate, put into practice.

Management and staff had been fully involved in decisions made concerning the new provision and had been kept up-to-date with the developments.

Staff carried out a nursery audit and forwarded the results to their Development Worker, who worked in partnership with the service.

Staff described opportunities provided to enhance their skills and qualifications. Staff received supervision regularly and appraisal yearly, enabling staff to discuss and identify their future goals with management. .

Staff were involved in a new Pre-school Evaluation Tool (PET) system, which had been introduced with the 3- 5 age group. Parents could review the progress of their child at any time.

Areas for Development

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards

Enforcement

There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information

There was once recommendation made following the last inspection:

1. The provider to review the Child Protection Policy to ensure it is consistent throughout the nursery and that the policy is up-dated to reflect the new notification procedure in relation to child protection.

The Child Protection Policy was reviewed at inspection. The correct information had been included.

This recommendation has been met.

Requirements

1. The provider must ensure infection control procedures are followed to ensure the health and wellbeing of Service Users. In order to achieve this, the management must ensure:

- Staff wear disposable gloves and/or use spoons when serving snack
- Staff ensure children's crockery is always clean
- Children wash their hands prior to eating snack or meals
- Dirty nappies are disposed of in a suitable bin
- Appropriate bins are in place for disposing of paper hand towels.

This is in order to comply with SSI/114 Regulation 4(1)(a) & (d) Welfare of Users

Timescale - on receipt of this report

Recommendations

1. The provider should continue to develop methods of consultation with parents and children to involve them in the evaluation of the service.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 13 Improving the Service.

2. The manager and staff should review the snack process to encourage children's development and independence.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 3 Health and Wellbeing

3. The provider should review the Child Protection Policy to ensure that it contains information regarding arrangements for children/young people to have access to independent support/advice as appropriate and a statement advising parents that should child abuse be suspected, they may not always be contacted in the first instance.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 3 Health and Wellbeing

4. The provider must ensure that children always have access to messy play and a range of craft resources offering a variety of mediums and textures with which the children can explore and experiment.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 5
Quality of Experience

5. The provider and staff should look at the provision of arts and crafts and the outcomes for the children.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 Standard 5
Quality of Experience

Jan Davidson
Care Commission Officer