

Albyn School Nurseries Day Care of Children

17-23 Queens Road
Aberdeen
AB15 4PB

Telephone: 01224 322408

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 25 May 2018

Service provided by:
Albyn School Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003003562

Care service number:
CS2003016175

About the service

Albyn School Nursery is provided by Albyn School Limited and is located within the Oliver Wing of the school buildings.

The service is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 125 children. A maximum of 40 children aged two to three years and a maximum of 85 children aged three years to not yet attending primary school.

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The nursery operates from the Oliver Wing within Albyn School. The nursery is located close to local shops, parks and a playing field.

The aims of the nursery include:

"To provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment, allowing each child to feel happy and secure, gaining in confidence and independence."

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 Getting It Right For Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

We observed children in all the playrooms and the outdoor areas. Children were happy and confident, with most children engaged in their play.

Children's comments included:

"I can go much faster on the grass!"

"I was the first one!"

"The potatoes were really big!"

"Look at my hippo!"

"We found a snail!"

"Net to catch a jellyfish."

"I'm making a caterpillar."

"Choo choo train.... This is sharp!"

"Look at my digger."

We spoke with four parents during the inspection. Parents were very pleased with the service. They commented positively about the level of communication and the supportive transitions, the quality of children's experiences and the "amazing staff".

We sent out 45 Care Standards Questionnaires; 26 parents completed and returned the questionnaires to us. When asked about the overall quality of care their child received at the nursery 20 parents strongly agreed and six agreed with this statement.

We shared all comments with the management team including suggestions made by parents as well as a comment made about how some food products contained lots of sugar. The management team advised they had recently reviewed and changed the menus in line with best practice guidance to take account of healthy eating. We found the lunches served were healthy and nutritious.

Comments from parents included:

"My daughter started in the toddler unit at Albyn in November 2017. The staff were excellent at supporting her transition and were very effective at keeping me informed. The activities that they do on a daily basis appear well planned and varied enabling my daughter to learn lots of new skills and supports her development. On a recent occasion they took a small group on the bus to the local library which his wonderful and provides new experiences. XX appears an effective leader and my daughter's keyworker XX is very approachable and always lets me know how my daughter is getting on. Great nursery!"

"The service and care my daughter has received has been exceptional. My child has excelled in the warm and nurturing environment pre-school have provided. I cannot fault Albyn from nursery to pre-school. Albyn offers the highest standards of professionalism and quality child care."

"Albyn nurseries pre-school department is an amazing fantastic setting. My daughter loves going everyday. She has become so confident. The transition process is brilliant really preparing the children for going to Primary 1. The children have fantastic experiences whilst at pre-school which will have great memories for them!"

"Always impressed with the level of care, attention and development opportunities with nursery and pre-school! Learning journeys and folders about my child are always up to date and very detailed with examples and information about my child's learning and play. We love the photos that are always on display of our child and friends engaged in so many activities of tremendous value is also the pack of take-home optional 'work sheets' that we can take if needed."

"Excellent nursery. Very well-managed. Children treated as individuals."

"I moved my children from a different care provider to Albyn nursery two years ago. The difference in them has been very noticeable to all. They enjoy the nursery setting and I have been very pleased at the dedication of staff and level of care shown by all the staff."

"The transition to pre-school was well organised, which allowed our kid to settle in much quicker than in previous nurseries."

"Superb nursery with excellent staff - delighted with level of care and my child is very happy at Albyn toddlers."

"If I may, could I suggest they have meetings and talks with the parents about bullying; how to help our child be more confident and so on? Sometimes I feel I could use some help on these matters."

"I put my son to Albyn nursery as I didn't feel he was getting enough from his state school nursery. He has come on leaps and bounds and couldn't be happier with Albyn nursery."

"We have a child in toddler unit and one in pre-school and overall feel the service provided is excellent. Children are encouraged to develop at their own pace. We have noticed a huge leap in development since starting at Albyn."

In my opinion, Albyn pre-school has been a great learning experience for my son. He has developed confidence, manners, a good behaviour, good eating habits, lovely friendships with his fellow peers and ladies who care for him."

"I have been extremely happy with the service offered by Albyn nursery and in particular the pre-school department. The staff are experienced, friendly and instill great confidence in their care of our child. It is evident from our son's attitude regarding nursery and his behaviour when carrying out drop-offs and pick-ups that he has formed close relationships with all of the staff and feels comfortable around them all."

"Some food products contain lots of sugar, there should always be an option of sugar free products."

"I would like my child to play outside more, go to parks (at local areas), post office, shops in neighbourhood."

"More crafts please."

"I believe that the staff is well prepared and some of them really know my child, their personality. My child knows everyone's name and is happy to go to school."

"The facilities and staff are excellent. My child runs into the ante pre-school and enjoys every moment; he often doesn't want to leave. I would recommend Albyn to anyone."

"Excellent nursery, with excellent staff. The standard of care at Albyn Nursery remains very high - both my husband and all three of our children have been very happy with the nursery."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at the service's improvement plans and found they took account of the areas to be improved on in each department. Evidence confirmed improvements were being progressed. Staff should ensure that plans are manageable and remember to date improvements when they have been achieved.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Albyn nurseries provided a welcoming and nurturing environment for children and families. The staff team knew the children and families using the service well. Information was gathered at enrolment to help them get to know children. Staff used this to provide activities and resources that would help them to feel nurtured and included.

Children in the pre-school clearly enjoyed child-led play, following their interests. They accessed the nursery outdoor area where they enjoyed a variety of opportunities including playing in the wooden hut and mud kitchen. The children walked safely to the local playing field where they practiced a variety of races for their forthcoming sports day. This encouraged children to be active and energetic.

Children in the ante pre-school room participated in a range of activities including construction and painting butterflies, play dough and water play. This provided opportunities for the children to be creative and imaginative.

Children in the toddler room were offered opportunities to engage in a variety of activities, exploring shaving foam and pasta art, listening to stories and singing songs. Children also experienced free play within the rooms.

Generally snack and meal times were positive experiences for the children who were supported by staff who knew the children's dietary needs and preferences. Older children were encouraged to be independent and responsible. The younger children were supported where appropriate but further opportunities to be responsible and independent should be considered. Snacks and meals took account of best practice guidance to keep children healthy.

All children experienced regular, safe, active and energetic play in the fresh air. The older children had lots of community involvement, making frequent shopping trips and visits to local amenities. This supported them to be familiar with their local community. Staff told us that the younger children had more opportunities to explore their community during holiday periods.

Staff remained committed to providing children with well-planned, smooth transitions from stage to stage within the nursery and primary school. This supported children to be more confident and included.

During our visit staff interaction was positive. Staff were warm and caring towards children. They were motivated and worked well together as a team and told us they felt well supported in their roles. Staff we spoke with knew children well as individuals and spoke confidently about their individual care, learning and development needs.

Recruitment procedures were safe and effective. All checks were undertaken prior to staff starting employment. There was an organised induction procedure which ensured staff were confident and competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

All staff had appropriate qualifications or were working towards these. All staff were Scottish Social Services Council registered. Managers had an overview of registration renewals. This contributed to keeping children safe.

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. The child protection policy provided staff with clear guidance to follow. The staff we spoke with had a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe and the systems in place for reporting and recording any concerns. Staff attended regular child protection training to keep their knowledge up to date.

Staff felt well supported by management. Support and supervision and annual appraisals provided opportunities

for staff and management to discuss achievements and areas for development and identify training. Staff we spoke with were able to tell us how training events helped them have a better understanding of how children learn and develop.

Staff had opportunities to research different areas of best practice such as 'My World Outdoors'. This would contribute to improving children's outdoor experiences.

What the service could do better

Personal plans were in place for all children. However a number of those sampled did not contain sufficient detail. Observations and next steps within the learning journeys were not always dated or purposeful which made it difficult to track children's learning and development.

The manager and staff now need to continue to develop personal plans for all children, clearly detailing how the health, welfare and safety needs of the children would be met. Staff should also be supported to ensure that they are able to more effectively record the progress made by children and plan for individual next steps in learning.

Safe systems for the review and administration of medication were in place. We saw that staff had a good knowledge of children's medical needs. However a number of individual medical care plans required more information on particular conditions and additional step-by-step information to support and guide staff to take appropriate action when required to do so. This would contribute to keeping children safe and well.

From our observations we could see that the layout of some playrooms was not fully supporting all children to experience high quality outcomes. For example, there were insufficient well-presented resources for children in the toddler rooms to keep them interested and engaged.

At times staff focused more on undertaking tasks rather spending time with the children. As a result children were not always benefiting from quality interactions and were not challenged enough. Staff should consider the benefits of learning conversations and how to set up their playrooms to encourage children's exploration and investigation; taking account of those children in the early stages of walking. The forthcoming 'enabling environment' training should prove beneficial.

Overall, good infection control procedures were followed, keeping children healthy and well. However hand washing practices were variable. Some circumstances meant that children were not able to wash their hands in line with current best practice. Management took immediate action to resolve this by contacting the health protection team for advice. This should contribute to keeping safe and healthy.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
27 Jul 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
13 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
31 Aug 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
24 Jul 2012	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 1 - Unsatisfactory
4 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
5 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed
31 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings
		Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good

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