

Oakwell Children's Nursery Day Care of Children

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Linlithgow
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 April 2024

Service provided by:
Oakwell Childrens Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2015012526

Service no:
CS2015338771

About the service

Oakwell children's nursery is a daycare of children setting. The main building is on one level and comprises of room for each age range. All rooms have direct access to a decked area for outdoor play. In addition, the vast ground had been divided into a variety of outdoor spaces for children.

Number(s) and Age(s) of person(s) to whom service may be provided:

1. To provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 82 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

- no more than 23 are aged under 2 years
- Of the children aged 3 years to not yet attending primary school no more than 24 can attend the forest kindergarten at Oakwells Meadows.

Any other conditions unique to the service:

2. Adult: child ratios will be a minimum of:

Under 2 years - 1:3

2 years to under 3 years - 1:5

3 and over - 1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day, or

1:10 if the children attend less than 4 hours per day

The forest kindergarten adult: child ratios are a minimum of 1:6

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 23 April 2024 between 08:30 and 16:00 and Tuesday 25 April between 08:15 and 15:00. 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 several children using the service and three of their parents/carers. We also received 30 completed electronic questionnaires
- spoke with 11 staff and management
- observed practice and how children were supported with their routines, play and learning
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The inclusive and welcoming ethos created by staff has established close relationships with families.
- Children benefit from nutritious, home cooked meals and snacks.
- The vast outdoor spaces offer children stimulating and interesting places to play.
- To support children's learning, some staff need to develop their skills to use effective questioning to extend children's thinking and creativity through play .
- Effective communication meant staff knew children well as information about their individual needs was regularly updated.

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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

The positive ethos within the service meant that a culture of respect and inclusiveness was embedded in practice. As children experienced positive interactions from staff they had formed close attachments with them. They benefitted from their nursery experience as we saw how cuddles and affection supported their emotional well-being. As children played, it was evident they had developed nice friendships with each other. They had a sense of belonging as they felt welcomed, valued and safe in the setting. Parent's shared "Oakwell is a fantastic, welcoming place with a lovely ethos. Staff are friendly and informative and have great relationships with both parents/carers and the children in their care."

Effective communication with families meant partnership working with parents was well established. Regular meetings, electronic app and daily verbal updates, enabled children's information about children's progress and development to be shared. As a result, staff talked knowledgeably about the needs of children and how they were supported and met. This meant children experienced a consistent approach to their care. One parent said "The staff at the nursery follow my care plan exactly. I have recommended different additions to my child's care plan and nothing has ever been done without my consent. Overall I am very pleased with her care. I." And "Regular updates through one to one chats and updating care plan, to phone calls and emails when any issues arise or to update on any care aspect for her (child)."

Meal and snack times were relaxed and sociable experiences for children. We saw children had some opportunities to develop their self help skills. For example, older children served themselves and poured their drinks. Younger children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff sat with babies which promoted safety as they were focussed on them. Children benefitted from, and enjoyed the social time as they chatted with friends and staff. In the tweenie room this could be improved if staff had space to sit comfortably beside children. They could also provide more opportunities for children to develop their self help skills. For example, having jugs of water on the table so children can pour their drinks.

Children's routines were supported as they were settled to sleep. Almost all children slept on beds, but a few slept in prams. We asked the service to review this as children should sleep on a flat surface.

We confirmed that as best practice was followed, children's medication was stored and administered safely. Weekly checks ensured that all information was up to date. Adding children's photograph to the documents would further support the good practice in place.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Children benefitted from a well organised environment where a range of activities supported their development and interests. This enabled them to lead their play both indoors and outdoors. Open ended resources helped children use their imagination, curiosity and investigation. As they played, children said "We're being fairies. This is our wand."

As staff were enthusiastic and responded positively to them, children shared their ideas for developing their play. For example children were helped to build with blocks and make paper aeroplanes. We saw that at times there were missed opportunities to promote children's learning through play. We asked that staff were supported to develop their skills so they used questions to extend children's thinking. This would also help develop children's skills in literacy, language and numeracy within activities. Parents shared "Arts and crafts, water play, reading, playing outside, building and baking are all experiences that my child has been involved in so far. She is outside playing most sessions which involves supervised climbing and independent play at the park they get to spend so much time outdoors if they choose to."

A focus on being outdoors meant children had daily opportunities to play in the natural environment. Direct access to a decked area from the playrooms as well as extensive grounds offered children stimulating and interesting outdoor environments throughout the day. Children learned about seasons, wild animals, bugs and insects and were enabled to take risk in their play. They also benefitted from real life experiences as they grew vegetables which were used in the preparation of meals. Parents shared "The overall provision is excellent but particularly the outdoor education element is great, I think it has given my daughter extra confidence and built up her resilience. I feel the practitioners listen to her and respond to her about how she is feeling."

Staff could further develop how they plan and evaluate children's learning. They should continue to build on responsive planning rather than monthly topics. Writing evaluations, they could record the outcomes for children's learning. They should also include information about how 'next steps' for learning were followed up.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.

Staff had created a safe, welcoming and well organised environment which was inviting and supported children's learning and development. Cosy areas were available which ensured they could also have quiet time to rest if they wanted to. We saw that children had positive experiences as they influenced the pace of their day as staff listened to them and supported their choices.

Resources and toys were arranged so that children could choose what they wanted to do. The layout meant children had space to develop their games and play as they could move resources around. Parents said "The setting seems to be zoned very well, providing opportunity for a wide range of play, with a homely feel. The various areas and resources are adapted regularly to suit different times of the year/seasons and are also responsive to the children's interests. This often makes us smile as the ideas are very creative and inventive."

Children benefitted from direct access to enclosed, outdoor area for play. Large equipment, and open ended resources offered children a variety of play experiences. Playing in the natural environment, promoted their

well-being as they benefitted from fresh air and exercise. When playing children told us "That's the clay babies. There are lots of them in the family." And "I like playing on the swing."

We were satisfied that the environment was well ventilated, hand washing promoted and regular cleaning took place. These measures were effective at minimising the spread of infection. Risk assessments and daily checks were used well to achieve and maintain a safe environment. We asked that information about the scoring system was included to explain the assessment process.

Staff were security conscious as they accounted for children throughout the day. They had used SIMOA (Safe, Inspect, Monitor, Observe and Act) to help children learn about keeping safe. Safety measures included a secure door entry system and high handles on playroom doors and locks on gates. These kept children safe as staff knew who was in the building and prevented children from leaving. We were satisfied that children's information was safely stored.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Children benefitted from a management and staff team who were committed to providing a quality service. The use of national and local guidance as well as best practice documents supported staff to reflect on their practice. This had resulted in a shared vision for the development of the service. Staff contributed to change as they were familiar with the priorities outlined in the improvement plan.

A range of reviews and audits took place to monitor the work of the service. Staff were supported as action points were recorded that would help them develop their practice. Small changes could be made to improve the effectiveness of audits. For example, adding dates to follow up areas for improvement so the progress and outcomes were recorded. This would enable achievements to be acknowledged and agree further action to ensure progress was maintained. To build on this, we suggested peer support could be considered where more experienced staff shared their skills and knowledge.

Use of team meetings and support and challenge meetings offered staff opportunities to talk about their practice. This enabled them to identify areas for continued professional development or gaps in provision. Staff felt valued as their suggestions were listened to. For example, they talked about how they had improved meal times and transition for children.

Opportunities were in place that supported parents' and children's views to be gathered. Parents said these included "Opinion polls sent out via social media and parental questionnaires." Parents and carers were routinely involved in the work of the service and their children's care. This meant they felt valued and knew their opinions mattered. Parents shared "Nursery asks for suggestions and takes them on board." And "Regular parent's evenings, some surveys to collect parental views on different matters."

Children's voice was captured in floor books and planning which were used to support their interests and extend learning. Children said "We made paint with chalk, have breakfast, play and do yoga."

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a range of staff skills and experience within the team. All staff implemented the ethos and values of the service which has resulted in a welcoming and inclusive environment. All parents commented positively on the staff team and how they welcome them, chat and it feels like 'family'. Positive elements shared by parents included "The excellent staff she (child) deals with every day, the support and encouragement she receives in learning and her outdoor experiences." And "Quality of staffing including their continued professional development."

Staff were very well deployed throughout the service which ensured children benefited from their nursery experience. The pattern of staff attendance had been considered to promote continuity of care across the day. Effective communication and a flexible approach meant children were supported in all areas. At busier times, routines had been established which promoted children's safety. As a result, children were supported throughout the day. Parents shared "The large teams they have for each group and the consistency of their presence. My children talking about the adults they played with that day."

Changes to the staff team were well managed. When they started, staff benefitted from and felt supported through the induction process. Staff said "Induction- we are always guided to read relevant and important documents such as care plans, policies, tour and information that's important we can ask questions if need be." And "I got buddied up with my senior who was my mentor. She taught me so much and helped me connect strong relationships with each of the families by introducing me to each child and their parents. I always feel supported by her, the rest of the staff and management and a year and a half later I still feel very confident I can go to any of them with anything I need help with or any concerns I may have."

Staff were committed to professional development and used training and best practice guidance to keep up to date. They were enthusiastic in their role which meant children were supported in their learning and development. Parents shared "They (staff) know all the little details about who our children uniquely are. They're not just numbers to them."

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 provider and staff should continue to develop children's personal plans and room planning. Information should be meaningful and show how children's experiences, and identified next steps, contribute to positive outcomes in their development.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'my personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and

choices' (HSCS 1.15) and 'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me.' (HSCS 2.17).

This area for improvement was made on 7 June 2018.

Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place and updated regularly. Parents confirmed they had daily conversations with staff and asked to update information. Planning records and floor books showed the range of activities children were involved in. Staff had evaluated their experiences to show learning and had identified continued learning.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The manager should continue to develop, implement and embed self-evaluation and monitoring systems so the work of the service is effectively assessed. The outcomes from these processes should inform the content of the improvement plan, with information about the person responsible, timescales and progress being made.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 4.19)

This area for improvement was made on 7 June 2018.

Action taken since then

Formal and informal quality assurance systems in place. An improvement plan was in place that all staff were aware of. There was a quality assurance calendar that supported monitoring of staff practice and the systems that supported their work. Audits were also carried out to ensure procedures were followed.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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