

Thrive Childcare and Education Happitots Erskine Day Care of Children

Erskine
Bishopton
PA7 5PU

Telephone: 0141 812 2333

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 June 2024

Service provided by:
Enchanted Forest Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2005007827

Service no:
CS2005107944

About the service

Thrive Childcare and Education Happitots Erskine provides a day care of children service to a maximum of 70 children at any one time, of whom no more than; 22 are under the age of two years; 18 are aged from two years to under three years; 30 are aged three years to not yet attending primary school. At the time of our inspection, 56 children aged two to five years were registered with the service.

The registered provider is Enchanted Forest Nursery Limited and the service is in partnership with Renfrewshire Council, to provide funded places for eligible children aged two to five years.

The service operates from a purpose built premises within the grounds of Erskine Hospital, Bishopton, in the Renfrewshire area. Children are cared for across four playrooms, depending on their age and stage of development. There is also a large secure outdoor area and the nursery is close to woodland, country walks and the river Clyde.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24, 25 and 26 June 2024 between 09:15 and 18:00. Two inspectors carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received thirteen completed questionnaires
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were kind, caring and respectful in their interactions with the children.
- Staff worked hard to develop meaningful relationships with children and families.
- Personal planning should be consistent for all children, and there should be more evidence.
- That parents and carers are consulted and that staff support children in meeting their targets, based on relevant guidance.
- Management should ensure medication auditing follows current guidance and helps ensure children's wellbeing.
- Children had opportunities to lead their play throughout their sessions.
- Children benefitted from a broader range of stimulating play resources indoors and outdoors, to support and enhance their learning.
- Management should review information about children's learning and development to ensure it is consistently recorded and shared with parents and carers, supporting children in progressing and reaching their full potential.
- Management should continue to ensure that children, staff and families are routinely consulted to give their opinions and influence change.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced care from staff who were kind, gentle and caring. This approach helped children feel valued, loved and respected and supported their emotional development. Staff sat at the children's level and offered them cuddles and comfort, responding well to their care needs. As a result, children were happy, settled and confident when approaching staff. Parents and carers agreed they have a strong connection with the staff caring for their child. Some comments include:

"The staff couldn't be any nicer and my boy has come on so much since starting the nursery."

"The staff are always welcoming, and you can tell that they all care for the children."

"Staff are friendly, approachable and respectful of my child's needs."

Personal planning linked to the GIRFEC SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and was in place for all children. Plans included individualised information on children's needs and how these would be met for some children. There needed to be a consistent approach for all children and more evidence to show that parents and carers were consulted, and that staff supported children in meeting these targets based on relevant guidance.

While the medication was stored safely, we identified some issues in the paperwork for recording its administration. These included inconsistencies in dosage amounts and administration frequency, which could lead to unsafe practices. It is essential that the management team takes action to ensure medication auditing follows current guidance, as this is crucial to ensuring the wellbeing of children and influencing positive outcomes.

Personal care routines were carried out with kindness, compassion and respect for children's independence. Staff used a rights-respecting approach in their interactions, such as asking children before wiping their noses or changing their nappies, and respecting children's decisions within the safe boundaries of care and wellbeing, when they wanted to continue playing.

Children enjoyed a hot, nutritious meal that met their daily dietary and allergy requirements. They had opportunities to be independent through self-serve, and staff sat beside them, keeping them safe. This resulted in an unhurried and relaxed mealtime experience.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children were happy and enjoyed the play and learning experiences available during their sessions. They could choose what and who to play with, supporting their choices and peer relationships. One parent commented:

"My son has a good relationship with staff and other children. The Staff are always welcoming and have remained consistent despite the nursery having been through a rough patch the last few months. My son always has fun and enjoys going to nursery. This is also down to a great team!"

Recent development in planning approaches was beginning to support staff to extend children's ideas and interests. This was evident in some experiences available. For example, staff introduced a hedgehog house after a child spotted a hedgehog in their garden, and children learned about flowers after seeing them on a recent walk. Staff should continue to record children's interests and experiences and evaluate the impact on their outcomes.

Some staff were skilled in using effective questioning and commentary to extend children's learning. While some interactions positively impacted children's outcomes, interactions from all staff were in the early stages. Further work around role-modelling practice is needed, to embed quality interactions across the setting.

Opportunities to develop children's literacy skills need to be more evident across the setting. There were storybooks for children to enjoy listening to stories and some recent introductions of letter/sound resources. However, having additional resources for drawing and writing would encourage children to develop an understanding of print in various contexts and make good progress in early writing skills.

Approaches to early numeracy were in the early stages. More opportunities for these should be weaved into children's play and learning experiences to naturally extend children's understanding of mathematical concepts and add opportunities to explore science, technology, and engineering and learn new skills.

Staff knew the children well. Observations recorded on I Connect showed some play and learning experiences children were interested in. These were of variable quality and did not always include children's next steps in learning. **(See area for improvement 1)**

Trackers and assessment tools were in the early stages, and staff were becoming familiar with learning and development benchmarks, and the initial data which shows a baseline of where children are and what is needed, regarding planned and responsive experiences to support their progress and provide positive outcomes.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to progress and reach their full potential, management and staff should review information about children's learning and development, to ensure it is consistently recorded and shared with parents. Improvements should be made to the planning for play and learning processes. Children's ideas, wishes and interests should inform planned play experiences and be evident within the observation, assessment and planning cycle.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education' (HSCS 1.27)

and

'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children, and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a welcoming environment that was clean, well-furnished and comfortable. Plenty of natural light and ventilation supported the children's wellbeing. A secure entry system to the building and a fully enclosed garden helped to maintain children's safety.

Children were provided with their own space to store their personal items, fostering a strong sense of ownership, belonging and security. The addition of children's names or pictures on their coat pegs further reinforced their independence, making them feel more at home in the setting.

Personal care and hygiene practices were followed in line with infection prevention and control guidelines. Staff cleaned surfaces before and after use, and children and staff washed their hands at key times of the day and following activities. This commitment to cleanliness and safety reassured families of the setting's dedication to providing a clean and safe environment for children.

Indoor and outdoor learning environments have significantly improved since the last inspection, with families praising the enhanced resources and garden area. Parents and carers comments include:

"My child absolutely loves being outside in the garden. There is so much for them to do and to use their imagination. I would like them to be given the opportunity to walk outside the nursery and see the woods and wildlife there."

"Outdoor play is encouraged every day and choices are respected, as my child often prefers not to, although the recent addition of a growing garden has peaked her interest."

"Garden space is available. My wee one is often coming home covered in dirt/mud from outdoor fun."

"The nursery has a large garden, and the children are outside daily. The nursery is also situated next to the woods where they often go walks and explore looking for animals, bugs etc."

Progress made in outdoor play and learning should inspire optimism in the management and staff team about the potential for further development.

Children played outside throughout their sessions, with more opportunities for sensory development including planting and growing vegetables, water play and pretend cooking in the mud kitchen. We discussed with the management team that additional opportunities for children to participate in active experiences should be considered to support children's physical development.

Softer lighting and ceiling fabrics in the two to three year olds playroom have been introduced to help children feel more secure and relaxed, especially during sleep. The service should consider softer furnishings and seating across all playrooms to support quieter, cosy areas for all children to relax and self-regulate.

Risk assessments were used to promote children's safety. These identified potential hazards and mitigating actions to be taken to reduce any risk to children in the setting, daily walks and outings. Staff carried out regular checks of the environment. More involvement from children in the process would support them in evaluating their own risks under adult supervision, further supporting their awareness of keeping safe.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children benefitted from a new management team committed to continuously improving the setting. Since the last inspection, many changes have been made, such as improved infection prevention and control, chronologies for individual children and staff training, which have positively impacted children's outcomes.

The service's vision, values and aims were being developed by all relevant stakeholders to ensure the service meets the needs of children and families. This should support the future development of the service, where everyone feels confident in making suggestions and initiating change, valued and respected.

Processes for self-evaluation were being developed and in the early stages. This should support the management and staff team in reflecting on changes to date and future improvements, linking these to positive outcomes for children.

Staff expressed motivation and willingness and felt well-supported by the management team. The management and staff team knew the areas that needed improvement, took pride in their achievements, and were committed to further enhancing the service. One parent commented:

"The nursery has been through a bit of a rough patch over the last few months but personally I can see a vast improvement and the nursery has a much better atmosphere going into it. The nursery has always been brilliant and it's good to see it back on track!"

The management and staff team worked hard to encourage greater feedback from parents and carers to help them evaluate the quality of the setting. This included introducing a newsletter and sharing a recent survey with them. However, the recent survey shared by the service and the questionnaires we received showed that while improvements to the environment, such as resources and outdoor play, had improved, improved communication across various means was needed.

This included better use of online journals and social media platforms, promptly responding to parent's and carer's feedback and reasonable notice of events that were to take place. Parent's and carer's comments include:

"We get asked to give feedback on the service, then don't hear anything else about it. I don't feel parents are involved at all."

"Management and staff always seem to listen to views and concerns, but it never gets fed back or taken into consideration."

"The monthly newsletters and diary always seem so exciting and full of activities for the children and families, and so many things don't take place or are on really short notice."

"The nursery has so much potential, but it always seems to struggle to put things into place or make things happen."

The management team has developed a family engagement calendar, which they plan to implement in the new term. This should support improved parental involvement and partnership between the setting and the child's home.

Children and families were beginning to benefit from improved quality assurance processes. Monitoring, audits and checklists have helped address some concerns found at earlier inspections. While recognising this progress, more work was needed to ensure these quality assurance systems were consistently implemented across the service. This will provide positive care, play and learning outcomes for children.

An improvement plan was being developed with areas identified to address gaps in service quality. The management team should continue to ensure views are routinely sought from children, staff and families to give their opinions to influence change.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children, and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children were cared for by friendly, caring and nurturing staff who had developed meaningful relationships with families. This helped create a positive and welcoming ethos and significantly contributed to children's sense of safety and wellbeing. The impact of these relationships was evident in feedback from almost all parents and carers, who described the staff as 'welcoming' 'lovely' and 'friendly'. Overall, almost all were happy with their child's care and support in the service.

One parent commented on the staff's commitment to the children, noting that they have continually created a fun, safe and relaxing environment despite the high level of scrutiny. However, additional family feedback showed a need for improved communication at handovers. Specifically, parents and carers expressed a need for more detailed information about the play and learning opportunities, a desire for more frequent updates on their child's progress and activities, and a more personal touch in the handover process. The service knew this was an area where staff could improve their skills and continue to develop means of communication. This included a whiteboard at the playroom doors with information to support what children would be doing each day in the setting, supporting better communication between the setting and child's home.

Arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care across the day, ensure positive transitions for children and ensure that staff received regular breaks to rest and be refreshed while ensuring that children were supported at all times. Staff's strong teamwork and positive relationships fostered a supportive and collaborative environment. Almost all staff communicated effectively with each other throughout the day to share important information, demonstrating their commitment to meeting the children's needs.

Staff wellbeing was supported through regular discussions, one-to-one appraisals and team meetings with the manager. This was an opportunity to reflect on their childcare practice and further support their personal and professional development. For instance, some staff embraced newly promoted roles and played a part in developing the planning formats and floor books used for children's learning. These tools were in the early stages and were used to highlight children's play; further guidance would demonstrate where children's learning has progressed to provide support and challenge.

Staff had participated in safeguarding training to ensure children's safety. Further opportunities to develop staff skills included provocations and invitations to play, which was beginning to empower staff to use their initiative and knowledge of children's interests to plan play and learning experiences. Some staff were undertaking or about to undertake higher childcare practice qualifications to support professional development.

The provider should continue identifying learning opportunities, such as training on child development and effective communication with parents, to support all staff in their roles. Focusing on continuous learning and improvement will drive the service's future growth and success and improve outcomes for children and families.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 12 January 2024, the provider must ensure that robust quality assurance systems are in place to help them identify areas for improvement and strengths within the service.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Ensure views are routinely sought from children, staff and parents on aspects of the service and that.

These views are used to inform improvement planning.

- b) Ensure self-evaluation processes are developed to support reflective practice across the setting.
- c) Ensure sufficient time is made available weekly for management to improve the quality of the children's and families experiences and outcomes and of 11.
- d) Ensure management has the required time to carry out regular, effective, and focused monitoring across the setting to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children

and

e) Develop and implement a clear and effective improvement plan to maintain and improve the quality of service provision.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19)

and

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This requirement was made on 21 September 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Satisfactory progress in quality assurance processes has been developed, and these should strengthen reflective practice, collaborative working and monitoring across the setting to support further improvement in maintaining and improving the quality of service provision.

Met - outwith timescales

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

To support children to progress and reach their full potential, management and staff should review information about children's learning and development to ensure it is consistently recorded and shared with parents. Improvements should be made to the planning for play and learning processes. Children's ideas, wishes and interests should inform planned play experiences and be evident within the observation, assessment and planning cycle.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education' (HSCS 1.27)

and

'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 21 September 2023.

Action taken since then

We found some improvement in the children's play and learning. However, to support children in progressing and reaching their full potential, management and staff should review information about children's learning and development to ensure it is consistently recorded and shared with parents. Improvements should be made to the planning for play and learning processes. Children's ideas, wishes and interests should inform planned play experiences and be evident within the observation, assessment and planning cycle.

This area for improvement needs further consideration and has not been met.

Therefore, repeated at this inspection in Key Question 1: 'How good is our care, play and learning?'

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure a positive impact on children's wellbeing, learning and development, children should experience stimulating and challenging indoor and outdoor play spaces daily.

To do this, staff should, at a minimum, ensure resources and layouts provoke children's interest and extend their thoughts and learning.

Management should regularly evaluate the learning spaces, to ensure these are filled with open-ended opportunities, for example, loose parts materials, sand, water, clay, creative tools and imaginative props for children to explore, inquire and engage in energetic play.

This is to ensure that the quality of the environment is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (HSCS 1.32)

and

'As a child I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 2 February 2023.

Action taken since then

We found that sufficient progress had been made in the indoor and outdoor learning spaces with more open-ended opportunities, to stimulate and challenge play and positively impact children's learning and development.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To promote high quality care and support for children, the provider should ensure that all staff have access to a core training programme to support them within their role. Priority should be given to staff accessing training in Infection Prevention and Control.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14)

and

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 21 September 2023.

Action taken since then

We found that the service had made sufficient progress in infection prevention and control practices to support a safe and clean environment for children.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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