

Little Scholars (Nursery) Limited Day Care of Children

Scholars Gate
Whitehills
East Kilbride
Glasgow
G75 9DN

Telephone: 01355 900 119

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 July 2024

Service provided by:
Little Scholars (Nursery) Limited

Service provider number:
SP2004937433

Service no:
CS2003041099

About the service

The service is provided from a single-storey building in the Whitehills area of East Kilbride, South Lanarkshire. There are five playrooms, a sensory room, a central area and large enclosed outdoor play areas, which are accessible from all playrooms. Children also benefit from regular visits to a nearby woodland area. The service is close to the town centre, main roads and public transport links.

The service is provided by Little Scholars (Nursery) Limited and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 100 children:

- 28 children birth to under two years
- 21 children two to under three years
- 51 children three years to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to provide funded places for children aged three and over. On the day of our onsite visit, there were 61 children present at the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 July 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 for 40 people using the service and 15 of their families
- spoke with 18 staff and management
- observed practice and environment
- reviewed documents and records.

Key messages

- The fun and challenging outdoor area
- Mutual respect and trusting relationships with children and their families
- Robust monitoring and evaluation processes
- Person planning for children with additional needs was exceptional
- Staff were very warm, nurturing and attuned to all children's needs.
- Children were at the heart of everything the service did, the children were happy, loved and included and supported to be the best version of themselves.

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?	5 - Very 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?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were committed to delivering a high standard of care. Nurturing relationships, professional practice and supporting children's wellbeing were central to this.

Children attending the service were happy, settled and content in the service. They were confident in their interactions with staff, each other and inspectors.

Staff knew children well and could talk about the different individual needs of children and were aware of how to support children. Personal care needs were delivered in a warm, kind and respectful manner. For example, children were asked if they would like their nappy changed, respecting and valuing children's rights.

Children were supported with kind and nurturing approaches that enhanced their overall wellbeing. Staff interactions promoted children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. Staff ensured they were at children's level while supporting and interacting with them and used positive ways to demonstrate that they were valued and respected as individuals.

Staff ate their lunch with the children and gently supported them to be mannerly and using their cutlery properly. This enabled children to feel independent and to make their own choices of what to eat. There were lots of encouragement and praise. Children were empowered and all the children celebrated a child's achievements, this meant the child felt valued and encouraged to develop good self esteem. Management agreed to review menus to ensure children were offered a good choice of well balanced and healthy meals.

All children had a personal plan. Parents were included in creating personal plans for children, identifying areas where their child needed support, that took account of the wellbeing indicators.

Children with additional support needs were supported to feel safe and nurtured within the setting.

Management and staff recognised the benefits of partnership working with parents and other agencies.

Regular communication with key agencies ensured the team had up-to-date information to support children's current needs and any changes in the child's life.

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Families were invited to join in their children's learning through responsive and planned approaches which included stay and play sessions, parents/fundraising days, learning journals, social media website and verbal discussions at various times. A parent stated: "3 monthly reviews are a great top up to my child's experiences." This promoted continuity of care between the home and service which supported children's wellbeing.

Children played in the outdoor hub, roleplay was taking place and children were encouraged to relax and self regulate. A member of staff promoted mindfulness, encouraging children to talk about their feelings with the use of the emotions pictures. Children told us: "We are going to the zoo tomorrow, I am going to see the tigers." "My mummy showed me the penguins walk." The children selected the emotional stones in the sand, children enjoyed having fun and wanted to find the laughing emotion stone.

A child said "I feel happy in my nursery."

Children had a fun time in the garden area. Enjoying risk versus benefit play. They encouraged each other to conquer physical challenges on the the swings and chutes. Children directed staff to play with them, for example going down the chute behind them. This gave children the sense of responsibility and security in their environment.

Babies and young children toddled around negotiating space. Singing songs and rhymes in the playhouse, children were learning to share toys and take turns. Staff encouraged them to play with their friends and socialise.

Older children were problem solving, turn taking and team building in the leafy green area around the trees. As they listened to and assessed, language skills were developed when assessing the rustling of the different tree sounds. In the same area a staff member built on a child led experience, children pretended to be animals marching around the garden. Staff supported children use their counting skills and develop their imagination. The activity continued indoors, where staff employed skilful questioning to promote children's higher order thinking skills for children to draw their animals. Children took pride showing us their drawings.

Staff explained their responsive planning approaches to us. From looking at the floorbooks we could see these were child centred and responsive to children's interests. As a result children were engaged meaningfully in their learning, and progressing well.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was comfortable, well-furnished and provided a welcoming space for children. Playrooms were spacious and well-ventilated with plenty of natural light. Staff had created a homely atmosphere for children with relaxation music playing quietly in the background.

Spaces were stimulating and offered provocations such as large-scale weaving with wool, clay modelling and provided materials to create complex obstacle courses. There were regular opportunities to conduct experiments through a commitment to learning around science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This meant that children were able to engage in deep learning and promoted life skills.

Parents told us that they felt their child's interests and stages of development were reflected throughout the environment. They said "My child loves outdoors and they always have access to this. They also love dancing and sensory play which the staff regularly do."

The service had a variety of safety measures in place such as risk assessments, prevention of choking procedures and project work based around Care Inspectorate's keeping children safe guidance. Children received care in a safe environment that was well maintained.

The safety of the environment was further supported through the infection prevention and control procedures, helped to minimise the spread of infection. Staff used appropriate personal protective equipment when needed and children's handwashing was embedded.

Consideration had been given to data protection and the use of online systems. Children's information was securely stored and managed. The service had a variety of policies such as child protection and complaints. These policies were aligned with the aims and vision service. This supported the management of the service.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Staff used good practice guidance, team meetings, staff What's app group and professional development reviews to facilitate discussions. The manager had established distributed leadership, this was to enable focus areas for the service to support improvement for children. This was supporting the service to help meet the aspirations families had for their children.

Continued professional development was central to the staff team approach. Training opportunities were wide and varied and included consideration of subjects such as management and leadership, emotional wellbeing and child protection.

Quality assurance was detailed and monitoring ensured focus areas helped high-quality service delivery. The service had an up-to-date quality assurance calendar. Priority areas included intergenerational experiences, outdoor learning and the wellbeing of all in the nursery community. These areas were underpinned by current best practice to support families and children.

Staff were confident and committed. Several families shared individual experiences of the directed support they had received. For example, one parent told us: "Good communication between nursery and home makes me feel easier to go to work", "It's a fantastic place and my child has thrived there." A parent stated: "I think what makes it a really good nursery was their consultation, community engagement especially with the nearby older people's care home."

Shared communications were in place between families and staff to support the direction of the service moving forward. Questionnaires are sent regularly asking for input and children's voice is present throughout.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator: 4.3 Staff deployment

Parents told us: "The welcome as you walk through the door, brightens the duller days, my child loves going to her ladies at nursery and often shouts on them at home."

Children told us: "I like the ladies, they cuddle you if your sad", "The ladies are kind and friendly."

Well-functioning systems were in place that enabled new children, families and staff to be introduced and form positive bonds that were supporting high quality outcomes not only for children but also for their families. Parents told us this approach worked well.

Staff supported children's progression and interests through professional reflection and practice. For example, each member of staff had a leadership role that focused on providing extended opportunities. Careful consideration had been given to the skills, knowledge, and expertise of the team.

Staff were well deployed across the day. They communicated with each other often, such as when supporting lunch time and transitioning children from indoors to outdoors. Staff shifts and breaks were flexible which helped to minimise impact on children. The service was appropriately staffed and supervision ensured children had quality engagements.

The management team along with staff had worked hard to ensure new staff were well supported through a detailed induction and mentoring programme. This meant that staff were clear in their understanding of their role and confident in their knowledge about the needs of individual children. Their comments included, "I feel confident speaking to parents and feel I have good relationships with them which have built up over time", "We have regular face to face and online training."

Staff were aligned in their nurturing approach and happy to be at work. Parents commented positively on their relationships with staff.

Staff relationships were respectful and nurturing. This was evident in the playrooms, they worked well together as a team. A staff member told us: "We care for each other we are just like a big family."

There was a good staff mix and skills in employment and designated in different playrooms.

Staff training, included using expertise of parents. The staff team had attended various training sessions. For example, first aid, child protection and management and leadership skills.

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 should review the nappy changing and handwashing facilities to bring these into line with current best practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed.' (HSCS 5.2)

This area for improvement was made on 4 November 2021.

Action taken since then

The service had fitted a separate hand washing sink within each playroom for staff as well as separate children's sinks to playrooms 3, 4 and 5.

Room 3 toilet area had a changing station cubicle built within it. To provide children with privacy and dignity as well as a more positive changing experience for the children.

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