

J-LOs EarlyYears Day Care of Children

1 Buchan Road
Fraserburgh
AB43 9WE

Telephone: 01346511334

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 August 2024

Service provided by:
J-LOs Early Years LTD

Service provider number:
SP2022000219

Service no:
CS2022000329

About the service

J-LOs EarlyYears is a daycare of children service which is provided in an adapted residential property in the coastal town of Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 28 children aged two years to not yet attending primary school full-time at any one time with 10 children between two to under three years old.

Adult:child ratios will be a minimum of:

- two years to under three years - 1:5
- three years and over - 1:8 if the children attend more than four hours per day or
- 1:10 if the children attend for less than four hours per day.

The service is on a bus route and is near to local amenities, including a primary school and shops. Children are cared for in one main playroom with space for dining. Other play spaces include the cloakroom, foyer, and sensory room. There is a well developed garden for outdoor play.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13-14 August 2024 between 09:00 and 16:00. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- interacted with children using the service
- spoke with parents/carers
- received 29 completed questionnaires
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care from kind and patient staff.
- Children experienced positive mealtimes and enjoyed nutritious homecooked food.
- Children had fun and took part in a balance of spontaneous and organised activities which supported their learning and development.
- Children who required additional support were well supported by patient and skilled staff and specialised equipment and resources.
- Children played in an inviting and safe environment.
- Self evaluation and quality assurance processes were effective to ensure high quality care and support for children and their families.
- Staff were friendly and approachable and were loved and respected by the children and their families.

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 key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing care from kind and patient staff. Staff responded with sensitive care to support children settle and keep safe. Cuddles and comfort helped children feel safe and loved. Parents commented, "It's such a nurturing place where children have great opportunities to learn through play" and "Staff are warm and receptive at J'LOs and go above and beyond".

Children's personal plans were effective to support their overall wellbeing and care. Parents were central to this process and provided information linked to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators which are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. This contributed to high quality and consistent care from staff who knew the children well. Parent comments included, "I feel like the staff know my child really well, they know their little quirks and their likes and dislikes, and they work so well with them to make them feel included".

For some children additional care support plans were in place. These included strategies, such as using a visual timetable, pictures, and photographs, to help children follow daily routines and transition between play experiences. Children's progress was regularly reviewed and discussed with parents, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Children experienced positive meals and snacks. Snack was unhurried with opportunities to self serve, chat, and build friendships with their peers. Lunch was well organised and a sociable experience for children. Children enjoyed homecooked meals that were nutritious and looked appetising. Staff sat with the children to provide support, encourage good manners, and keep children safe. Water was readily available during the day to help keep children hydrated and well.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of adverse childhood experiences and the potential impact on children and their families. When necessary, other agencies had been contacted to help ensure children and their families were provided with the support they needed.

Children were kept safe and well by knowledgeable staff and effective systems and procedures to support the safe administration of medication.

Children and families were supported by friendly and welcoming staff. Staff took time to speak to parents and carers at drop-off and pick-up times. Parents commented, "All the staff are lovely and friendly and tell us all about our child's day and what they have been doing". However, parents were not invited into the playroom to help strengthen connections and build strong relationships. We highlighted the document 'Me, my family, and my childcare setting: A practice note for building stronger connections and meaningful relationships' to the manager who agreed to make changes.

1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun and took part in a balance of spontaneous and organised activities which supported their learning and development. Experiences included using real tools to fix switches on the tinker table and making cement with foam and sand to build walls. Parents 'strongly agreed' their children's development

was supported through fun and interesting play experiences. Children said, "I like the kitchen and the magnets, and I like painting and Playdoh".

Children were confident learners who were encouraged to be kind and helpful to others. This was supported using stories to develop their understanding of the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. Ongoing learning of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) meant children were beginning to understand the importance of feeling, safe, secure, and happy in order to achieve.

Planning approaches were effective to support children's progress and development. Observations with identified next steps informed planning to support children's progress. The guidance 'Realising the Ambition' and 'Curriculum for Excellence' were used well to ensure children experienced learning that was relevant and sufficiently challenging for their stage of development.

Staff were skilled when interacting, engaging, and responding to children's interests. For example, cooking and baking activities were planned as a result of making Playdough and discussing ingredients and recipes with the children. A few children had returned from their holidays and were excited to use their experience in role play. This was facilitated by staff who helped children make train tickets and plan rail journeys.

Children who required additional support were well supported by patient and skilled staff and specialised equipment and resources. A few staff were proficient in using a language programme that uses symbols, signs, and speech to enable people to communicate (Makaton, 2024) and were helping others to develop their skills. Staff listened to the children and provided them with thinking time to process information. As a result, children were progressing well and were happy and confident.

Opportunities for language and literacy development were evident in children's play experiences. Children had daily opportunities to practice their writing skills in their play and there was a good selection of books for children to read. Children were encouraged to use mathematical language correctly. For example, when filling and emptying containers during water play. Children had fun and were introduced to money when pretending to pay for their lunch.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections to their own and wider communities. New buses supported spontaneous opportunities for getting out and about and children visited local village, parks, and the beach as a result. Parent comments included, "Outwith the nursery setting my child has been to the beach, local supermarkets, parks, farms, to the library, visiting local businesses, to the dentist, to a football session, and down to the harbour. They regularly visit the local care homes too".

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 key question as very good.

Children were cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. The setting was well maintained with new flooring, neutral freshly painted walls, and high quality fixtures and fittings. They were well looked after by staff and children, giving a strong message to children that they matter.

Wall displays were attractive with some photos of the children, information to support planning, and a few examples of the children's artwork. We suggested creating more displays of children's artwork to help raise self esteem and promote a sense of belonging and worth.

Positive changes to the learning environment meant play areas were well defined and looked attractive. The role play area was well thought out and provided children with opportunities to play and learn in a real and familiar environment similar to their own home. The construction area was large with a good selection of blocks and loose parts. Resources were stored to support children's independence and included a photographic inventory of toys for easy choice.

Children could sleep and rest in a safe and comfortable environment. There were inviting cosy spaces for cuddles and relaxation. A well resourced sensory room with an extensive range of sensory equipment had been recently installed for calm and soothing play.

Outdoor provision included places to climb, explore, and be creative. A refurbished caravan and garden sheds provided shelter on cold days. The conversion of a garden shed into a large sandpit promoted inclusivity with better access for children with poor mobility. Water play was available at a large 'potion station' where children had fun filling and emptying containers.

Staff were vigilant in children's whereabouts to help keep them safe. They demonstrated a good understanding of risky areas and potential hazards. Children were encouraged to understand the impact and consequence of risky and unsafe actions and to make informed decisions about the risk taken during their play. In doing so, children's activities were not compromised and they were supported to enjoy challenging and fun play experiences.

Staff demonstrated a very good knowledge and understanding of infection prevention and control. The setting was clean and staff followed guidance when supporting children to prepare snack and when serving lunch. Effective handwashing was embedded in practice.

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 key question as very good.

Strong leadership of the service led to very good outcomes for children and their families. Staff felt valued and were committed to using their strength and interests to develop the service. This led to a very positive morale with everyone working closely together.

The vision, values, and aims of the setting reflected the aspirations of the service and were fully embedded in practice. The service aims were shared with children and their families, helping them know what to expect from the service.

The service promoted a culture of inclusion and working together with families to improve outcomes for children. Suggestions and comments from parents/carers were valued. As result of feedback and consultation, parents advised they preferred paper learning journals and this had been introduced. Newsletters and ongoing sharing of information using private social media helped ensure parents and families were fully informed of new initiatives.

Children were asked what they wanted to do and where they wanted to play. As a result, they took part in experiences and outings they enjoyed. They were fully consulted on changes made to the environment and commented, "I like the paint" and "I like the bathroom".

Strong leadership within the service promoted a culture of continuous improvement. The manager/ providers of the service were very committed to initiate change by involving and recognising the contributions of staff. Self evaluation was embedded in practice, linked to guidance, and used to identify where improvements could be made. The service improvement plan reflected current areas for development which included improved coastal and forest school learning opportunities.

Children benefited from effective quality assurance systems that impacted positively on their experiences and outcomes. Regular audits of medication and of any accidents which took place in the service helped keep children safe and well.

Observations of staff practice, team meetings, and regular support and supervision helped support staff with their professional development. This helped deliver very good outcomes for children and families.

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 key question as very good.

Children were kept safe by staff who were safely recruited. New members of staff were supported with an effective induction, helping to develop their confidence and skills needed for their role.

Skilled and knowledgeable staff supported children's care, wellbeing, and learning. Staff were friendly and approachable and respected by the children and their families. They were committed to their own professional development and discussed research in areas such as Makaton and forest school and coastal learning. They had been instrumental in making changes to the learning spaces, such as improving the opportunities for block play. This led to sustained play and improved engagement. Parents who were contacted 'strongly agreed' that they felt staff had the skills and knowledge to care for their child.

Staff deployment worked well to support the needs of the children. There was a positive ethos of attendance within the service and any absences were covered by flexible staff who were willing to swap days. This led to a continuity of care from staff who knew the children well. There were enough staff at key times, such as during lunch and at arrival and drop-off, to supervise, engage, and keep children safe and well.

Children were supported by staff who worked well together. The day-to-day routines were well organised and staff were confident in their roles and responsibilities. Very good communication between staff ensured children were still provided with the support they needed when staff were engaged in other activities.

Parent comments included, "Staff at J-LOs are warm, receptive, and they go above and beyond to ensure the children are engaged daily", "Staff are all very approachable, nothing is ever too much, they always greet us and make my child feel welcome", and "Brilliant staff, could not be kinder to my child".

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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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