

Hanover Street School Nursery Day Care of Children

Hanover Street School
Beach Boulevard
Aberdeen
AB24 5HN

Telephone: 01224 569 880

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 November 2024

Service provided by:
Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000349

Service no:
CS2003014434

About the service

Hanover Street School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time, from three years up to those not yet attending primary school.

The nursery is accommodated within Hanover Street School, located in a residential area of Aberdeen close to the Beach Boulevard. The children are cared for in one large playroom with a kitchen area and integral toilets. The outdoor play area is solely used by nursery children and is fenced off from the rest of the playground. Nearby amenities include the Beach Boulevard, parks, and supermarkets.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 November 2024 between the hours of 08:45 and 16:10 and 20 November 2024 between the hours of 08:30 and 14:10. 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 children during their play
- Received eight parent/carer online questionnaires
- Received five staff online questionnaires
- Spoke with eight parents in the setting
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily experiences
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled and happily engaged in play and learning.
- Children received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well.
- Children mostly led their own play through a well-balanced mix of activities and play experiences.
- The staff team were very motivated and enthusiastic about their roles and were keen to continue to take on training to develop their practice.
- The setting should continue to reflect on the environment both indoors and outside to ensure the children are accessing a very good range of resources to support their play and learning and offer challenge where appropriate.
- The service should now consider how they collate their self-evaluation information to allow the team to successfully measure the impact developments have had, to support the pace of change and improvement going forward.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - 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 positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing care from staff which meant they were settled, relaxed and confident. When children needed support and comfort, we saw that staff were responsive to their needs. Children enjoyed closeness with staff for stories and adults used strategies effectively to support children's emotions. Positive attachments had been formed which supported children to feel secure and loved.

Staff knew children well and were able to confidently discuss their interests, likes, dislikes and support that was in place. Parents felt they had a strong connection with the staff. One parent said; "The staff are always lovely and ready to answer any questions you have and it's so good getting any updates on seesaw." Another parent said; "The staff members are very friendly. When we had a meeting to agree on the personal care plan for my child, their views were very exceptional in terms of how best to support my child." This promoted supportive ethos of children's needs being well met.

Personal plans were in place for all children and reference was made to the wellbeing indicators. This contributed to gathering meaningful information, supporting children to receive care and support that is right for them. Care plans were in place for children who required one and these identified strategies to support staff to tailor individual care, which we saw during inspection. Personal plans were being evaluated and reviewed regularly with families. Review dates should be clearer on the plans, highlighting that they contained the most relevant and up to date information. This would ensure that staff had access to key information allowing them to consistently offer children care and support tailored to their needs.

Mealtimes were a positive experience for children. At lunchtime we saw staff sit with children supporting them as they ate their food which provided a nice social experience. We discussed how this approach could be adopted and implemented to improve children's snack time experience. Children ate food that was well presented, taking into account their preferences and dietary needs. We talked about the importance of monitoring what children ate over the course of the day and sharing relevant information with parents. This would support their growth and development and establish good healthy eating habits. There were opportunities for children to develop independence through helping to prepare food, set up for mealtimes and serve their own food and drinks. This contributed to learning important life skills such as cutting, spreading and pouring. Parents told us their children could choose from a range of healthy meals and snacks which reflected their individual, cultural and dietary needs.

Medication was stored safely and securely, easily accessible to staff while being out of the children's reach. Medication records sampled contained relevant information to help staff with safe administration. We found however, that it was not clear if records had been updated every three months. We asked that the service ensure their auditing systems take this into account, to ensure information provided is relevant and up-to-date.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had fun and were engaged throughout the inspection. Staff were responsive to children's interests and generally supported their choice about where they played. We asked that the setting consider the timing and frequency of group time to support and improve the flow of the day. This would ensure play was not interrupted and children had time to explore their ideas.

Children had opportunities to lead their play and we saw them problem solve and use their imagination. Children used the construction area well. A group enjoyed creating a structure for the animals and built steps and stepping stones for animals to move along. Children tested these out by walking on them and made adjustments to make it stronger by adding a tyre to support the steps. They worked together discussing, testing and extending their own play. Children then used this structure to engage in imaginative play with the animals. Children used the available resources well. However, we discussed the benefits of adding more open ended resources and loose parts, to further support children's curiosities and thinking skills.

Staff interactions were patient and encouraging. During discussions with children, staff adapted their pace and language, which supported children's understanding and language development. Some staff were skilled in using open-ended questions to support children's learning. For example, when children discovered ice outside they were very excited. Open questions such as "what made the ice?" and "how does it feel?" supported the children's understanding and thinking as they stamped on the ice to break it and held it tight in their hands to melt it. We discussed how this could be developed further throughout the team to ensure learning is meaningful and provides appropriate challenge for children.

Opportunities to explore language, literacy and numeracy were evident within the environment and in children's play experiences. Children enjoyed stories and singing spontaneously and in groups. Adults used numbers to develop numeracy skills during play, such as hiding numbers under a sheet while children guessed which number was missing. This was extended to think about numbers before and after. Children were starting to explore the mark making materials available throughout the environment, not only in the craft area. They had a clear interest in letters and numbers and we discussed a number of methods which staff could adopt to promote this. One such approach could include directing and modelling the purpose of writing to children during play, for example creating shopping lists in the house corner and making signs for their structure in the construction area. This would contribute to developing children's literacy and numeracy skills and make their experiences meaningful throughout the setting.

Planning processes were being developed and we noted that staff welcomed being part of the planning process, including the opportunity to take responsibility for areas in the setting, working alongside colleagues. Planning aimed to promote a balance of intentional and spontaneous learning experiences for the children. Key group time was used to focus on spontaneous learning and floor books were being used to gather children's ideas and evidence learning. We looked at these books and found that some of these experiences were adult led. We discussed the importance of ensuring children's interests were being explored alongside intentional planning. This would lead to deeper levels of thinking, learning and involvement.

The Seesaw App was used to share information, photos and capture children's learning. This also provided an opportunity for families to get an insight into their child's play and learning in detail. Most of the observations we sampled identified learning which helped staff to assess children's achievements and progress, allowing them to plan the next steps in individual children's learning journey. The setting was tracking children's learning. Planned meetings with leaders to discuss this would further support staff to tailor support and challenge, and identify gaps in learning.

Children had benefited from connections with the wider community. They used "Touring Tuesdays" with parents to visit the beach, local green spaces like Union Terrace Gardens, went shopping to buy snack, and visited museums such as the art gallery. Parents were also welcomed into the setting to share their occupations within the community with children. This contributed to children's sense of belonging and supported them to have new opportunities and learn about work roles out with the setting.

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 experienced an environment with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Since our last inspection, work had been carried out in the setting, meaning it was now fit for purpose. The nursery was now well-furnished with new resources which were of a good quality. The service was becoming more attractive with the addition of lighting, greenery and materials to soften the feel of the room. This could still be further developed to create a more homely environment for the children.

The layout of play spaces ensured that children could move around areas with ease and could access resources independently. Children were confident in moving around these spaces to explore their ideas and interests. Resources were mostly age and stage appropriate and children had the freedom to transport these to extend their play further. We highlighted the benefit of adding additional resources to areas within the nursery, such as the construction and craft areas, this would further support children's play and learning.

A quiet room within the setting gave children a quiet space to rest and relax. We discussed how this could be better utilised by everyone, involving the children in the development of the space. This would support them to feel valued and included in the decision making.

Children's access to the outdoor area was limited due to adverse weather at the time of our inspection. Some children were taken to the outdoor space in the afternoon to play in the snow. They enjoyed exploring the snow by throwing it, digging in it, making snow men and using rakes to create patterns. Adults supported these experiences well, using open questions and directing children to resources to further support their play. Staff shared their plans to develop the outdoor space using fund raising and possible grants to support this. This was currently part of the setting's improvement plan.

Systems were in place to support keeping children safe. Risk assessments helped staff to mitigate risk and enhanced children's safety. We discussed utilising the Care Inspectorate's SIMOA campaign. This would promote a culture of being safe, supporting children's understanding of potential risks within the environment during their play. This would contribute to the children's understanding of risk and keeping themselves safe.

Infection control measures were understood and implemented effectively by staff. Hand washing routines were embedded and staff protected children by providing a clean and hygienic environment. PPE (personal protective equipment) was used at appropriate times such as nappy changing and food preparation. This contributed to keeping children safe and well.

How good is our leadership?**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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The setting regularly updated their vision, values and aims involving staff, children and families. This supported everyone to feel valued and included and ensured that these updated documents were meaningful, capturing the needs and wishes of those using and working in the setting.

Children's and families' views and suggestions about their care, play and learning were valued by staff. The feedback we received from parents highlighted that they felt they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. Informal approaches such as seeking feedback following events indicated that parents welcomed these opportunities. The service effectively used the "Seesaw App" and we saw that hand over times provided opportunities to share good information about the children's day. Parents were invited along to "Touring Tuesdays" and were welcomed into the service for events such as open evenings and more recently Autumnal celebrations. We discussed the benefits of using more formal approaches to gather feedback such as questionnaires. This would allow the service to ask questions and gain feedback on specific aspects of the nursery. The setting shared they had previously taken onboard suggestions and used a "you said, we did" display, which ensured parents felt listened to and created a collaborative approach to improvement.

Staff told us they had felt well supported by leaders in the service over the last year. They now felt more confident in their roles and were being meaningfully involved in supporting improvement in the setting. The leadership team were keen to include staff in driving change, and were supporting this through the use of self-evaluation during team meetings, in house training, monitoring of practice and support and supervision meetings. This supported the team to feel empowered and more involved in driving forward improvements.

The setting was using a quality assurance calendar to support procedures, audits, and monitoring. We suggested quality assurance processes should be extended to include regular audits of medication and personal planning. This would contribute to positive outcomes for children.

An improvement plan identified relevant and meaningful areas for development. An eBook was being used to document improvement planning and captured progress made with the local authority. This allowed the team to acknowledge their successes. We suggested that they now consider how they collate their self-evaluation information to allow the team to successfully measure the impact developments have had. This would support the pace of change and ensure improvement was ongoing.

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.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff demonstrated genuine warmth, kindness and interest towards the children they cared for. This resulted in children being settled, happy and confident. When asked about the most positive aspects of their child's experience, one parent told us; "Whenever my child comes home she tells me what has happened at school and how the teachers are always supportive and taking good care of them."

The teachers are ready to listen about my child and are always ready to support." Another parent said; "The teacher [tells] me what happened in school and the staff are kind and friendly and helpful and they are always there to support you and your child."

The leadership team recognised the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed at all times. Rotas and the senior practitioner's respectful and calm approach, contributed to the very effective deployment of staff. The team were flexible in their approach, communicating very well with each other. Staff moved with children, to support the smooth running of the service and the children's needs.

Staff were appropriately qualified. Some were working towards gaining further qualifications and had a good knowledge of child development. They were able to discuss how they had identified individual areas for development and were supporting children, for example with their social skills, speech and language and food and nutrition. Parents told us they were happy with the care and support their child received. One parent said; "Interacting with different people, both children and teachers - allowing [my child] to build [their] confidence and communication skills. Having the opportunity to take part in various activities, having fun and making friends. Another parent said "[My child] has gained confidence."

Staff were very committed to their professional development to ensure they delivered a high-quality service and improved outcomes for children. Staff had undertaken a range of learning which included formal training, engaging with best practice documents and professional discussions. Staff told us this had supported them to develop their knowledge and skills. They were able to discuss in detail how learning had impacted on their practice, for example Autism Awareness training. As a result, children's care, play and learning were informed by current research and best practice. We would encourage the staff team to continue to reflect on their professional development, making use of the training logs that were available. This would support them to evaluate the impact training had and allow them to identify further training needs.

Staff inductions and the effective use of mentors had supported staff's knowledge and awareness of their role and responsibilities. We saw that mentors were very committed to their role, offering continuous support. We directed the setting to the "Early Learning and Childcare National Induction Resource" to encourage questions and reflection. This would further support staff to have a good understanding of their new role, responsibilities, and effective ways of working.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 12 April 2024, the provider must ensure children experience a well maintained, comfortable, and homely environment. The provider, manager, and staff should ensure that actions are taken to repair some areas of the nursery.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- walls and painted surfaces were in good order
- all doors and surfaces are clean
- any holes in walls are repaired
- furniture, walls, and radiators are clean and well presented for children
- worktop areas around sinks are in full working order
- kitchen units and cupboard doors are repaired.

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) Regulations 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 experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy, and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment" (HSCS 5.24).

This requirement was made on 8 November 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Since our last inspection, work had been carried out in the setting. During the inspection it was found to be clean and well maintained. This meant it was now fit for purpose.

Met - within 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 ensure children experience high quality play, learning, and development opportunities that are safe and meet their individual learning needs, the manager should continue to develop staff skills, knowledge, and competency in providing high quality play and learning experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "As a child I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me" (HSCS 1.27); and "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).

This area for improvement was made on 8 November 2023.

Action taken since then

Training and management support has contributed to developing staff's knowledge and skills, enabling them to support good play and learning opportunities which were safe. Staff discussed how they were supporting children and extending learning, this was evident in some play experiences observed. **This area for improvement has been met.**

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children have fun and experience high quality play and learning, the manager and staff should ensure all areas of the learning environment are well resourced, clean, and attractive.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy, and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment" (HSCS 5.24).

This area for improvement was made on 8 November 2023.

Action taken since then

The environment had improved since the last inspection. It was clean and fit for purpose. It was becoming more attractive with the use of lighting, greenery, plants and materials to create a homely environment.

The nursery was set up in areas of interest, mostly taking account of children's age/stage of development which they accessed well. Staff were being given responsibility to develop areas, taking account of the resources available. Continuing to evaluate and monitor the environment would develop this further. **This area for improvement has been met.**

Previous area for improvement 3

To help keep children safe and well, the manager should ensure children's health and safety in relation to effective infection prevention and control. This should include, but not be limited to, effective supervision when handwashing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy, and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment" (HSCS 5.24); and "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).

This area for improvement was made on 8 November 2023.

Action taken since then

Infection control measures were understood and implemented effectively by staff. Hand washing routines were embedded and staff protected children by providing a clean and hygienic environment. This contributed to keeping children safe and well. **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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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