

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:
25 November 2022

Service provided by:
Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000349

Service no:
CS2003014434

About the service

Hanover Street School Nursery provides a day care of children's service located in a residential area of Aberdeen, close to the beach boulevard. The service is accessible by foot and by bus. Amenities nearby include the Beach Boulevard, parks and supermarkets. The service 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 children are cared for in one large playroom with good access to toilet areas and a kitchen area. The nursery is situated on the first floor of Hanover Street School. The outdoor play area is solely used by nursery children and is fenced off to the rest of the playground.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 November 2022 and 16 November 2022. 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 using the service during their play
- Had contact with approximately eight parents and family members
- Spoke with staff and management
- Spoke with representatives from Aberdeen City Council
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- A requirement to ensure that outdoor areas were safe for children had been met.
- Staff worked well to build positive relationships with other agencies that were involved with children's care.
- Most children were happy and confident around staff and had formed positive relationships with them.
- We raised concerns where one child was unsupervised and climbing on windowsills putting themselves in significant danger.
- Lunch times for children was not a well organised experience and needed to improve.
- Staff had improved the use of loose parts resources adding to, reviewing, and developing play areas for children. Work on this should continue.
- Maintenance and repairs were needed throughout the nursery to ensure the best environment for children.
- Children and families were not yet meaningfully involved in influencing changes and developments within the setting.
- To support positive outcomes for children the provider, manager and staff should collectively work together in a meaningful way.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

Most children had fun and were happy and relaxed in their surroundings. We saw that children were confident around staff, and most had formed positive relationships with them. Staff interacted with children showing warmth, kindness, and respect.

Senior staff worked well to build positive relationships with other agencies that were involved with children's care. For example, regular meetings were held with education psychologists, development teams and health visitors. This helped create clear strategies for staff to follow when supporting the individual needs of children and families.

Children with additional support needs had made positive progress in their own identified areas of development. The management had received some additional staff hours to help support children with additional support needs. Staff mostly supported these children well. We raised concerns however when observing children climbing and an incident where one child was unsupervised and climbing on windowsills putting themselves in significant danger. We discussed this with the provider on the day of inspection (see area for improvement 1 under deployment of staff).

Staff did not always respond to children's cues when they needed support during their play. This at times led to situations escalating and children becoming upset or finding difficulties playing with those around them. Overall children could be better supported with their emotional needs and their understanding of feelings and how to cope with these.

There were some examples of where Makaton was used to support some specific children with communication. This was not used consistently by staff and therefore did not fully support children. We suggested that the use of Makaton as a consistent and familiar way of communication may support all children in their emotions and wellbeing.

All children had personal plans in place which helped support their wellbeing. On a few occasions however we identified times where some information in these could have been more up to date. Staff should ensure that key information on how best to support a child is always up to date.

Lunch times were not a relaxing experience for children. Staff had made changes to the routine so that children ate lunch in the school dining hall. This was not yet successful. Over the two days lunch time was noisy, disorganised and task driven. On day one some children had to wait too long for their lunch to be served to them. There was not always enough staff to meet all the children's needs. Staff were not well placed at the dining tables to ensure all children received adequate supervision. This is important to ensure children are supported, have a nurturing experience, and kept safe from choking hazards (see area for improvement 1).

Staff had been developing the use of loose parts and had reviewed and improved play areas for children. This had created increased opportunities for children to direct their own play and extend on their thinking and learning.

Children experienced some fun play opportunities and most enjoyed time with friends. We saw children smile, laugh, and enjoy time with staff. Many children were keen to talk to us about their play and told us about their potions, playdough creations, craft creations and what they had been making with blocks.

Some staff used spontaneous play to extend children ideas. For example, making bags from paper and decorating them, decorating the doll's house with wallpaper and making potions in the sand tray. However, these opportunities were not always being used to their full potential. Staff missed opportunities to extend learning in areas such as mathematics. Staff would benefit from support and reflection on how to use children's play ideas to fully support their learning in the moment.

Children's interests were not yet at the centre of planned and spontaneous approaches to learning. Overall children were not being challenged at a level important to their learning and progress. There were a few planned learning experiences available for children based on their interests, such as diggers and cars in a tray of soil for children to explore. However, these were not consistent enough to ensure a well-planned approach to children's learning and development. Other planned times, such as group times with key workers, did not consider the groups interests or learning needs well enough to provide effective learning opportunities (see area for improvement 2).

Children's learning journeys and observations of development and progress were lacking. Many children had limited information available. Many observations for children were group observations and did not show a child's individual learning, interests, or progress. Staff had not made consistently skilled observations with identified next steps for children's learning and progression (see area for improvement 2).

Staff were reviewing their approach to planning for children's learning. This was very new in place and was not yet able to be reviewed for its effectiveness. The manager, senior and staff should review this carefully to ensure that it supports and identifies the interests and learning needs of all children moving forward.

During the inspection we carried out support and improvement work with the senior practitioner surrounding planning, observation, and assessment for children's learning.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are nurtured and supported through their daily experiences the manager and staff should ensure that mealtimes are a safe, relaxing experience that meets the individual needs of children.

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

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and

'I can enjoy an unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

2. To ensure children have fun as they experience high quality play, learning and development opportunities the manager and staff should ensure that the cycle of observation, planning and assessment is used to maximise children's successes.

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).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

At the last inspection a requirement was set to ensure that outdoor areas used by children are safe for their play. This had been met. The management team and staff had worked to ensure children were supervised in all areas of the garden, that children used equipment that was safe, and that the area was clean and free from hazards.

There had been improvements to the indoor and outdoor play environments for children since the last inspection. Together the management team and staff had worked to develop more interesting and developmentally appropriate learning areas for children. This had resulted in some positive changes. The management team and staff recognised that this was still an area for continued improvement but could see how it was beginning to create improved experiences for children. Staff should continue to be self-reflective on how this area of practice can be further developed to reach the highest quality of play environment for children.

Some improvements had been made to how children could direct their own play. Staff used the space available to create large learning areas. Open shelving and storage allowed children to see and choose what was available. This supported children's independence and choice to play. Children who were more familiar with the setting used the space freely choosing what and where to play. Staff had been incorporating more loose parts equipment for children to choose from. This supported children to be more imaginative and explore their thinking.

Staff had considered how to promote curiosity and extend children's learning. The use of picture and idea cards at each play area was in the early stages of being introduced. At times however this was not well thought out. For example, many question cards were in written format which children were not able to understand, some picture cards in areas such as a bits and bobs investigation station were fixed to the wall and not easy for children to access and explore.

Wall displays had improved and were now beginning to show the child's voice in their environment. Recognising themselves in previous learning activities they took part in helps children to revisit and embed knowledge. At times however displays were still adult driven. Staff should continue to work on how to use displays to fully support the child voice.

A quiet room had been further developed with the aim of providing a secure, and comforting space for children to have some rest and quiet time. Children were not always well supervised in this area. The room itself would benefit from further development to meet the aims of a quiet and relaxing space for children to be. More cosy areas within the main playroom would further benefit children to have quiet times alone or with friends. This was ongoing and staff should continue to develop this area for children.

We raised concerns around the upkeep and maintenance of the nursery. In many areas walls were chipped of paint and at times scuffed and décor was tired. Doors to the bathroom area were dirty and in need of being cleaned. The nappy changing area had a stale smell and was not fresh. A hole in the wall was present above the nappy changing bench. Many pieces of furniture, walls and radiators had old sticky residue from previous displays. Sink areas had been sealed with brown tape while waiting for them to be replaced. A hole was present on the linoleum floor by the snack area. The manager had agreed to review any maintenance issues including all these areas mentioned and put in place a plan to ensure the nursery is fresh, welcoming, and well maintained (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To 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 not limited to:

- Walls and painted surfaces are in good order
- All doors and surfaces are clean
- The nappy changing areas does not have any intrusive smells
- 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
- Flooring is safe for use and in good working order.

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).

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

The management team and staff had a positive approach to improvement and welcomed any feedback.

The management team and staff described that improvement had not progressed as fast as hoped. At times there were frustrations at all levels of staff as to how to move forward in a cohesive way. The provider, manager and staff should now consider how to come together and collectively work in a meaningful way that supports true partnership working to achieve the shared vision, values and aims of the setting.

The shared vision, values and aims of the setting had been reviewed by staff using feedback gained from parents. While this helped support a shared thinking, their aims were not yet fully achieved or used within the setting's self-evaluative practices. The aims were not prominent within the classroom for staff to follow. Achieving these aims together would further support positive improvement and experiences for children.

An improvement plan was in place which considered areas identified at the previous inspection along with areas identified by staff for development. Short, medium, and long term goals were clear to follow and helped create opportunities for meaningful change.

Staff used time together to reflect on and make changes to the service. Daily conversations at the end of each day helped staff share information about children's play and make preparation for the following day. Regular meetings had supported staff to discuss progress and use self-reflection as a tool for improvement. Inset training days had been used to support staff to evaluate areas, such as the garden play area and staff training.

A quality assurance calendar had been developed to support the ongoing monitoring and progress throughout the year. Monthly tasks had been set out to look at most aspects of practice and improvement. This was a working document that was also flexible to suit any changing priorities. Along with the calendar the management had also set out clear roles and responsibilities. This supported all levels of staff to

understand the expectations set and how to support each other.

Children and families were not yet meaningfully involved in influencing changes and developments across the setting. 'We asked, you said, we did' was used to gain parents thoughts and wishes surrounding children's personal plans. Doing this allowed staff to identify what was positive, what required development and identified actions to take. Further work is required to ensure that the views of families and children are actively sought and influence positive change in all aspect of care (see area for improvement 1).

The setting was taking part in cohort four of the early learning and childcare improvement programme run by the Care Inspectorate improvement advisors. At the time of inspection this was in the early stages of the programme. Staff attending spoke about how this had been helpful so far in supporting their understanding of improvement journeys.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure high quality care and experiences for children quality assurance and self-evaluation should be embedded into practice. This should mean that:

- Children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting
- Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans lead to high quality care and support.

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 systems' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impacted on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

The management of staff rotas and work patterns supported the care of children. This helped children experience continuity of care from a staff team that were familiar to them. Staff were respectful towards one another and worked flexibly together to support children's needs. Staff had a mixture of childcare skills, knowledge, and experience. Some staff were less experienced in their role. These staff were mostly supported by the team however at times more direct guidance and supervision may help build confidence and skills all round.

Staff were not always well deployed to ensure the supervision and safety of children. At times children played in the quiet room or cloak areas and staff were not aware. Additional staff recruitment hours sourced by management to support those children with additional support needs were not yet fully meeting the needs of these children. This at times meant that a few children put themselves in possible harmful situations (see area for improvement 1).

Temporary relief staff were deployed to cover any staff absence. At times however these staff were not well informed about the plans of the day, the care needs of the children and their role within that. The setting should ensure that any visiting staff member in nursery is well supported to carry out their role and meet the needs of the children.

Rotas were used to support roles and responsibilities connected to routines and duties to be carried out during the day. For example, staff took turns to be responsible for preparing and serve snacks throughout the day or to ensure children had access to outdoor play each day. Staff were suitably flexible in these and supported each other in a way that benefited the children's experiences.

Children's safety was promoted through staff practice when moving around the school. For example, children were escorted by staff in smaller groups. Staff communicated with each other to ensure all children were counted for and present.

Staff were well supported in their wellbeing which helped to maximise attendance. Regular support and supervision meetings were held on a one to one basis with a manager. This helped provide individual reflection and support time. Staff spoke about how supportive the team were when going through difficult times both personally and at work.

Staff were undertaking group training based on areas of practice that required further knowledge and development. All staff were taking part in a course to expand their knowledge of autism spectrum condition. This had not yet been completed however staff were supported to reflect on each module to identify learning and next steps to improve their practice in supporting children.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure the safety of children the provider and manager should ensure that there is the right number of staff and that these staff are deployed in a way that meets children's needs.

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

'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15); and

'People have the time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 08 April 2022, the provider must ensure that outdoor areas for children's use are safe for their play. To do this the provide at a minimum must ensure that:

- Play areas are clean and free from hazards
- Children are well supervised by staff
- Play apparatus is in good working order.

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

'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17); and in order to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Regulations 2011 (SSI2011/210).

This requirement was made on 25 February 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

The management team and staff had worked to ensure children were supervised in all areas of the garden, that children used equipment that was safe, and that the area was clean and free from hazards.

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 support children's wellbeing the manager and staff should ensure that routines, activities and targeted approaches to care meet the needs of children.

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

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 25 February 2022.

Action taken since then

Some progress had been made as detailed within the report however not enough to fully meet this area for improvement set during the previous inspection. This has been carried forward and reworded in line with the new Care Inspectorate document: 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school age children' published in February 2022. Settings should use this quality framework to evaluate their own work and is used by the Care Inspectorate to provide independent assurance about the quality of care and support.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's health and wellbeing the manager and staff should ensure that all children experience everyday mealtimes that are relaxed, create meaningful and positive experiences and meet their individual needs.

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

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 25 February 2022.

Action taken since then

Some progress had been made as detailed within the report however not enough to fully meet this area for improvement set during the previous inspection. This has been carried forward and reworded in line with the new Care Inspectorate document: 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school age children' published in February 2022. Settings should use this quality framework to evaluate their own work and is used by the Care Inspectorate to provide independent assurance about the quality of care and support.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children's health and wellbeing the manager and staff must ensure that children's needs are met. This should include but not be limited to:

- Wearing suitable outdoor clothing for the weather
- Not spending longer periods of time outdoors that children are not comfortable with
- Ensure that children who require quiet/rest time receive this in a suitable, warm indoor space.

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

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 25 February 2022.

Action taken since then

The management team and staff had worked to ensure that children did not spend prolonged time outdoors in cold weather. When playing outdoors children wore suitable clothing for the weather, such as hats and scarves.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support improvement to the service and ensure good outcomes for children, the manager should ensure quality assurance systems are fully embedded into practice.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 25 February 2022.

Action taken since then

Some progress had been made as detailed within the report however not enough to fully meet this area for improvement set during the previous inspection. This has been carried forward and reworded in line with the new Care Inspectorate document: 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school age children' published in February 2022. Settings should use this quality framework to evaluate their own work and is used by the Care Inspectorate to provide independent assurance about the quality of care and support.

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?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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