

Little Einstein's Arbroath Day Care of Children

Abbot Street
Arbroath
DD11 1HH

Telephone: 01241 878130

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

14 December 2018

Service provided by:

Forth Care Limited

Service provider number:

SP2014012365

Service no:

CS2014331857

About the service

Little Einstein's Arbroath is part of a group of nurseries, which are situated in various parts of Scotland. The Arbroath nursery is located in a central, quiet area, close to shops, schools and other areas of recreation. The nursery caters for children aged from birth to school age. The nursery operates Monday - Friday offering full-time and part-time sessions. The service is registered to:

Provide a care service to a maximum of 61 children aged from six weeks of age to entry to primary school age, of whom no more than 16 can be under two years of age, 16 children 0 - under two years, 20 children two - under three years and 25 children three - to those not yet attending primary school.

Four children were present on the first day of inspection and there were five children on our second visit.

There are three playrooms available, but due to the numbers and ages of children attending not all rooms were in operation at the time of the inspection. Each room has direct access to the outdoor area at the rear of the premises.

What people told us

We spoke with children throughout the inspection, who were observed to be happy and settled in the nursery environment. We saw that they were active at play and enjoying their nursery experiences.

Their comments included:

- "Look - look - look at the sky - it's a plane."
- "Look -there's a crane - a big crane - can you see?"
- "The leaves - the leaves are moving - in the wind -its windy - blown away."
- "I was fast."
- "I can see a spider's web."
- "Lots of spiders webs - but no spiders - where are the spiders?"
- "Um that smells nice - I like this play dough."
- "That was yummy - very yummy."
- "Does the baby want more milk? is she happy now?"
- "I gave her a cuddle."
- "I climbed up - that was high."
- "Look Christmas time - the tree - it's shiny."

We received three completed Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) from parents and carers who spoke generally positively about the service. Two of the three parents who returned questionnaires to us 'strongly agreed' and one 'agreed' that overall they were happy with the quality of care that their child receives in the service.

One parent commented that:

- "I visited a few childcare providers and Little Einstein's was the only one that I felt comfortable with as soon as I stepped inside. Everyone was very friendly and welcoming and the manager was very open about the history of the nursery and the changes they had now made. I would recommend Little Einstein's to anyone looking for childcare."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance systems. These demonstrated the service priorities for development and provided some information about how they were monitoring the quality of the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Outcomes for children were found to be generally good and the children present were seen to be settled, happy and secure in the nursery. There was a relaxed, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. We saw that children had formed good relationships with staff and had made friendships with their peers. Staff knew children very well and understood their individual needs.

The free-flow play offered children good opportunities to make choices and develop their own interests. They could move freely between activities and resources, working at their own pace and revisiting activities that were of interest to them. Play was not interrupted by routines or adult led group activities and this resulted in motivated and focused children who remained interested in the learning opportunities available to them. The inspector observed very young children concentrating for some time at the water tray and when building with blocks. We saw that there was some degree of challenge for children, with staff mostly supporting children's learning well, adding value to their experiences. However, this was not consistent and this aspect of children's care and support could be further improved through the staff development programme. Staff were generally attentive and responsive and played with children at floor level, ensuring good eye contact and communication. Staff were mostly seen to be warm and approachable.

Children played independently and in small groups, they were sociable and caring towards each other, they shared, took turns and had fun together. They were learning about number, colour, shape and size in the context of play. Children with English as a second language were being well supported by staff and had made good progress in their bi-lingual communication. These additional support needs could have been better reflected within children's personal plans.

There were very good opportunities for outdoor learning, which was clearly an integral part of the daily routine. Children were independent, they strived to dress themselves and change their shoes as they moved between inside and outdoors. They poured drinks and were independent at mealtimes. We saw that children were confident and had a pride in their achievements and independence, in which they were encouraged and praised by staff.

Planning and routines were child-led and well organised. This ensured that children never became restless or bored, they had minimal waiting times for meals and personal care tasks. There was an easy and natural flow to the children's day that ensured that children were always content, busy at play and had time and space to be restful.

The SHANARRI wellbeing indicators were being naturally met through the children's positive play experiences and generally caring ethos of the setting. Most staff interaction was kind and respectful. Staff were generally responsive to requests and cues from children, including non verbal communications. For example, a staff member lifted a bead threader down from a shelf once she had noticed a child's interest in the toy.

Children's health was being well supported through the varied diet, very regular active play and fresh air, toothbrushing and robust approach to hand -washing. Staff were also trained and aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection, being clear about the service's procedures and who to contact with any concerns about children's safety and wellbeing.

We concluded that outcomes for children were good, they were happy, secure and confident and seen to be generally stimulated by the play and learning environment. We suggested that staff further develop the children's folders to ensure a consistency to the content and quality. Staff should check to ensure that personal plans are always dated and reviewed at least once every six months to ensure that they accurately reflect children's current care needs. We also suggested improved tracking and review of progress on the identified next steps in learning. **(See recommendation 1).**

We also suggested that the approach to planning should continue to evolve, with staff considering how they offer children greater challenge and broader experiences. We also felt that staff could be more aware of the language they use to support children's learning, for example using more open-ended and challenge questions to extend children's thinking and ideas.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The format of children's files should continue to be reviewed and developed to ensure consistency and better account of children's needs, learning and progress to inform their care and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The nursery building was bright, welcoming and spacious. There were large windows and doors that flooded natural light and fresh air into all rooms used by the children. There was secure entry into the nursery, with the position of the office enabling the manager to greet families as they arrived and to monitor who was coming into the building. The ground floor level accommodation made it accessible to all and easy to vacate in an emergency situation. Not all rooms were currently in use, due to the small number of children attending, but they were equipped appropriately ready for use if needed. The rooms used by children were seen to be well organised and with resources appropriate for their age and developmental stage of the children attending.

We saw that staff had reviewed and reorganised all rooms to create more inviting play spaces, with resources displayed at children's level, offering them choice and opportunities to explore and extend their ideas for play. Staff had introduced more natural and open-ended resources and this offered children greater scope for learning, creativity and investigation. Staff had been mindful in creating a calm and not over stimulating environment, with more neutral colour schemes, less brightly coloured plastic resources and the introduction of more sensory materials for children. The rooms were seen to be clean, uncluttered and well cared for. There were soft and comfortable areas with cushions and rugs for children to relax in, we saw children enjoying these restful spaces and were able to enjoy books in a relaxed and uninterrupted manner. The home corner areas had been thoughtfully arranged to create inviting play spaces with the inclusion of some real foods and real life resources to support children's play and learning. We saw this area to be well used, with children busy cooking 'pasta' and making 'breakfast'. Staff tidied up and reorganised resources to maintain children's interest in the area.

There was a good approach to risk assessment, with pictorial risk assessments used with children to enable them to have an active role in checking areas for their safety. This ensured that children were included and were learning to manage risk and take responsibility for their own safety and behaviours. We saw that staff supported the children very well in managing risk, helping children to understand, to test and challenge themselves within safe boundaries.

Children's art work was displayed and children's contributions and achievements were valued through the 'wow' wall display that celebrated children's achievements. For example, a photograph and comment about a child taking their first steps.

Staff had continued to develop the outside play area, which was seen to be very well used throughout this inspection. Staff reported that for most of the year there was completely free-flow access to the outside spaces, but they kept the doors closed to maintain the inside temperature during the colder spell of weather. We saw that children confidently asked or indicated that they wished to go outside and saw that this was always enthusiastically facilitated by staff. Children laughed and had fun outside. Staff engaged actively in their play and brought out additional resources to support children's ideas for play. The outside space now offered children broader experiences, with the introduction of more natural and open resources that promoted children's curiosity and imagination. They explored and investigated, they used magnifying glasses to follow an insect, they watched the birds and the wind, they dug in mud and water in the large tyres, they ran, climbed and balanced. We concluded that children were enjoying and benefiting from their outdoor play, they were active and sociable in the fresh air, they were learning about nature and developing a range of physical skills.

There was a robust approach to hand washing and an observed nappy change saw hygienic and safe practice that followed best practice.

There were appropriate systems in place for recording and monitoring accidents and for the safe administration of medication.

To summarise, we concluded that the nursery was comfortable, safe and warm. Children were seen to be very relaxed, settled and secure in the nursery. We suggested that the environment could be further improved by creating more opportunity for indoor active play. For example, space for children to dance and enjoy music and movement or exercise activities and by introducing more resources like tunnels, small climbing apparatus or small trampoline.

We also suggested that the service could further extend the soft and comfortable areas in the nursery, by introducing more den type spaces, or designated nurture space and more adult-sized seating for staff to sit and read, cuddle and enjoy one to one time with children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We found staff to be mostly cheerful and enthusiastic in their roles and they told the inspector that they liked working at the nursery. There had been some staff changes since the last inspection and some of the staff present had only very recently joined the service. They had settled in well and staff morale appeared to be good.

Staff ratio's were met to an enhanced standard throughout this inspection, which ensured that all children received ample individual attention and support. Although, as already mentioned in Quality of care and support, children's experiences could have been further enhanced with improved staff observation and broader use of language.

We saw that there were good outcomes for children, who were benefitting from the positive attention and good relationships that they had with staff. Staff were having fun with the children, they listened to them and responded positively to their requests and ideas. Staff mostly spoke to the children with interest, warmth and respect. These favourable interactions indicated that there were positive attachments with children. Some inconsistencies to this responsive care should be addressed through monitoring and staff development to ensure consistently high standards of care at all times.

Staff held appropriate qualifications for their roles and there were two trainees who were currently working towards Scottish Vocational Qualifications. However, there was a lack of experience in the workforce and lack of leadership in the rooms at times. The service should continue to develop confidence and expertise in the team to support further improvement. There was a good staff development programme in place that should address these issues over time. There were internal and external training and development opportunities made available to all staff. This whole team training enabled all staff to learn together and provided opportunities for discussion and developing a shared understanding of how key principles could be embedded into nursery practice. This in-house training was further enhanced by attendance at some external training, where staff had opportunities to

meet with staff from other services and discuss and share practice issues. The manager had introduced monthly training topics within team meetings. Recent topics included observation skills and 'Building the Ambition', which were helping to develop practice. The manager understood the strengths and development needs of the team and was providing individual and targeted support. The staff development programme should place additional focus on; responsive planning, good quality recording of children's needs, observation skills, developing reflective practice and the adult role in supporting learning. **(See recommendation 1).**

Staff were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and we saw that safe staff recruitment practice was followed.

Staff had good opportunities to express ideas, views and to contribute to the development of the service. Team meetings, annual appraisals and individual support sessions provided staff with good opportunities to discuss their work, seek guidance and identify training and support needs.

Overall, we found there to be many good qualities within the staff team which had positive impacts on outcomes for children. This was a relatively new team, with a lack of depth and experience. Further staff recruitment should strive to bring experience and leadership skills into the staff group.

We were also concerned that only one staff member held a valid first-aid certificate and stressed that upskilling staff in this area must be an urgent priority. We were reassured by the manager, before concluding this inspection, that all staff would be accessing appropriate first-aid training early in 2019. **(See recommendation 1).**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Effective staff training and development should take place to ensure that all staff are well trained and appropriately skilled to meet children's needs. Staff should be trained in first-aid to equip them to keep children safe and well.

This is in order 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).

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The manager was more settled and confident in her role. She had clear vision and values for the nursery that were starting to be more evident in daily practice. She had an approachable and supportive manner and was a positive role model for staff. This included her daily presence in the rooms, modelling good practice and guiding

and directing staff. She set and reinforced clear expectations for staff, with emphasis on respect and child-led practice. This regular working alongside staff gave the manager a good insight into individual and team practice, their skills and any training and support needs. Viewing of staff records demonstrated how the manager was addressing any practice issues and identifying priorities for training and development.

The manager had established good relationships with staff and families and played a key role in creating the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

The team had developed an improvement plan for the service. This ensured that key goals were identified for improvement, which were tracked and progress was monitored. Current priorities included developing Floorbooks and making greater use of self assessment to help monitor and improve the service. We saw that progress was being made in these areas.

A range of quality assurance measures were in place that had delivered some improvement and was establishing more consistency to the quality of care. Staff had recently started to introduce the 'How good is our early learning and childcare?' tool and its challenge questions to reflect on service performance. They also used 'Building the Ambition' and other relevant tools to help inform their improvement agenda. This was still at an early stage and it was too soon to measure its impact on developing the service. The nursery felt stable and settled and the manager confidently shared some of her ideas for further development of the service. She was currently studying and gave some examples of how she was bringing her learning and ideas into the setting. The service should continue to use and expand their use of self assessment to measure performance, support improvement and promote more reflective staff practice.

The quality assurance framework provided staff with constructive feedback about their work through the manager's room monitoring and other measures taken to evaluate and improve the service.

The service used a range of measures to consult with parents and involve them in the service, for example, stay and play sessions. The team actively sought parental feedback through evaluation exercises, question of the month and the 'you said - we did' hall display that let parents know that their feedback was valued and influenced changes to the nursery.

The manager felt well supported by the area manager and other Little Einstein managers, who met regularly to share ideas and issues and to discuss good practice.

We concluded that the nursery was now benefitting from stable and consistent management, with a positive vision and a commitment and drive for further improvement. We suggested that the service continue to embed and develop effective quality assurance systems to progress improvement and extend quality within the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
24 Jul 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings
7 Dec 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
5 Apr 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
18 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
16 Nov 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 1 - Unsatisfactory Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 1 - Unsatisfactory Management and leadership 1 - Unsatisfactory
12 May 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

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