

Tip Toes Children's Nursery Ltd

Day Care of Children

Valeview
Stenhousemuir
Larbert
FK5 3BY

Telephone: 01324 551 444

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 July 2023

Service provided by:
Tiptoes Children's Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2015012530

Service no:
CS2015338877

About the service

Tip Toes Children's Nursery Ltd is located within a residential area of Larbert and is accommodated within a large purpose-built building. Accommodation includes an office, laundry and kitchen where meals are prepared on site. There are three playrooms with toilets and changing facilities, and cloakroom areas are provided for each room. A large enclosed outdoor play area is directly accessed from two of the playrooms. The nursery is located near local parks, shops and other amenities with transport routes and nearby parking.

Tiptoes Children's Nursery Ltd. provides a care service to a maximum of 66 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. Of those 66 no more than 10 are aged under 2 years. The outdoor space has been taken into account when agreeing the maximum number of children aged 2 and over. Children must have access to the outdoor space at all times.

The service provides funded early learning and childcare for Falkirk Council. We are working with the provider regarding a matter relating to the registration of the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 June and 3 July 2023. 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 and two of their family
- reviewed questionnaire feedback from 22 families and 12 staff
- spoke with staff management and the provider
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children were settled, happy and had fun in their play.
- Children were nurtured by staff who knew them well, and interactions were warm, sensitive, and respectful.
- The staff team were committed to playing an active part in the self-evaluation and improvement of the nursery.
- Managers and staff should continue to develop quality assurance processes and follow best practice guidance to improve outcomes.
- Some refurbishment was required to improve the quality of indoor environments.

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?	4 - 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 strengths supported positive outcomes for children and outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced caring and nurturing approaches from responsive staff who knew children well. Interactions with children were warm and sensitive and staff gave affectionate reassurance when children needed comfort or encouragement. They had awareness of children's rights and were respectful of children's dignity and privacy, for example, when changing children. This allowed children to feel safe and settled and supported their sense of security in the service. One parent told us, "The staff are always lovely and seem very knowledgeable, and the kids love them".

Personal plans supported children's individual care and support needs and reflected families' personal preferences. Information including strategies to support individual children were included in plans. Personal plans were regularly reviewed with parents to update information. Some relevant information to support the needs of a few children had not been included. Staff should ensure that all current information to support each child is included in their plan. They could capture more of the child's voice to make the plan more meaningful to them. To ensure children receive the best possible support for their individual needs staff should continue to review, extend and embed approaches.

Mealtimes provided a calm, relaxed and sociable experience. Staff recognised this time as an opportunity to promote close attachment and support communication. They engaged well with children in nurturing and encouraging ways. This supported children to be safe and provided a positive, caring social experience where children felt valued. Children could choose when they ate, which allowed them to enjoy uninterrupted play. They developed independence skills as they served their own food, poured their drinks and washed their dishes. Parents and children were consulted regularly when planning menus and best practice guidance was used to provide healthy and nutritious food. Children told us how much they liked the meals. To further enhance the mealtime experience, staff could reflect on good practice guidance to develop their knowledge.

Children were supported to be safe and protected because staff knew their responsibilities. Staff had a good understanding of safeguarding children and were confident about the steps they should take if they had concerns. Chronologies recorded significant information although did not always include enough detail. To fully support children some could be developed further, and the manager had identified guidance to support this.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children meaningfully and actively led their own play and learning. Staff were responsive to their interests and provided experiences that promoted choice and independence. Play experiences helped children to develop skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, children joined in with singing, shared books, and counted objects as they played. To develop children's curiosity, creativity, and imagination the service could continue to extend challenging, open-ended and natural resources in all playrooms.

Children had fun as staff played enthusiastically with them, picking up sensitively on their cues. For example, they understood and supported the development of younger children as they played throwing games. Some staff made good use of effective questioning within children's play to extend their thinking. To ensure that children consistently have opportunities to progress and achieve we would encourage all staff to keep working on these skills.

Planning for children's play and learning was child centred and responsive to their interests. Floor books captured children's thoughts and experiences and could be developed to deepen children's learning. Observations of children's learning were recorded and shared with families through digital journals. To capture significant achievements and plan more effectively to extend children's learning staff should continue to develop observations. This would help children to receive the right support and challenge to support their progress.

Staff recognised the importance of working with other professionals and the positive impact this can have on children's lives. For example, a speech and language therapist provided guidance to support children's communication and developing literacy. Consistent approaches to developing literacy and communication such as using pictorial symbols and Makaton signing helped to develop a shared understanding. This supported all children to feel included and to make progress in their development.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where strengths supported positive outcomes for children and outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Playrooms provided opportunities appropriate to children's stage of development. Babies and younger children had space to move freely. Older children could choose from a variety of resources in different areas of their room. To support children's wellbeing staff told us about their plans to develop more cosy, calm and inviting places for children to rest and relax.

Most children benefitted from direct access to the nursery garden throughout their day where they enjoyed fresh air and being active. Outdoor areas provided a good range of play opportunities and resources for children to have fun and develop skills. Children had ample space to run, climb and dig. Staff had a good understanding of the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. One parent told us that the large garden and the amount of time which children could spend outdoors was one of the main reasons that they chose this nursery.

Routines of younger children had been adjusted to safely provide increased time outdoors. Children were able to spend time with siblings which provided reassurance. Children of different ages could play together which provided opportunities to develop responsibility and important role modelling to support learning.

The service made good use of the natural environment within the local community. This provided children with many opportunities to learn and explore. Visits to their allotment encouraged children to learn about growing. Children told us that they enjoyed going for walks and to the park. These experiences meant children were learning about the benefits of an active lifestyle that promoted their health and wellbeing. They also helped them to feel a sense of belonging in the community.

Risk assessments supported children's safety to ensure potential risks were minimised, without compromising activities. As a result, children were able to enjoy challenging, fun play experiences as they developed an awareness of risk in play. We reminded the service to review risk assessments dynamically to respond to changing circumstances. To develop their understanding of safety, children could now be more meaningfully involved in risk assessments.

Measures were in place to minimise the spread of infection and support children's wellbeing. Hand washing was promoted, and children had a good understanding of routines. Rooms were well ventilated, and the manager had revised cleaning routines to support a more planned and consistent approach. The manager had also identified that cleaning provided by external services needed to be improved. Maintaining a clean and safe environment will support children's safety and wellbeing and make them feel valued.

Information about children was kept securely. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed it to meet children's needs. As a result, children's information was protected, and storage complied with relevant best practice.

To improve the experience of children and families some refurbishment was required. We noted some areas which would benefit from improvement, such as flooring, which was chipped, dirty and in need of replacing. Whilst there were some high-quality resources there was a need for some to be replaced or added. We discussed this with the manager who had taken steps to address this within action plans. Maintaining high quality facilities will help to ensure children's safety and give a message that they matter.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where strengths supported positive outcomes for children and outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The new leadership team led the service well and had aspirations for staff, children, and their families. The recently appointed manager told us of their intention to review the vision, values and aims. This would provide an opportunity to reflect with staff, children, and families and we encouraged the manager to include them all in the process. This would support a shared understanding and would contribute to everyone feeling involved in shaping the service.

An ethos of continuous improvement was evident throughout the setting. The staff team were dedicated and enthusiastic about providing high quality care for children. The new management team supported staff to develop confidence. Developing shared leadership within the team was helping to progress improvements. Staff told us that they felt valued and listened to. The manager had identified priorities and there was a clear focus on self-evaluation, which fully involved all staff. This was beginning to promote positive change and improvement to support outcomes for children and families.

Recently introduced quality assurance procedures were having a positive impact. The manager had developed a plan for monitoring and had begun to introduce formal approaches to audit staff practice and a range of procedures. To ensure the best possible outcomes for children and families the service should continue to develop and embed quality assurance approaches making use of best practice guidance.

Working with others helped to drive improvement. The staff team had established strong working relationships with each other, creating a positive ethos of mutual respect and trust. A range of professionals from Falkirk Council helped to extend staff skills. The service had made links with other childcare establishments, to share good practice. These opportunities had been used well to evaluate the service and improve opportunities available for children and their families.

Children and families had opportunities to share their views. Parents and children told us they were asked for their feedback and ideas to improve the snacks and meals and were offered the chance to sample foods being considered for menus. Adjustments were made in response to feedback. This supported them to feel involved in the service. Developing a greater variety of ways to gather children's thoughts and views would help them to feel included and valued.

Communication and opportunities for families to be involved in the service could be developed. Parents were provided with information in a range of ways, and they liked the digital platform which provided updates of children's learning and play. The service invited families into the setting to join in and share learning experiences with their children. Some parents told us that they would like more information and discussion about children's experiences and progress. They also commented that they did not always know who staff were. The manager had identified that they needed to extend parents involvement and should continue to explore different ways to communicate and engage families.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where strengths supported positive outcomes for children and outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff communicated respectfully with each other and were flexible and responsive as they worked together to provide a positive and welcoming environment for children. The staff understood their roles and responsibilities within each area of the nursery. This supported continuity and supervision of children and ensured children's experiences across their whole day were positive. Staff should make sure they position themselves in areas where children could hide or take part in higher risk activities. To support safe supervision of children we asked the service to ensure that staff were deployed in line with their policies and risk assessments.

The provider and manager recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed to provide the right support for children attending. Staff were flexible and breaks were planned to minimise the impact on children whilst also making sure staff had time to rest. Staff deployment at busier times of the day, such as mealtimes, was planned to provide quality interaction with children. On occasions this quality time was interrupted because enough staff were not immediately available. Parents commented that transition times could be improved as staff did not always have enough time or information about their child's day. Overall, appropriate staffing met children's needs and the manager should continue to monitor this as circumstances change.

There was a clear process for mentoring and supporting new staff using the skills and knowledge of the existing staff team. The service used the Scottish Government's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) National Induction Resource to support consistency. Staff observed practice and were supported to understand strategies being used for individual children. They had opportunities for professional reflective discussions and ongoing mentoring. This ensured consistent approaches for children and enabled them to receive quality 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?	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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