

Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Great Western Pre-School @ Great Western Road Day Care of Children

356-358 Great Western Road
Aberdeen



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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Inspection Visit Type: Unannounced

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Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

 [@careinspect](https://twitter.com/careinspect)

Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	5	Very Good
Quality of environment	5	Very Good
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

The management team and staff worked hard to provide a warm, caring and stimulating environment for the babies and children who attended.

The parents and carers who we asked, told us they liked the security of the premises and the caring atmosphere within the service. They liked the home cooked meals and that there was a wide range of activities provided for the children.

Parents and carers said it was good that the children went outdoors most days and they liked the garden and range of outdoor activities provided. Several also commented on the new menus and thought the home cooked meals were better planned now.

We found the manager on duty whilst we inspected to be very enthusiastic about the work of the nursery and noted she was keen to hear and take forward any points raised during the inspection.

What the service could do better

There were some areas we asked the service to look at following our inspection:

- The manager and staff to look at the planning regime to include more next steps for individual children.
- To continue to look at how they involve and share information with parents and carers.
- To look at the hand-washing regime and ensure antibacterial hand-wash is not used for the children.
- To continue with plans to upgrade the Caterpillar's garden area.

What the service has done since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the service is now jointly managed by two managers on a job-share basis. We met both managers during this inspection.

We noted there had been a change in how the Great Western Pre-school group was managed. This had involved all their childcare services de-registering under the previous organisation, and applying for a new registration. This had been completed and the new management structure was working well.

We noted the service had reviewed the menu for meals and snacks, and included the parents and carers as well as the children with this.

One of the outdoor areas had been fully upgraded and the available space they had created was interesting, stimulating, and provides a safe area for the children to play.

The service had also created a sensory room on the top floor which will be available for all age groups to use. This area will provide sensory activities including mood lighting, which will add to the children's experience.

The service had introduced a new CPD regime (continuous professional development) in line with all Great Western Pre-school services. We noted there was an individual folder for each staff member and they were encouraged to take ownership of their own file.

Conclusion

Overall we found a happy and caring atmosphere at Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road. We found the management team were dedicated to the work of the service and keen to encourage their staff team to provide a safe, happy and caring environment for the children in their care.

We noted that there had been several staff changes within the service but found the current staff were enthusiastic, and keen to provide the best standard of care for the babies and children who attended. The staff were very warm and caring and had created a nurturing and interesting environment for children they cared for.

Parents and carers told us they were very happy with the service overall and said that their child enjoyed their time at the nursery. Parents and carers also felt welcome and comfortable within the service.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

The service operated from a former residential building over three floors. The upper floor has a sensory room and office space. The first floor has a baby room and an ante pre-school with toilets areas and changing facilities. The ground floor has two playrooms with access to an outdoor area, children's toilets and nappy changing area, office, kitchen and secure entrance area.

There are two garden areas, one of which has been newly upgraded and provides an interesting outdoor area where the older aged children could play.

The service was registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 70 children under 12 years of age. In the left-hand side a maximum of 32 children from birth to 3 years and in the right-hand side a maximum of 38 children aged from 30 months to those not yet attending primary school.

An out of school service can be provided to a maximum of 16 places on the right hand side of the building. The service operates between the times of 7 am to 8 pm, Monday to Friday.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure that they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right of every child is being woven into all policy practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of environment - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place over two days. This was carried out by one Inspector from the Care Inspectorate. We gave feedback to the Joint Managers, and the General Manager of the Great Western Pre-school group at the end of the second day.

During the inspection visit the number of children varied from area to area. We noted there were always enough staff which showed us that the service was aware of working within the conditions of their registration, and maintaining appropriate adult/child ratios per session. The age of children ranged from babies to children not yet attending primary school.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return that we asked the service to complete and submit to us. We also took account of the information within the service's self assessment and documents we looked at within the nursery.

We sent out 20 care standards questionnaires for the service to distribute to parents, and six parents sent us a completed questionnaire before the inspection.

We emailed three of the parents who had supplied an email address and we received two replies. From this we learned that overall the parents and carers were very happy with the care and support provided at Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road. Comments from these will be included within the body of this report.

During the inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources which included:

Talking with:

- both joint managers
- the general manager responsible for the Great Western Pre-school services
- the staff on duty in each room
- the cook who made all meals
- the handyman
- seven parents and carers over the two inspection days
- children from all rooms (those who were happy to chat with the Inspector)

These were informal chats which - included asking what they liked to do at nursery.

We looked at the:

- aims of the service
- the completed self-assessment
- welcome information given to parents and carers
- certificate of registration
- liability insurance
- planning and observation regime in both areas
- floor books
- children's online learning diary format (ILD)
- care plans in each room
- various surveys and audits completed with parents and carers
- actions plans
- development plan
- complaints policy
- concern book
- child protection policy and procedures
- medication policy and system of administration of medicines

- risk assessment regime
- accident and incident regime
- first aid
- infection prevention and control procedures
- staff meetings
- staff achievement board
- staff training grid
- staff files and record of continuous professional development (CPD)
- staff annual review system
- staff registration with the Scottish social Services Council (SSSC)
- the environment
- children's engagement and enjoyment of activities
- photo albums
- 'Puddlestompin (Great Western's interactive website).

We also observed:

- how staff work
- three members of staff changing nappies during two days
- the hand-washing regime
- the sleeping regime and monitoring of sleeping babies and children
- the snack, lunch and tea sessions
- the equipment and resources
- how staff ensure children get fresh air and exercise and
- outdoor play.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

This was completed to a very good standard and gave a description of the service provided.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

During the two days we inspected the service we informally talked with some children as well as observing them as they played, enjoyed snack and lunch, and how they were with the care staff. We noted the babies and children in all areas were familiar with routines, happy with staff and enjoyed their time at Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road.

When we asked what they liked best about the nursery they replied and usually told us what their favourite activity was. When we asked if they had good fun here they confirmed that they did.

Taking carers' views into account

As part of the inspection process we take time to make contact with the parents and carers and find out their views and opinions of the service provided. We received six completed care standard questionnaires before the inspection. We emailed three parents and carers and received two replies. We noted that overall parents and carers were very happy with the service though several noted there had been several staff changes over the year.

There were several written comments one of which was:

- "We like that our child is happy and content and enjoys her nursery time".

We informally interviewed several parents and carers on both days we were present in the nursery. We learned that overall parents and carers were happy with the care and support provided. They liked the safety and security of the premises, thought there was a good selection of toys and activities for the children, and thought the home cooked meals were good.

Several thought that communication and information sharing could be improved, and when asked about the online communication and website told us they did not really use it. Again they mentioned the staff changes.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.”

Service Strengths

As part of the inspection process we look at how the management team and staff involve the parents, carers and the children with the service. We found that the Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road was performing to a very good standard in relation to this. When we arrived we met with both joint managers and had a discussion about how the service was operating. One of the joint managers had only been in post since March this year but both told us that they felt the new management regime was working well.

Parental Involvement

We asked how the service involved the parents and carers with the care and support provided to the children. Both managers told us they were continuously looking at participation and considered it important to consult parents and carers about all areas of their child's care and development needs. One way they felt that they were good at, and parents and carers liked, was by giving daily feedback in each room.

They also told us about their interactive website 'Puddlestompin'. This was kept up to date by staff, and management considered this was an effective way of sharing information with parents and carers. We also talked about the increasing use of IT technology and how the parents and carers could access IT readily at home or whilst mobile for example; by mobile phone.

We saw there was evidence of encouraging participation throughout the premises. We saw posters with "We Asked, You said, We did", which showed parents suggestions (or questions asked) and information as to what the service had done, or planned to do, to meet these. Parents and carers who we talked with, told us that they were consulted at times and given opportunities to share their views and opinions.

We looked at how the service communicated with the parents and carers. We saw there were notice boards containing information about the nursery, staff information as well as policies and procedures in the main entrance. We saw other notice boards at each room with information particular to that area. We saw a suggestion's box in the entrance area, as well as a complaints policy displayed for parents and carers.

We liked that the service had displayed a comment which said:

- "The smallest suggestion can lead to the biggest improvement".

We noted other communication methods used by the service included:

- emails
- parents' evenings and curricular evenings
- social events at times throughout the year
- telephone
- children's learning journeys (folders in the rooms)
- children's interactive learning diary on the website
- planning floor books.

We had viewed the website and looked at the children's online learning diaries used by the Great Western Pre-school group. We found that this was used by some parents and carers.

Several parents and carers told us they did not use this but were happy with the updates given daily by staff. Other ways were to encourage parents and carers to be involved with fundraising and the example given was the recent 3-5 year olds garden upgrade. Again the managers told us they welcomed all suggestions. We also saw various audits and surveys completed with parents and carers, which we have reported on within Quality Theme 4:4.

During this inspection we looked at the planning regime in place. We saw that the service gathered information from home and used this as a knowledge base to plan the care and support for each individual child. The managers told us that the Teaching Advisor had taken the lead in further developing the planning and evaluation and this was an area they were working on.

The staff used large floor books to plan with the older children, which were displayed. We noted a simpler system used in the baby room - where the stages of development for individual babies were noted, and activities suitable for their ages were planned. Free choice was encouraged and we saw toys and activities on low shelves so they could choose other activities freely.

We looked at the children's learning journeys on-line in one of the pre-school rooms during our first day of inspecting the service. We looked at their folders (paper copy of the learning journey) which went with the child as they moved into the next room. This showed us that their child's developmental progress was shared with parents and carers. The service had nice displays of photographs as well as the children's art and craft. Staff had displayed the current topics, as well as what they were learning.

We looked at the settling-in regime as well as the transition regime between the rooms. We noted new parents and carers received a welcome pack with information about Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road.

Once they had decided to use the service, parents and carers completed a registration form, and information sheets, asking about their child as well as consent forms. From this staff gained an awareness of each child's individual needs then planned the care and support they would provide.

We saw they shared information about fees and the help available for parents and carers with childcare costs. When we asked some of the parents and carers if they had received information before their child started they told us that they had.

The parents and carers also told us that they had visited with their child to view the premises and meet the staff. They confirmed they had been asked about their child's routine and current needs and had discussed the childcare the service would provide. We asked what their first impressions of the service had been, and all said they had liked the friendly atmosphere.

We asked how they had found the settling-in process and they confirmed this had been overall positive. Several said the staff were very understanding and aware of their needs as well as their child's. They told us staff had helped to make the settling-in process positive for both child and parent. From this we learned that the managers and staff were aware of the anxieties of separation that both child and parent suffered and how they strived to make this transition as smooth and stress-free as possible.

We talked with parents and carers who arrived to collect or drop off their child/ children during both days we inspected the service. We had contacted three by email and received two replies. When we asked if they were given information about their child, they confirmed they were. They said they received daily feedback from staff. We observed this during our time at Great Western Road and noted staff made time to talk to each parents and carer. This showed us they were aware of the importance of involving parents and carers with their child's care and development.

During the inspection we observed the staff as they worked with parents and carers who were present. We saw all staff were welcoming and friendly and talked in an open way with parents and carers.

We looked at the feedback the service had gained from parents and carers through their in-house audits and surveys including:

- "Annual Better Place to Be" and "Help Us Assess Our Service Please".

We looked at the feedback we gained from the returned care standards questionnaires and the emails we received. There were some written comments on the care standards questionnaires, and emails we received. These showed us how parents and carers were happy with the service overall.

Among the comments we received were:

- "We are very happy with the standard of care provided by Great Western Pre-school. The staff turnover has been noticeably higher than in the past but the management appear to have addressed the matter in the form of the 'curriculum helpers' being more and more involved in the day to day classroom activities".

Children's Involvement

We looked at the methods used to involve the babies and young children, how they planned and monitored the systems in place. We found that the service was very good at involving the children in their care and learning.

We looked at this in all areas. In the baby room on the first floor we noted the staff had created a positive atmosphere and all were warm and caring in their care of the babies. Staff could demonstrate that they were aware of their stages of development and knew them well.

We saw staff sitting on the floor and playing at their level. It was nice to see they were aware when they needed comfort and reassurance and freely give cuddles. We saw the babies respond well to staff, and we saw they had happy, smiling faces. Staff nurtured the babies and from their happy smiling faces we saw they enjoyed caring for this age group. Staff were good at giving babies praise for their efforts, which allowed them to feel important and valued.

We noted the staff had built up positive relationships with the children which was consistent across all the playrooms within the service. New staff were forging relationships and getting to know the children. We noted that the staff in all rooms worked positively with the children. Staff were very good role models for behaviour and manners, showing them by example how to act, how to share, and how to be kind towards their friends.

We noted staff asked the children for suggestions and ideas, on what they would like to do next, and encouraged them to choose new activities. We noted the older children were involved with the floor book planning, in line with their learning needs. We saw displays of what the children were learning, and how they were enjoying the activities. We noted the service had given out children's questionnaires, which parents helped them to complete at home.

The pre-school aged children were cared for in one of the downstairs rooms and the ante-preschool age group in one the upstairs rooms. We saw staff worked well with these ages and were aware they needed more challenging activities and planned for this. The staff told us the children were fully involved in planning and generally the topics came from them. This showed us staff were aware of the age and stage of development of the children in their care. We noted that the children's ideas were included in the planning.

We noted the planning regime was curriculum based and regularly evaluated. We saw the staff completed 'brain storming' and mind mapping with the children within the floor books. Evaluations were regularly noted down and next steps identified at times. This was shared with parents and carers via folders and the online system.

Areas for improvement

We noted that in some of the children's learning journeys, both in the folders and the online version, that at times staff had evaluated and written "No next steps". Evaluation was generally very good and next steps were recorded in most of the learning journeys.

We discussed this during the feedback session with the general manager and the two joint-managers. We agreed that this should not have been written as children are constantly learning and developing at this crucial time of their lives. We made a recommendation that this be reviewed - **see**

Recommendation 1.

During our discussion with parents and carers we noted that several told us they did not use the 'Puddlestompin' website and some told us they did not access the on-line learning diaries. The managers told us this was one of the main ways they communicated with and informed parents and carers about all aspects of their service, as well as a way they could ask for suggestions and ideas.

The managers told us this was an area they now planned to work on. They again stressed the importance of participation, and making sure they got this right for all concerned.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 1

1. The service should continue with the evaluation regime they have in place but make sure that next steps are identified and planned for.

Reference: National Care Standards, early education and childcare up to the age of 16 years. Standard 4: Engaging with children.

Statement 3

"We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met."

Service Strengths

Great Western Pre-school @ Great Western Road were found to have very good systems and processes in place to ensure the health, wellbeing and the needs of the children were being met. As part of this inspection we also looked at how the service promoted the health and wellbeing of the children through infection prevention measures.

We found the service had a range of policies and procedures in place which promoted the children's health and wellbeing, and informed the staff and parents of best practice in this field. All policies and procedures had been reviewed and updated by the management team and were shared with parents and carers. The interactive website also held information for parents and carers, and was another way the service could share information about how they supported the children's health and wellbeing.

During the inspection we sampled the children's files in all rooms. We noted the staff had recorded information they had gained from the parents, which included information about the child, family, emergency contacts, allergies, medical requirements, likes and dislikes and fears and any additional support needs. We looked at care plans and chronologies held within each room. The chronologies had been introduced relatively recently, and we saw they were updated regularly in line with the regime implemented by all Great Western Pre-school services.

During the inspection we saw the children were happy, confident and settled within their room. We did notice one child who was settling and was upset, but staff were very good at working with him and reassuring him in a kind and caring manner.

The staff supported each child well and demonstrated that they knew the children in their care. We noted staff who were new to the service were well supervised by the existing staff. We heard them explain routines, and share necessary information about the children to help these staff members become familiar and confident.

We looked at how the service managed behaviour and encouraged manners. We heard staff praise children for their efforts for example "well done for tidying" and "good helping". We saw that this boosted children's self-esteem and confidence and showed us that staff understood the children well. We saw that staff were aware that the babies and toddlers preferred to play on their own at times, and needed to be reminded to share or wait for a turn.

We noted staff understood the ages and stages of development of the younger children. All staff supervised their areas very well. They gently reminded the children to play nicely and to be considerate of their friends.

We looked at how the service administered medication and found this was safely organised. Medication was taken in by parents and carers daily if needed and there was a signing-in and out system, which everyone was familiar with. Appropriate systems were in place to record the administration of medication. We discussed the importance of making sure all staff were aware of how to give and record administration of medication, and the manager told us they all received training as part of their induction.

We looked at how staff made sure children were kept free from harm, abuse, bullying and neglect. We found that the staff had attended child protection training and updated this on a rolling programme. New staff were introduced to the service's own child protection policy during their induction period. We asked staff how they would act if they were concerned about a child. Those we asked demonstrated that they were aware of who to approach if they had concerns of this nature. This showed us that the service was actively working to safeguard the children on all levels.

We looked at how accidents and incidents were managed and saw there was a suitable method in place to record any that happened within the service. All staff had received training in first aid, and appropriate first aid equipment was held within the premises, and there were sets available to take when out for walks or outings. The managers told us that all new staff would attend training as soon this could be arranged.

We looked at nutrition during this unannounced inspection. The service promoted healthy eating and shared information regarding healthy eating with parents and carers. We noted information about the new Allergen within food had been shared with parents and carers.

The service provided all snacks and meals which were prepared by the cook in the fully equipped kitchen. The cook used nutritional guidelines and appropriate food preparation procedures. The service had recently updated the menu and had involved the parents and carers as well as children in choosing foods. We saw the six-weekly rolling menu displayed throughout the premises and information about this was also on the website.

We asked some of the parents and carers for their opinion of the food provided. They were overall very happy with the choices. We noted water was available in each room for the babies and young children throughout the day. All snacks and meals were served in each room.

We heard the staff reminding the children to have good table manners and encouraged them to eat their meals so they would be healthy and grow up to be big boys and girls. Children could eat by themselves but were offered help when needed. Diluted fruit juice was offered with the meals.

We asked about babies' milk bottles. The baby room had a food preparation area where milk was made up by staff. We noted there was a comfy chair so the staff could give babies their bottle in a relaxed home-like way.

We looked at the sleeping regime in the service and saw this varied from area to area. There was a sleeping area in the baby room with cots and bedding. We saw this area was warm, cosy and that supervision was easy as staff were in the room. There was also a baby monitor. Each child had bedding used only once and noted this was placed in a laundry bin and the cot wiped down ready for the next time it was needed.

We noted the children were encouraged to have a rest on the small beds after lunch in the Caterpillar's room. They prepared an area for naps once the children had finished their lunch. We saw staff sitting on the floor soothing the toddlers to sleep. We saw those who did not sleep could play in the other half with staff supervision and some went out in the garden.

We looked at how the staff managed control of infection and overall we found this was managed well. Staff promoted hand washing and we saw children washing their hands before eating, after messy and outdoor play, and after using the toilet or at nappy change. We saw staff helping children to wash their hands - see also area for improvement.

We observed nappy changing during this inspection and noted the staff followed procedures well. We found that the staff treated the babies and children with respect and maintained their privacy and dignity during changing. We saw staff chatting with the young children and singing rhymes during the nappy changes which helped the children to relax and enjoy this time. This also allowed us to see the children were comfortable and happy in the care of the staff.

We looked at how the service ensured children had access to fresh air and exercise. We noted this was an area they were keen to encourage and saw children from all rooms playing outside during our inspection. The babies went out for walks in buggies whilst the other age groups played in their section of the garden.

We noted the children in the downstairs rooms enjoyed free-flow play between indoors and outdoors. This promoted their independence and allowed them to choose where they wanted to play. Some children went for a walk to a nearby library to choose new books.

Areas for improvement

We noted that the service provided antibacterial hand-wash for the children to wash their hands with, however this is not in line with current guidelines.

Therefore we made a recommendation - **see Recommendation 2.**

We also noted some staff lifting the lid of the bin with their hands and reminded the managers that this was not good practice. They stated they planned to remind staff at the next staff meeting.

We observed the lunch routine in the Caterpillars' rooms. This was done in two sittings to allow children more time to eat, and for the lunch time to be less busy. However, we asked the service to look at this, because we noted that although children received a drink with their meal it was removed whilst they were eating their pudding. This should be left until the children have finished their meal.

At the second sitting the table was cleaned but not the floor, meaning children were walking through the debris on the floor. The children trying to sleep on the beds were safe and secure, however, one bed was placed near the passage to the beds and that child was tripped over on more than one occasion.

However, on the second day we inspected the service we went into the Caterpillars, to observe this routine, and noted staff had not placed a bed here so there was no child at risk from being trampled on. We discussed this during the feedback session. The managers told us they had been aware the routine had not been handled as well as they normally do, so they were happy the Inspector had revisited this area.

We looked at how the service promoted the Scottish Government's policy, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC). We noted that the managers were aware of the importance of the service's role in supporting children in their care to achieve their full potential. Some of the staff had attended GIRFEC training but not all. We saw that GIRFEC was included on the staff 'Reading List', and staff were aware of the need to read this.

The manager was aware that all staff should become familiar with the GIRFEC guidelines and attend this training as soon as this was available.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 1

1. Anti-bacterial handwash should not be used for washing the children's hands.

Reference: National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 years. Standard 3: health and wellbeing.

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service."

Service Strengths

Please refer to the previous Quality Statement 1:1.

We noted the service had recently upgraded the 3-5 year olds garden area, which was almost completed. We saw the workmen constructing a tree house the first day we were in the service and noted this was in place when we came back two days later. The managers showed us the consultation they had held with parents and carers regarding the upgrade of the outdoor area. We also saw the participation displays within the service as well as the "You said We did" format they used.

The service had given thought as to how they could ensure parents and carers were included with the environment. The managers told us their 'Puddlestopin' website was one way.

We also noted they were in the process of changing the former soft play area into a sensory room, which was almost completed. This was a pleasant room and will be a good addition to their service and used by all the age groups of children. We saw the children were using it at times, for example, the children waiting for second lunch in the Caterpillars enjoyed a session in the sensory room until it was time for their lunch.

We noted they involved the children naturally during the session, asking for their opinions, allowing free choice and supporting the younger ones in their choices. It was nice to see the young babies choosing from baskets and shelves what they wanted to do.

Areas for improvement

During the inspection we noted that there was only one area of the garden which had been upgraded, for the 3-5 year olds. The managers told us their next plan was to look at, and improve the Caterpillar's outdoor area.

Two of the parents we talked with had not been aware that the garden had been so extensively upgraded and told us the Caterpillars garden was "rather tired" and "in need of work". We shared this information with managers during the feedback session and they were aware of this and planned to work on this. They told us parents and carers and the children will be fully involved with this.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 2

“We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.”

Service Strengths

The service operated from a former large house which has been converted for use as a pre-school day care centre. There is a small garden at the front with a larger area at the back. This outdoor area is divided into two play areas and a staff car park. The premises were well maintained overall and they had the services of a handyman for repairing any items as and when needed.

The service had a secure entrance, which remained locked at all times. We saw that the manager's office had a viewing window into the entrance hall and noted this enabled the managers to view people who entered. When we asked parents and carers if they were happy with security at the Great Western Road service they said they were. They confirmed that the door was locked and they had to use a code to enter and several told us this was reassuring. This showed us that the service was providing a safe area for babies and young children.

We saw that the premises were well ventilated and had natural light from the windows. The premises were decorated throughout with examples of the children's art and craft, including the baby room. We also noted photographs and displays related to topics and events. The effect was child-friendly and showed they celebrated the children's achievements.

The ground floor had two playrooms both had French doors and one end which led directly to a play area. Good use was made of the outdoor areas, with the doors open at times during both days, allowing the children to play outside or play indoors as they chose. There were two areas on the middle floor - the baby room and the ante-pre-school age (approximately aged 3-4 years). Children had to be accompanied up and down the stairs to use the garden. On the upper floor was the sensory room which had been recently introduced.

We spent time in all areas during our inspection over the two days. We noted the baby room had a warm and caring atmosphere. This was of open plan design with a food preparation area where staff could prepare milk feeds and serve the snacks and meals. We noted the baby room was laid out to allow crawling and floor play which was suitable for their age and stage of development.

The staff observed the babies and found out the type of activities they liked then planned to provide this as well as introduce new activities as they developed. There were toys and activities on low shelves and in boxes on floor level which allowed children to choose what they wanted to play with. It was nice to see real household items in the home corner. We heard the baby's laughter as they played and noted they were engaging well with staff.

We noted there was a nappy changing room on each floor which was shared between the two rooms. Though this was small both areas were well equipped with hand-basins. There were suitable toilet areas situated near the other playrooms.

The children had access to a wide selection of toys and activities in each of the rooms. Staff had made good use of available space to provide a very good range of play experiences for young children in their care. There was ample space to play indoors. We noted the rooms were laid out to allow children to choose to play together in the larger group, or in a smaller group. We noted staff had created "corners" for this. There were also quiet areas where children could relax with a book or take a little "chill out" time of their own.

We noted there was a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere at Great Western Road. We saw the managers greet parents and carers and we saw staff take time to welcome each child into the service. At the end of their stay we saw staff say goodbye to each child and talk in an open and friendly manner with their parents and carers. We noted the children were familiar with routines and generally very relaxed and happy. We saw happy faces and children busy playing with their chosen activities during both days we were present in the service.

We found that staff supervised the four areas and were competent in their roles. We noted each room was organised with appropriate storage areas for their toys and resources. We saw staff encouraged the children to put things away after they had finished playing with them, and to look for missing items. This showed us that the staff encouraged the children to take care of the toys and equipment and to value the activities provided. The children in all rooms were familiar with the routines as well as 'nursery rules'. Staff reminded the children to show care and consideration to their friends.

All furniture and equipment was in a good clean condition. We noted that the furniture was age-appropriate, well maintained and suitable for the needs of the age group present in each area.

Overall we noted a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness with the premises. We saw staff tidy as they went, wiping up spills when any occurred. We did not inspect the kitchen but noted there was a good level of hygiene and cleanliness. The meals were cooked in-house and safely transported from the kitchen to the children's rooms.

We looked at the outdoor area available for the children. We noted the older children playing in their upgraded garden and enjoying the new tree house. The younger children played in their garden area with toys suitable for their age and stage of development. We noted the outdoor areas were well used and had a wide range of outdoor toys, activities and play equipment. We observed the staff and noted they supervised the outdoor areas well.

Areas for improvement

The outdoor area for the Caterpillars had not yet been upgraded. Again the managers told us this was due for refurbishing next.

We also noted that the nappy change cubicle in the downstairs area was very small, so the staff had placed the bin outside the room. We discussed this with the manager and suggested they revisit this area with a view to obtaining a suitable bin which would fit inside the room.

In the nappy change room on the upper floor we saw staff lift the children to wash their hands in the wash hand basin. We discussed this during the feedback session and suggested they risk assess this with a view to protecting staff's backs and look at obtaining a step for children to stand on.

We also saw the 'Sudocrem' tub remained open during nappy change, however, this was not used. Cream should remain closed until needed to prevent the spread of infection.

We are confident this will be addressed by the management of the Great Western Road service.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 2

"We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff."

Service Strengths

We looked at staff recruitment during this inspection. We found that the Great Western Pre-school group have a very good system in place for safely recruiting staff, which was practiced by the service at Great Western Road.

We saw suitable written recruitment policies and procedures were in place.

The procedures included:

- advertising for staff
- submission of CV during the application process
- short-listing prior to interviewing applicants
- pre-employment checks including PVG
- checks with registration bodies.

We noted the service had a very good induction regime in place for new staff which ensured that all staff understood their roles within the service. We asked one of the newly recruited members of staff how she had found the recruitment process. She told us she had received an induction pack, and was currently reading this, as well as becoming familiar with the staff and her new duties.

She also told us that:

- "the managers and staff were very helpful and that her first day had been busy, and enjoyable".

Areas for improvement

Whilst we found the recruitment procedures to be robust and followed correctly, several parents and carers gave us feedback to the effect that they thought there had been too many staff changes recently. Several commented that some of the staff appeared to be "quite young" and "inexperienced".

We shared our findings with the managers during the feedback session. However, parents and carers told us the staff were friendly and caring and worked hard in the service.

We did note there had been quite a high turnover of staff recently and both managers agreed with this.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

“We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.”

Service Strengths

As part of the inspection process we look at staff practice. We noted that the staff team at Great Western Road worked well together and provided a very good standard of care and learning for the children in their care.

All staff presented as enthusiastic about their role and committed to providing a good standard of care for children. We saw they were interested in the children in their care and keen to promote their wellbeing. We saw that staff in all areas worked hard to make sure the children were safe, happy and content. When asked the staff told us they enjoyed working at the service and felt well supported by the current staff team.

When asked both the managers told us that they were very happy with the staff team and thought they all worked well together. They continued to have full staff meetings on a regular basis. This was confirmed by staff who told us at these meetings they discussed all aspects of the service, which allowed for the smooth running of the service.

We saw staff talking together at various times during the two days we inspected. We saw them exchanging information by discussing how the morning had gone, plans for the afternoon, and how to support specific children within their care.

Overall the staff group demonstrated that they were skilled, motivated and committed to providing a high quality service for the babies and young children who attended. We also saw the qualified staff were very good at making sure the newer and less experienced staff understood their roles within the service.

During the inspection we looked at staff supervision and training. We noted that there was an annual review regime in place and all staff had a review which was recorded. We asked how the managers monitored staff performance and noted this was regular and feedback given to the staff. The managers told us they liked to work alongside the staff as this gave them an insight into their practice as well as made for strong working relationships. This was ongoing and training needs often identified as a result.

Staff told us they were encouraged to attend training, and liked to do so as this helped them in their role. We asked how they kept up to date with current childcare practice. They told us by training and also by the 'reading list'.

Since the last inspection Great Western Pre-school group had introduced a new continuous professional development (CPD) regime. Each staff had an individual folder which included a "reading list". This was a list of suggested reading with the reading articles displayed in the staff room. Staff recorded when they had read a particular article or book.

Training records were held centrally, so when core training was due to be updated the staff were reminded.

Staff had access to a wide range of core training including:

- pre-birth to three
- first aid
- child protection awareness
- food hygiene.

We noted that the Great Western Group were an assessment and training centre. This showed us training was high on their agenda, and staff would be supported to gain qualifications as well as keeping up to date with best practice.

As part of an inspection we take time to talk with parents and carers about the staffing within the service. We interviewed parents and carers during the inspection visit and found that the parents and carers were happy with the staff overall. When asked if they thought they had the necessary skills to support their children's learning and development, they told us that the permanent staff did - but they were unsure about the newer staff.

They told us the staff were "friendly and helpful" and one said the staff in the pre-school room downstairs were "excellent".

This was further confirmed within the care standards questionnaires and the emails we received.

Among the positive comments we received was:

- "I think the class supervisors they currently have at Great Western are very good. The quality of the class supervisor has made a big difference to the classes in general".

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

The SSSC is the body that regulates care staff and decides the level of qualification for each post. We saw that the majority of the staff were qualified to the required level, and were taking responsibility for ensuring that their practice was regularly updated in line with best practice guidance. The manager told us all new staff would be supported to gain a qualification.

We found that all staff who were required to, had applied for registration with the SSSC. We discussed how the service helped staff to apply for registration, which ensured staff applied correctly. We noted that during the induction regime new staff were supported with new applications for registration with the SSSC when required.

We noted that all new staff and students were checked under the 'Protection of Vulnerable Groups' (PVG) before starting work in the nursery.

Areas for improvement

We noted there was a copy of a Disclosure Scotland check kept within a staff file. We discussed with the manager how such checks should not be kept but the disclosure Scotland number and date of check only. However, this had been used as a proof of address so the manager photocopied the address then shredded the certificate.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service."

Service Strengths

We noted the service was now jointly managed on a job-share basis. Both managers were new to the service at Great Western Road but had worked for the group in other nurseries for several years. We found both managers to be enthusiastic about their role and keen to maintain a high level of support and guidance for the staff. One of the managers was currently working in Caterpillars supporting one member of staff who was "stepping up" and taking on the supervision of this room once the current supervisor left.

Parents and carers who were interviewed told us they felt both the managers were helpful and approachable. We noted some told us they did not have much contact with the management and would happily talk with any of the staff if they needed to do so. Generally parents and carers thought the service operated well and they had not real concerns about how it was managed.

Areas for improvement

We discussed again the importance of sharing information with parents and carers. The management team stated their intent to revisit how they shared information generally and look at how the parents and carers were (or were not) using their website.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide."

Service Strengths

We looked at the quality assurance regime during this inspection process. The joint managers shared the results of quality assurance surveys they had completed with parents and carers recently.

We found that quality assurance was an area that the Great Western group was keen to promote and had worked hard on - as well as looking for new or different ways to encourage the parents and carers to become involved with assessing their services. We noted they did this regularly, in an informal way, as well as more formally through various ways.

The managers both said they welcomed suggestions and comments from parents, carers and the children then they knew they were meeting their needs and providing what people wanted to see within the service. The managers told us one of the main ways of consulting parents and carers was via the interactive website 'Puddlestompin' though they were now aware this needed to be promoted as we had learned not all parents and carers used this.

One of the managers told us she liked the online communication methods, and it suited her as a working parent herself but would look at ways to ensure they were reaching every parent.

We noted various surveys were sent out to parents and carers including:

- "Better place to be".

There were other methods used to look at the quality of the service they provided included:

- the Care Inspectorate self-assessment document
- annual return
- evaluation using child at the centre
- regular staff meetings
- monitoring regime (by the managers)
- development plans
- voting sessions by parents and carers on 'Puddlestompin'
- regular parents' evenings and events
- participation displays and audits on specific topics such as the garden
- monitoring visits by the general manager
- visits by development workers and a Teaching Advisor to assess and work with staff
- observations of children and next steps in their care and learning
- suggestion's box.

We discussed how the inspection regime was one form of quality assurance. The service received inspections from Education Scotland as well as the Care Inspectorate. Previous inspection reports were displayed for parents and carers.

The general manager told us that any recommendations made, or areas they needed to look at, were looked at across all the childcare services managed by the Great Western group. They would identify action points from the report and then these were discussed at the full staff meetings, where they planned how they would work on this to make improvements or changes needed.

We interviewed and asked the parents and carers if they had opportunities to comment on or make suggestions about the service. Some told us that the service was good at asking for their views and welcomed suggestions. They were regularly consulted and given opportunities to have their say. Some thought this was an area the service could revisit. One had not been aware of the garden upgrade.

The parents and carers said that generally the notice boards were regularly updated and they felt they were kept informed of what was happening at Great Western Road. Some told us they would look at the website as well as at the online diaries. They told us staff informed them of day to day events and reminded them about items they needed to bring or if their child needed anything. From this we learned that parents and carers had opportunities to share their views both formally and informally

The managers told us that audits completed with the parents and carers were an important part of making sure they were meeting their needs. All surveys were collated, discussed and action plans developed from this. The service shared the results with parents and carers and highlighted what they planned to do now. This was confirmed by the parents and carers we talked to during the inspection and also within the care standards questionnaires.

We noted that there were several positive comments within the care standards questionnaires, as well as the emails sent by parents and carers, one of which was:

- "We are still new to the service but are impressed by how it is run, the dedication of the staff and the positive development of our child".

Areas for improvement

Similar to the feedback sessions we had had with other Great Western Pre-school services the manager and general manager highlighted how important it was to regularly evaluate the service. We talked about the importance of looking for new methods and ways to ensure they continued to assess the quality of service they provided.

Both managers told us that quality assurance was continuous and monitoring would continue to be done by an Independent Contractor on a rolling programme. The manager of the service said the input from the general manager was very helpful.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

5 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

6 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

7 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld for this service.

8 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

9 Additional Information

This is the first inspection under the new management structure.

10 Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

 @careinspect

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