Mulberry Bush Nursery
Day Care of Children

Park Lodge House
17 Charlotte Street
Helensburgh
G84 7EY

Telephone: 01436 679 822

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 November 2019

Service provided by:
Ms Claire Murdoch

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003003250

About the service

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

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Mulberry Bush Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 114 children at any one time:

- 12 children aged 0 to under 2 years
- 10 children aged 2 to under 3 years
- 30 children aged 2.5 years to those not yet attending primary school on ground floor of main building
- 22 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school on the upper floor of the main building
- 40 children aged 5 to 16 years.

Mulberry Bush Nursery is situated in a residential area in Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute. The service is based in self-contained premises, comprising two separate buildings. One small building for children under two years of age and the main building for older children. There is a large mature garden to the rear of the premises and another garden with artificial grass to the side of the building.

Mulberry Bush Nursery's vision is "to ensure that children are encouraged, supported and involved throughout the process of learning. In practise, we believe in the promotion and development of meaningful inter-personal relations, which lay the foundation for the child to enjoy and benefit from all aspects of learning. To a child "play is work" therefore we emphasise the importance of a happy and relaxed setting.

"Implementing the breadth of the curriculum fully stimulates and encourages the child into positive development physically, emotionally and socially and to have a higher level of self esteem. In turn the child will be more confident and will develop their natural interests and curiosities together, with the child's urges to gain more knowledge from their immediate environment.

"As part of the daily routine children are given the right to exert their choice during free flow, outdoor play, snack choices, group time and are involved in all areas of planning.

"We promote and implement positive attitudes towards equality, diversity and social inclusion. We continually develop and improve our Nursery, involving all stakeholders in on-going assessment and review. This year we plan to review our vision, values and aims through consultation with staff, children and parents. This will help to ensure that the ethos we are providing is shared and agreed. By exploring these further, we want our vision, values and aims to become merged into our professional language on a daily basis which will then be adopted by all involved."

What people told us

During the inspection there were 112 children attending over the morning and afternoon sessions. We observed these children at play indoors and outdoors. Children were very happy and settled in the nursery and were highly engaged in their play and learning throughout the inspection. We joined the older children for lunch and they told us about the healthy lunches they enjoyed and discussed the morning outing to swimming lessons. Some of the older children told us what they enjoyed about nursery. Children attending the after school service chatted confidently with us about what they enjoyed about the after school care service, including the snacks and activities.

Twelve children completed two stars and a wish sheets to tell us what they liked about the service and what they would wish for. Children commented:

"I like going outside and swinging on the trees and swings."

"I wish there was a door in the games room."

"I like the Xbox and football game."

"I like playing Power Rangers outside and playing with my friends."

"I like snack - orange and apple and pineapple."

"I wish there was more swimming."

"I like drawing in the messy room."

"I like seeing my friends and playing with them."

"Snack is boring because it takes forever to eat it."

"I like counting numbers at nursery because I can count to 100."

"I don't colour in for group time and I would like to."

"I would like more pencils ... and pens, please."

"I wish that the older ones could have a cupboard with older things."

We received 36 completed care standards questionnaires from parents/carers using the service. Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the care their children received. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the service provided to their children and commented:

"I have used Mulberry Bush Nursery for childcare for a number of years now. I have always found that they provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for the children. The staff and management team take time to get to know the children and families and are always approachable and helpful."

"This is my third child to attend Mulberry Bush and there is a real sense of co-parenting with the staff. They provide such a caring, nurturing environment. My child has faced some speech and other delays prior to attending nursery. The staff have gone above and beyond for my child, as have the management team, who have ensured that my child receives the support needed to help them flourish. My child is thriving and I strongly believe the safe, loving and exciting environment has played a massive part in my child's development. My child is always happy at nursery and the daily feedback is reassuring my child's progress grows. The frequent, more in-depth progress reports, are fun and informative."

"Mulberry Bush is a home away from home for my children. Not only do they love the staff but they also relish all the outdoor play opportunities available. In my experience the management have also gone out of their way to accommodate unexpected changes to childcare and taken my children for extra days when they can. We love Mulberry Bush and without them I wouldn't have felt as secure returning to work full-time."

"My child has been at Mulberry Bush since the baby unit and is now at school and attends Mulberry ASC. My child loves it there, has great friends, lots of fresh air and is always very well cared for."

"I am very happy with the care of my child and facilities. The nursery has been nothing but excellent for both my children."

"Mulberry Bush is always friendly and welcoming to my children. It is a lovely environment for them to be in while I'm at work and I feel confident that the staff go above and beyond to care for them. My children have been a part of every unit now and they have enjoyed each one."

"They continually invest and renew equipment. Time for each child."

"My child has been attending Mulberry Bush Nursery from 7 months old and has always enjoyed their time and formed close bonds with all staff and key workers. My child asks to come to nursery every morning as they enjoy it so much and it feels like a home from home. My child attends regular swimming lessons and is also part of the 'young at heart' scheme which I feel is fantastic."

"My children have attended Mulberry Bush Nursery for over 11 years. They have been well cared for by every member of staff all the way through the setting. The opportunities for activities within the community are fantastic. They have accessed swimming, tennis, dancing and taken part in the young at heart project at a local care home. The staff, management and whole of Mulberry Bush Nursery are amazing going above and beyond to help and support all of their families and children in their care."

"My child has come on so much since starting the Mulberry Bush Nursery and has made lots of new friends. My child has just started toilet training and the staff have been amazing at encouraging this in nursery. I love the new lunch menu as my child loves fruit and veg and has been trying lots of different homemade meals with veg in them."

"They provide a fantastic service. I feel the baby room could maybe be bigger/patio doors to decking to allow children more freeflow outside. So, so happy with the service they provide."

"My children love going to this nursery, I am confident that they are very well cared for and made to feel secure and safe whilst there. They love all of the play areas including messy and outdoor play. The nursery are always open to questions and have a friendly, welcoming approach."

"The staff at Mulberry Bush Nursery have always gone above and beyond to accommodate the needs of both our children who are very different. They have at all stages liaised with us and offered us support at times when each of our children have gone through difficult phases which has invaluable for us as a family. The activities the nursery offer are fantastic and it is very evident that every member of staff has the wellbeing and happiness of each individual child at the forefront. My children and our family see the staff here as an extension to our family as they treat our kids and teach them respect amongst other qualities. We trust them implicitly and cannot recommend them enough."

"Mulberry Bush Nursery is amazing, they make going to work so easy and guilt free! Providing lots of activities in the local community - tennis, swimming, care home, dancing, access to the parks for walks etc. Thank you to all the staff for your love, care and attention for our children and their development."

"Both my children have attended this nursery and the staff have always ensured that they are happy and cared for to a very high standard. The journals that I receive for my child are excellent and really capture my child. I love the extra activities that the nursery provide for my child such as swimming, tennis, care home visits. The staff are always approachable and go above and beyond."

"We're happy with all aspects of the nursery from educational and physical curriculum. Staff are good at communicating with us each day. Our children are really happy and settled there and we are happy with how they are developing."

"Baby Room is absolutely excellent. Cannot fault staff's care and attention. However, the Explorers section I feel needs a better welcoming policy. When taking child into Explorers we are greeted at the front door and then left in the hallway. Child has nobody to welcome them and we rarely know what room to go into. My child is left standing not knowing where to go. A better system of one staff bringing each child in to play would make children feel more welcome."

We discussed the above comment with the manager of the service and it was agreed that the welcome arrangements would be reviewed.

"An amazing nursery with all amazing staff. Definitely what all nurseries should be aspiring to."

"Mulberry Bush Nursery in my view is the best nursery I have used. The staff are professional at all times, giving quality feedback at all times. The facilities are perfect for my child and plenty of activities arranged outwith the premises such as swimming, dancing, tennis, visits to the cinema and other activities I believe puts this childcare centre above all the rest. The difference I have seen in my child's education has been immense."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at the service improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated the priorities for development and how the quality of the service provision was being monitored.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Parents and carers using the service expressed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of care their children received. Many commented specifically on the family/home from home ethos of the service, which the management team worked hard to promote.

Each child had a personal plan consisting of an All About Me format along with a registration form to record pertinent information about children. This information was used to tailor children's care to their individual needs. The manager had identified a need to make the content of children's personal plans more meaningful and we discussed and shared some information to assist with this process.

Staff demonstrated confidence in their responsibilities for safeguarding children and the manager confirmed that staff would continue to participate in annual refresher training in child protection to ensure that children were safe and secure at all times.

We found that staff were responsive to the youngest children's individual routines and were keen to work in conjunction with parents/carers. We observed staff being responsive to children's needs for nappy changing, cuddles, soothing for teething, sleep and bottles. Babies were settled and happy in the unit. Staff knew children well and we could see that close attachments had been formed.

Children throughout the setting spent lots of time outdoors for fresh air and active play and learning. Most were learning to become independent through getting dressed in outdoor clothes and footwear.

Older children enthusiastically performed a song they had written about bees and the environment and demonstrated their French and signing skills. Children were very confident, displayed good manners and played co-operatively with their peers. They chatted confidently with us about what they liked to do and what they had been learning.

We could see that children had very positive relationships with staff. Staff knew children well and responded considerately and patiently to their needs, conversations and questions. We noted that planning had recently been changed to offer more experiences for children to lead their own learning.

We joined the older children for a very pleasant and sociable lunch experience. Some children had packed lunches and others enjoyed a hot lunch prepared on the premises. The setting had recently become meat free and we noted that parents/carers were very positive about this approach. Children had become confident and independent in serving and clearing their own lunches and snacks. Staff joined children for lunch and facilitated interesting conversations.

Many children at the after-school service had been attending since nursery. Children told us they enjoyed attending the service and valued making friends with children from other schools. They told us that some children were elected to be "Have Your Say" representatives to influence the programme and resources, in accordance with the wishes of the larger group.

Overall, we observed confident, settled and happy children who had developed very good relationships with staff and, for the most part, with each other. Children were highly motivated to lead their own learning and direct the flow of experiences.

Since the last inspection, we could see a dramatic difference in the quality of the setting. The management team and staff had worked hard to improve both the learning environments and the premises overall.

The introduction of more natural decor and resources into the learning environments ensured a calm and attractive layout. Playrooms were warm, welcoming and nurturing and had been thoughtfully furnished and resourced to offer children increased opportunities for creativity.

Playrooms had become more enabling environments offering rich and varied spaces with high quality familiar and new resources. Activities and resources were well organised and attractively presented at child height. A variety of resources, including loose parts, could be moved and used in a variety of ways stimulating children's imagination and creativity.

Children could freely explore their environments both indoors and outdoors in the knowledge that comprehensive risk assessments were in place, which not only addressed the hazards for children but highlighted the benefit of risky play in many areas.

The outdoor area was very well developed and offered a variety of play surfaces including natural and hard surfaces. Mature trees and shrubs had been utilised to make dens and places of interest. Children could climb, run, hide and enjoy the large loose parts outside for open ended play.

During the inspection, children spent a great amount of time outside exploring, playing in the mud, playing alone, in pairs and in groups. We could see how much children valued the outdoors and the fun they could have. We noted that children of all ages were well supported by staff outdoors.

What the service could do better

Electronic journals had been introduced just over a year ago to record observations of children's progress in learning and development. While staff were becoming more familiar with these, the manager was aware of the need to develop these further to ensure staff were fully capturing children's progress and planning to secure individual next steps in learning.

We found that appropriate arrangements were in place for the storage and administration of medication to children. However, we felt this could be better organised to ensure efficiency. The manager agreed to keep a folder for current medication consent forms separate from expired medication consent forms to ensure forms could be located more quickly.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

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

Recommendation 1

The service provider should ensure that all staff are aware of the need to comply with the administration of medication procedures at all times. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment and Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 10 November 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation
We were able to confirm that the necessary steps had been taken to ensure the safe storage and administration of medication within the setting. We were satisfied with the progress made on this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

The service provider should ensure that there is a personal plan in place for each child and that each personal plan is reviewed at least once in every six months. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 6 - Support and Development.

This recommendation was made on 10 November 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation
We were able to confirm that each child had the necessary information to form a personal plan in place and that this information was reviewed regularly. We were satisfied with the progress made on this recommendation.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
19 Sep 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
24 Jun 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good
25 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
8 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
22 Jul 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
27 Jan 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak

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