Little Learners Nursery & Day Care
Day Care of Children

Tulloch Place
Inverlochy
Fort William
PH33 6JD

Telephone: 01397 701 040

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 December 2021

Service provided by:
Nevis Bank Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003001835

Service no:
CS2003008658

About the service

Little Learners Nursery & Day Care has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011. It provides a care service to a maximum of 42 children aged six months to not yet attending primary school, where no more than nine have reached their second birthday. The service is provided by Nevis Bank Nursery Limited and operates from refurbished accommodation in the village of Inverlochy on the outskirts of Fort William. The service has sole occupancy of the building and has secure outdoor play areas.

The nursery is in partnership with the Highland Council to deliver early education and childcare to 3-5 year old children as well as eligible two year olds.

The service's main aim is:

'To provide a warm, secure, safe and friendly environment for all children in our care. They will benefit from a wide and varied range of activities which are appropriate to their developmental stage. All experiences will be child led: child centred and will be focused on the interests and needs of the children within the group and outdoor experiences are available throughout the day.'

A full set of aims and objectives are available from the service.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC); Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC supports children and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

The children present during the session were observed as being very happy and relaxed in the care of the staff. There was a good rapport between the children and staff which allowed for natural and open communication. The children in each of the rooms were all engaged in a range of activities both indoors and out. We spent time outdoors with the preschool children who all had lots of fun making use of the wide range of resources and enjoying the opportunity to take part in physical activities in the fresh air.

As part of the inspection, parents and carers were invited to complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback. The nine parents and carers who completed the questionnaire were all very happy with the care and support their children received. They highlighted good levels of communication and information sharing. Parents also appreciated the development of the outdoor play area and the opportunities it offered their children to take part in fun outdoor activities and have access to fresh air on a daily basis.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of this inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good

Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

What the service does well

We spent time in each of the two playrooms. The children were all happy, settled and relaxed. They experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff who supported their care needs. Staff offered comfort, cuddles and reassurance which supported children to feel safe and secure.

We observed the children having lots of fun taking part in both indoors and outdoor play. Since the previous inspection, work had been done to develop the outdoor play space. While outdoors, the older children were engaged in their play in a purposeful and meaningful way. Children were encouraged to follow their interests and curiosities and lead their play experiences. Parents were all very positive about how much use was made of the outdoor area to offer the children access to physical activities and fresh air.

The manager and staff had made good use of online communication with parents and carers which helped to maintain positive relationships, especially when the children were unable to attend the nursery. They shared newsletters and kept families up to date with their children's learning through a variety of methods including social media platforms. This was highlighted as a strength by parents as this enabled them to feel informed and included. Comments made included:

'Her teachers are also great at communicating with myself when I pick my daughter up, I'm told all about her day and any other important information that I may need to know.'
'Always great with feed back with how he has been.'
'They have always communicated information well.'

The children experienced positive and relaxed meal and snack times. The children were able to have lunch at a pace which was right for them. These were social events where the staff sat with the children and chatted with them. The children received appropriate levels of support and independence skills were promoted.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection, prevention and control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and families. For example, good handwashing routines were in place and had been adapted in line with current guidance. The playrooms were visibly clean with enhanced cleaning regimes in place to prevent the spread of infection.

Staff had a clear understanding of their role and responsibility relating to keeping children safe and protected. The staff had completed child protection training. This helped reduce the potential risk of harm to children, as staff had the knowledge and confidence to respond to any concern.

Since the previous inspection, the manager and staff had continued to make improvements to the service which had a positive impact on children's outcomes. There was a culture of continuous improvement and a clear process for quality assurance.

There was an improvement plan which detailed the vision, values and aims of the service. Clear improvement priorities were identified. When identifying these priorities, the manager and staff had considered feedback from children and their families. Listening to the views of families and acting on their wishes showed that they were valued and included.

The improvement plan was routinely reviewed to ensure that all identified priorities were realistic and progress was being made. During regular staff meetings, staff had the opportunity to reflect on what had gone well and discuss areas for improvement.

Staff spoken with during the inspection all felt very much part of a team. They believed that the management team welcomed their feedback, comments and suggestions. They explained that the manager and deputy manager visited each of the playrooms daily and consequently there was regular opportunity to discuss anything informally with them. Staff felt valued, respected and were motivated as their opinions were listened to. Staff felt included in decision-making and planning activities.

What the service could do better

Staff were all aware of the individual care needs of the children attending. Each of the children had a personal plan in place. As part of the inspection, we looked at the personal plans for five children in each of the playrooms. The personal plans contained the essential information to ensure staff met the individual needs of the children attending and ensured there was some consistency and continuity in care routines. We discussed with the management team, the need to ensure that all personal plans were kept up to date and routinely reviewed. There should also be evidence that parents were fully included in the regular review of their child's personal plan.

In the sleep room there were three cots and a buggy for sleeping children. We explained that buggies did not provide appropriate support for children to sleep comfortably or sufficient space for children to move whilst sleeping. We signposted the management team to best practice guidance and advised that they should review and amend their procedures in relation to sleeping children to ensure that they took account of and reflected this guidance.

A number of the indoor activities were very much adult led and the children were not always being given the opportunity to follow their interests and curiosities and lead their play experiences. We discussed with the management team the need to ensure child led play was encouraged and supported by staff.

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

Management should review the policy and procedures for the administration of children's medication and incorporate best practice.

The service should refer to the Care Inspectorate guidance: Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services (2014)

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing and Standard 14: Well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 12 February 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been met. The manager explained that they routinely review all policies and procedures, including the administration of medication policy, to ensure they reflect current best practice. Their administration of medication policy had been updated appropriately.

Recommendation 2

Management and staff should ensure that appropriate measures are implemented to reduce the likelihood of any cross infection among people using the service. For example, use of individual bedding for children, preparation/serving of children's food.

Management and staff should refer to the revised Health Protection Scotland guidance: Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (October 2016).

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 12 February 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had been met. The service had improved their practice to ensure that they had robust infection prevention and control procedures in place throughout the nursery setting.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
13 Feb 2018	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
25 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good
9 Jul 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 5 - Very good
26 Oct 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
2 Sep 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
21 Jan 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
25 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
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