

Lecropt Ltd

Day Care of Children

The Old Schoolhouse
Henderson Street
Bridge of Allan
Stirling
FK9 4NB

Telephone: 01786 834 596

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 April 2024

Service provided by:
Lecropt Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004004615

Service no:
CS2003036407

About the service

Lecropt Ltd is a day care of children service, registered to provide care for a maximum of 47 children at any one time.

The service is provided from the Old Schoolhouse in the Bridge of Allan area of Stirling. Younger children (0-3 years) are cared for between four playrooms, older children (3-5 years) have a large playroom on the ground floor. A kitchen, toilet and nappy changing facilities are located on the ground floor. On the first floor there are two office spaces, staff room and staff toilet. Children have use of a large secure nursery garden.

Lecropt Ltd nursery is privately owned and works in partnership with Stirling Council to provide ante and pre-school funded places.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 24 and 25 April 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children using the service and reviewed responses from our questionnaire from their family members.
- Spoke with staff and management.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children experienced warm, kind, caring and nurturing approaches which supported their overall wellbeing and development.

Children benefitted from meaningful and thoughtful personal planning which had a strong focus on nurture, wellbeing, and relationships.

Children's natural curiosity and imaginative play was promoted using loose parts, natural materials, and real-life experiences, during their play experiences. Some older children would benefit from being offered more challenge through their activities, to enhance their thinking and problem-solving skills further.

Staff were fun and friendly in their approach towards children's requests and needs. This resulted in children that thrived and flourished in a happy atmosphere.

Children were provided with sociable, unhurried, and positive experiences during mealtimes. Older children benefited from rolling snack and lunchtime experiences which meant they could eat at a time and pace that was right for them.

Staff worked very well together, they were enthusiastic and committed to their roles and valued the positive working relationships they had formed.

Leaders worked collaboratively and effectively with children, families, and the staff team to improve outcomes.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring, and nurturing interactions with staff which supported their overall wellbeing. Staff knew most children very well; a few children were new to the service and with care and attention staff sensitively and lovingly soothed them into their new routines. This helped them to feel safe and secure as they became familiar with their new surroundings. Staff were fun and friendly in their approach towards children's requests and needs, which resulted in children that thrived and flourished in a happy atmosphere.

Children benefitted from meaningful and thoughtful personal planning which had a strong focus on wellbeing, and relationships. Information was detailed, and supported children's individual needs very well. Abbreviated copies of plans with key information were easily accessible to staff, which resulted in children receiving care that was compassionate and consistently provided throughout their day. Staff had built positive working relationships with other professionals, to ensure support interventions had the child at the heart of planning, which ensured their needs were met respectfully. This resulted in all children feeling included in nursery experiences with a true sense of belonging.

Mealtimes were unhurried, sociable, and supported a positive experience for children. Attachments were formed as staff and children planned menus and sat together eating in a relaxed and calm atmosphere. Staff effectively encouraged children to self-serve, be responsible, try new foods and promoted manners. Older children were offered a rolling snack and lunchtime experience, which meant they could eat at a time and pace that was right for them. However, for some children, the hot food option was cold when they sat down to eat. We asked the service to consider how they kept foods at an appropriate temperature, to ensure all children were offered a hot meal during the rolling provision. Allergies were very well managed by housekeeping staff in partnership with a local caterer which contributed to keeping children safe.

Children's rights were respected as personal care routines were carried out, using sensitive and warm interactions. We observed staff singing and talking to children with quiet voices as they talked them through their routines. Sleep arrangements respected children's needs and personal preferences, as staff responded to children's cues when they were tired and gently soothed them to sleep. This helped children to feel respected and secure.

Children's health and wellbeing needs were being met, as the appropriate forms and permissions were in place for the safe administration of medication. Staff were knowledgeable on how to share initial concerns on children's welfare and were confident in child protection procedures. We signposted best practice guidance 'Guide to Chronologies' to further support the service with keeping records in a way that fully considered children's needs.

1.3 Play and learning

Children benefitted from a good range of spontaneous and planned high quality learning experiences, which engaged them very well in their play. A real strength of the service was their approach to responsive planning, which fully reflected children's interests. For example, older children had an interest in bugs and excitedly showed us their bug house in the garden, they had added natural materials to attract bugs and a child told us, 'There's really tiny ones that live in here now.' Staff planned a bug scavenger hunt close by to the nursery, children were responsibly looking after African land Snails and confidently told us, 'They eat grass and lettuce.' Younger children were offered sensory and schematic play opportunities which enhanced their curiosities and sense of wonder.

Children were confident exploring and playing with different resources to develop their own learning and development. They had access to a good provision of loose parts, natural materials, and real-life resources, both in their playrooms and within the nursery garden. These types of accessible resources promoted their creative and imaginary play very well. We highlighted to staff that some older children would benefit from more challenge being offered through their activities, to enhance their thinking and problem-solving skills further.

It was evident that children's voices were highly valued as floor books evidenced children's comments, drawings and thoughts which demonstrated their involvement in the planning process. We found there were some missed opportunities to deepen interests further and highlighted to staff how these could be further developed, to evidence better the progression and depth of learning children experience.

Children were progressing well in their overall development. Observations of children's achievements were individual and focused on learning. Monitoring of children's progress was routinely tracked and shared with families on a digital platform. When asked how involved they felt in their child's care, play and learning, parents told us, 'We are always updated 1:1 on our children's days and any area of specific learning they have engaged in' and 'This is nearly daily, great feedback'.

Children were developing their skills in early literacy, language, and numeracy. Older children proudly showed us stickers for their participation and contributions to a Spanish lesson. They told us they visited the local library and liked to find books on bugs and other subjects they were interested in. Younger children explored sand and play doh, with different utensils, they rolled, scooped, and poured the malleable materials. They had fun playing musical instruments and laughed with joy as staff skilfully used repetition of words, facial expressions and rise and fall of voice which engaged them well in song and rhyme.

Children's learning was enhanced as they developed strong connections to their own and wider communities. For example, they visited woods, the local park and a 'secret garden' close to the nursery. Furthermore, they had decorated pots containing dog waste bags which they placed around the town. This initiative had encouraged dog walkers to dispose of waste appropriately while out walking their dogs.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

2.2. Children experience high quality facilities

Children and families were warmly greeted by staff as they arrived at the service, they chatted informally which strengthened relationships and effective information sharing. This supported children to be cared for in a consistent and positive way.

Children experienced bright, and well-ventilated playrooms that were designed to meet their needs. All playrooms were welcoming and inviting spaces, furnished with natural décor which helped create calm and relaxing environments for children to play and learn. Displays throughout the nursery gave children the strong message that they mattered. Their achievements were respectfully presented in interesting frames and structures which gave them a sense of ownership and family photographs helped them feel safe, secure and that they belonged.

Children were offered opportunities to rest and relax as homely and comfortable spaces enabled them to have some time alone or quietly play with their peers. Children made good use of the space available, and we saw they played happily together in small groups, which supported them to build positive relationships and develop their social skills.

Staff had developed effective systems to keep children safe. Infection prevention and control practices, such as regular cleaning and handwashing were embedded into routines which helped minimise infection. Staff had a good understanding of our SIMOA (safety, inspect, monitor, observe, act) keeping children safe campaign and how this supported them to ensure children were always accounted for. They empowered children to undertake 'SIMOA monitor roles,' providing them with responsibility to assess and remove risks in their indoor and outdoor environments prior to play. Staff skilfully used questioning to further develop their thinking on risks as children climbed structures and pedalled on bikes. Children excitedly and confidently showed us how they signed in and out of the nursery garden. These approaches taught children how to manage positive risk while keeping themselves and others safe.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. Older children moved confidently between the indoor and outdoor spaces. The garden was an interesting and exciting space for children to play, as staff had considered children's curiosities and development of their gross motor skills. For example, children were keen to show us how they climbed and slide down a structure they had created from larger loose parts. A recently added Pergola with a roof provided shelter from the elements and enabled younger children to comfortably sit and watch their older peers play. Despite older children being the only age group to have free flow access to the garden, staff had worked hard to ensure younger children benefitted from the outdoor space regularly throughout their day.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

3.1. Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Leaders were passionate and committed to providing high quality care, support, play and learning. They were well organised, had established strong working relationships, were visible in playrooms and supportive of staff. This resulted in a team that had high aspirations and confidence in their skills to help children reach their full potential. They worked very well together, utilising their knowledge to drive forward improvements within the setting. Their positive ethos of mutual trust and respect between themselves and the staff team meant improving outcomes for children and families were at the heart of their work.

Children, families, and staff had created a shared vision, values and aims for the setting. At the time of inspection, children were learning about being respectful, one of the settings core values. Children were playing more cooperatively together and minor disputes over resources were resolved without adult intervention. This shared responsibility had improved outcomes in an inclusive and child centred environment.

Planning for improvement reflected current priorities in the setting. Staff had a very good understanding of their role in improving outcomes and used best practice guidance and the Care Inspectorates 'Quality framework for daycare, childminding and school-aged childcare' to evaluate the service they provided. Staff had regular opportunities to meaningfully contribute which helped develop the service in a positive way and ensured staff felt fully included.

Robust and effective quality assurance processes allowed for meaningful opportunities for the manager's and staff team to engage in professional discussion. Together they reviewed and reflected on the service they provided and progress with their improvement priorities. For example, the manager's routinely monitored staff practice and their interactions with children. This resulted in areas for improvement being identified, actions undertaken, and positive changes were made. This resulted an ethos of continuous improvement and very good outcomes for children and families.

Children and families had opportunities to influence change within the setting. Families provided feedback on the service through questionnaires and children's views were collated through mind maps and group discussions. Views and opinions were gathered, actions were taken to improve, and families were updated on developments through termly newsletters. This demonstrated children and families were meaningfully involved in making decisions about service improvements and contributed to positive change. Families told us, 'We are often asked for opinions and ways we can be involved;' 'We are asked for feedback and suggestions regularly' and 'The parents are regularly asked for feedback and ideas of anything they would like to see the nursery do. Parents are invited to participate in grounds week and stay & play sessions.'

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

4.3. Staff deployment

The staff team were friendly, motivated, and enthusiastic and had established strong working relationships. They were respectful in their manner towards each other, worked well as a team and spoke with enthusiasm and passion about their roles. This demonstrated positivity and commitment to their work and created an ethos that was supportive for children and families.

Staff had a good mix of skills, knowledge, and experience to meet children's needs. They told us of training they had attended and were knowledgeable on best practice guidance and how they used this to provide very good outcomes for children. As a result, children were happy, loved and thriving at the setting.

Effective communication and teamwork throughout the day and during busier times meant children's routines were not disrupted from staff taking breaks or undertaking daily tasks. This resulted in children being provided with meaningful play experiences and enjoying their time at nursery.

Families spoke highly of the staff team, their comments included: 'The staff are always friendly - both those in my child's room and the wider staff, they seem to genuinely care about the children in their care'; 'Intimate setting, kind and friendly staff, that relationship maintains even when child moves up a class', and 'I find the staff helpful and engaging and very knowledgeable on the needs of all the children'.

The levels of staffing within the service were high, which meant deployment of staff was appropriate to ensure effective care and support for all children throughout the day. This included, enabling children in all playrooms to access the nursery garden and allowed the staff time to respond to children with care and attention. As a result, deployment of staff promoted positive experiences for children as they benefitted from the strong relationships developed with staff.

The service had recently experienced some staff changes, however, there were clear policies and procedures in place for mentoring and supporting new staff. Newer staff valued the induction process and told us, it had encouraged them to be reflective practitioner's which supported them to gain confidence in their roles. They were complimentary of other staff members and managers whom they found approachable which ensured they felt part of the existing team.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

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

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.