Ankerville House Nursery
Day Care of Children

Ankerville Street
Tain
IV19 1BH

Telephone: 01862 894 076

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 November 2021

Service provided by:
Ankerville Nursery (Alness) Ltd.

Service provider number:
SP2011011519

Service no:
CS2019378569

About the service

Ankerville House Nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate on 10 April 2020 and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children aged from three years to those still attending primary school.

The service is provided over two floors of a building that is suitable to accommodate children of different ages and abilities. Externally, there is a fully enclosed and well-resourced outdoor play area with an outdoor shelter.

The nursery is privately owned and works in partnership with The Highland Council to provide funded early learning and childcare.

We check services are meeting the principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (also known as 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. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of 'Getting it Right for Every Child:' safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection, carried out by two inspectors, which took place on 27 October 2021. We gave feedback virtually to the provider, manager and local authority representatives on 2 November 2021.

What people told us

We provided the service with an online questionnaire to share with parents and carers using the service. We received 10 responses. All of those who completed our questionnaire strongly agreed that they were happy with the quality of care and support their child received while in the service.

Some comments included:

"As parents we are extremely happy with the nursery. Throughout the past year the nursery have done their upmost in ensuring the children are unaffected and receiving the best care. We know our child is cared for with excellent staff. The individual needs of our child were considered and are met daily."

"The staff are always keeping parents up to date with things going on. My son always speaks highly of the staff and absolutely loves going to Ankerville."

"Very happy with the care and learning experiences provided for my children at Ankerville nursery."

We saw children having fun as they played outdoors, some children we spoke with told us:

"My favourite thing is the obstacle"
"I am good at balancing now"
"My favourite thing is playing with my friends"
"I like our new nursery sofa."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own quality assurance processes, self-evaluation and centre improvement plan.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children experienced warm, caring, and nurturing interactions from staff who supported their care needs. They offered comfort and cuddles when needed, which gave them reassurance. This supported children to feel safe and secure during their time at the service.

Staff spoke knowledgably and confidently about children's individual care needs, preferences, personalities and what they did to support them. This was achieved using effective personal planning information. Personal plans were developed in partnership with families and key agencies. Information clearly identified what support individual children needed to help them achieve positive outcomes. This enabled effective transitions and ensured consistency and continuity of care. As a result, individual children received care and support that was right for them.

Children were well supported to learn and develop through play. We saw children leading their own play experiences and independently selecting resources of their choice. Staff responded to children's interests in a meaningful and engaging way. We heard staff using effective questioning to scaffold and extend children's thinking and learning which supported them to develop skills in early language, literacy, and numeracy.

We reviewed lunchtime which was a positive, caring and social experience for children. They were well supported by staff who encouraged and promoted independence. The manager and staff had taken advice from a dietician and made use of best practice guidance "Setting the Table" to ensure the meals they provided were healthy and nutritious.

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. The child protection officer clearly understood their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and protected. Regular training was provided for staff. This meant staff had a clear knowledge and understanding of the procedures and their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children. Staff could confidently tell us how they would respond if they had any child protection concerns. Records were kept ensuring that relevant staff had the information they needed to keep children safe and protected.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff in relation to Covid-19. A comprehensive risk assessment was in place which reflected current guidance. We saw children being supported to understand the need for good hand hygiene and staff maintained good hand hygiene throughout the day and wore masks when required.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children benefited from a high-quality play and learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. They were provided with play and learning opportunities that impacted positively on their development, health, wellbeing and happiness.

The environment was sensitively structured to take account of children's age and stage of development. Spaces reflected children's interests and curiosities with appropriate resources and materials. Open ended real life and natural objects were being used to promote children's curiosity and imagination. Children enjoyed making cakes and potions in the outdoor mud kitchen and using loose parts to make an obstacle course. Staff understood the value of these resources for children's play and were able to model use to extend play and learning experiences. Additionally positive approaches to supporting risky play were embedded within practice. We saw children being supported on a high climbing frame to assess and manage risk. This allowed them to safely engage in play to push their own boundaries and build self-confidence. Physical energetic play was promoted to keep children active and healthy. Children had access to story books and materials for mark making which supported them to develop skills in early literacy.

Staff recognised the importance of outdoor play for health and wellbeing. In addition to a well-resourced outdoor play space within the nursery garden children benefited from weekly trips to the woods. This enabled children to explore a more natural environment, which provided opportunities for children to learn about caring for their environment.

We saw evidence of children being actively involved in influencing the design of the setting and in shaping their experiences. For example, children had identified the need for a cosy area in the outdoor shelter. The staff team were responsive to this and had recently upgraded the outdoor shelter to include a cosy space for children to rest when they choose.

The indoor playroom was decorated in neutral colours which promoted a natural, calm environment. This provided a homely feel and was welcoming to children. The playroom was laid out in a manner which helped develop children's independence, resources were easily accessible to enable children to self-select resources of their choice.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The quality of staffing has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children received consistent, stable and compassionate care from a staff team who were committed, motivated and flexible in their approach. They were friendly, outgoing, and worked well as a team which promoted a happy and secure environment for the children. One parent told us "My son always speaks highly of the staff and absolutely loves going to Ankerville."

The deployment and levels of staff within the nursery were effective. A high staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs. This enhanced children's experiences and ensured children had the right support at the right time.

Staff were very knowledgeable about child development. They had a sound understanding of how children learn and develop which was evident in their practice. Children were very well supported by skilled interactions from staff. Staff asked questions that supported and extended children's play and learning. This promoted children's curiosity, inquiry, and problem-solving skills. Effective and sensitive staff interactions across the nursery contributed to children's wellbeing and development.

The service had their own in-house training team which meant training was easily accessible for staff. Training captured individual staffs interests and professional development relevant to their role. They were encouraged to reflect on the training they had undertaken, considering the impact it had for children using the service. This contributed to an effective and professional staff team who were able to deliver high quality experiences and outcomes for children.

Children who required further individualised support were supported by staff who undertook training to ensure their needs were met. For example, some staff had attended early communication and Makaton training. They were able to use their learning to maximise support for all children to create an inclusive service. Learning from training was shared effectively across the team to enable all staff to upskill and develop their knowledge.

Regular team meetings allowed staff to share practice issues and communicate their ideas. This helped them to keep up to date with important information, be included and ask questions. This resulted in a staff team who worked well together to ensure outcomes for children were of a high quality.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The quality of management and leadership has been evaluated as good. We found that there were a number of important strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

We found the service to be managed and led to a good standard. The management team engaged well during the inspection process, taking on advice and support, which demonstrated a commitment for improvement.

All staff spoke of the open-door policy and support from management in both their professional and personal life. This contributed to staff having increased confidence and assistance in taking forward areas of interest and access to training opportunities to support children and themselves in reaching their full potential.

The management team had a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and their families. We saw evidence of how parents were involved in the cycle of self-evaluation. This contributed to the strong relationship's families had with the nursery as they felt valued and respected. Self-evaluation processes were beginning to allow all staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for improvement. The service improvement plan had identified priorities for development with clear actions on how these would be achieved which reflected some of the findings of the inspection. This showed a capacity to identify improvements and make plans for development.

The management team told us they were beginning to re-establish processes for monitoring and assessing quality in the nursery to ensure positive outcomes for children. We discussed with the management team how they could use their team meetings, support and supervision sessions and quality assurance calendar effectively to ensure self-evaluation remains focussed and on task. This would support the management team and staff to embed robust quality assurance systems to allow for a steady pace of change and sustained improvements, ensuring improved outcomes for children and families.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

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

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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