Chapter One Childcare Shawfair
Day Care of Children

Shawfair House
Campend Farm
Old Dalkeith Road
Dalkeith
EH22 1RS

Telephone: 0131 654 0186

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 June 2023

Service provided by:
Chapter One Childcare (UK) Limited

Service provider number:
SP2021000080

Service no:
CS2021000135

About the service

Chapter One Childcare Shawfair provides a care service to a maximum of 56 children not yet attending primary school at any one time, of those 56 children no more than 21 are aged under two years.

The service operates from a large two-storey detached house which has been adapted for the purpose of providing full day care to children. The building is in a secluded location with fields behind. The ground floor of the building accommodates babies and children up to around thirty months old. The first floor accommodates children from around thirty months old to not yet attending primary school. The service consists of playrooms, sleep room, upstairs dining room, kitchen, toilets and nappy changing rooms, staff room and office space. The service is set within substantial grounds which provide three separate outdoor play spaces for the different age groups of children.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 30 May 2023 between 08:55 and 18:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered. In making our evaluations of the service we:
- spoke with children and considered the views of 16 parents
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children experienced care and support that was warm, sensitive and nurturing.
- Staff knew children well and were proactive in providing appropriate support to meet their individual needs.
- Children experienced welcoming and homely playrooms which were well-resourced to stimulate children's play.
- Children benefited from extensive grounds which supported their outdoor play.
- Management should continue to monitor maintenance tasks within the setting to ensure it remains comfortable and well-maintained.
- Children would benefit from more opportunities to be independent at lunch time.
- Effective quality assurance processes supported continuous improvement of the service.

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?	4 - 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 were nurtured and supported throughout the day by staff who knew them well. Children were very happy and comfortable in the setting. Staff supported them through warm, caring and respectful interactions. Staff had built positive, trusting relationships with children which helped them feel secure and confident in the setting. Parents commented "My child is clearly very comfortable with the staff who give them great care, cuddles and learning experiences" and "my child is nurtured, supported and understood in this setting".

Children's personal plans were created in partnership with parents and provided sufficient information to enable staff to effectively plan for children's care and support. A system was in place to review information regularly with parents which ensured children's changing needs could be effectively supported by staff.

Staff were proactive in taking steps to ensure children's individual needs were considered and supported. For example, staff worked with visiting professionals to develop support strategies for some children which were recorded in individual learning plans. Strategies were reviewed regularly to assess their effectiveness and consider whether adaptations were needed. These individualised plans enabled staff to provide consistent care and support which helped children to progress in their learning and development. The use of support strategies should be extended further for younger children. Where necessary, staff should identify, record and evaluate relevant strategies to support the individual and changing needs.

All children experienced a relaxed and sociable lunchtime experience. Snacks and meals for older children were served in the 'eating room' which was attractively presented and welcoming. Children were effectively supervised by staff during mealtimes. The staff team had recently reviewed procedures for the prevention and management of choking episodes at a recent staff meeting. This helped to promote children's safety at mealtimes. To further enhance children's mealtime experiences, staff should develop more opportunities to promote children's independence and choice. This could include children setting the table and serving some foods themselves, and reviewing arrangements for mealtime sittings for the older children.

Children's medical and health needs were supported in a safe manner. Parents' permission was received and recorded by staff prior to them administering any medication. Staff informed parents through the online system when medication was given and acknowledgement received from them. Management should continue to review medication procedures to ensure these remain consistent with the best practice guidance, 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' (Care Inspectorate: 2014).

1.3 Play and learning

Children were having fun as they experienced high quality play, learning and development opportunities. For example, older children's language development was supported by regular music sessions, and Show and Tell sessions. Children's confidence and wellbeing was promoted through nature walks in the community, and play dates in the park supported children's transition to school. Younger children's learning was promoted through a variety of sensory play experiences and regular singing by staff, both indoors and outdoors, promoted their language development. A parent commented "I appreciate the amount of creative

play that is encouraged in the babies room, like painting and drawing. I'm seeing a huge amount of progress in our baby's fine motor skills". Staff caring for younger children should review the daily routines. A more flexible approach would enable them to further promote children's choices and engagement in play.

Outdoor spaces provided opportunities for children to engage with physical play and develop their skills, such as, climbing and balancing. Children's curiosity and creativity were promoted through play experiences. For example, lots of children were playing in the outdoor kitchen creating and mixing their own recipes. Children were fully engaged in their play and told us they were making "hot chocolate" and "bug pie". Staff had evaluated play spaces and children's experiences and they should continue to adopt this practice regularly. This will help to ensure indoor and outdoor spaces and experiences continue to meet the changing needs and interests of children and continually provide stimulating experiences which support and challenge children's learning.

Planning approaches were child-centred. Staff had recently reviewed their planning procedures and most staff felt confident in these. A mix of responsive and intentional planning approaches were used taking into account children's interests. Stage appropriate activities were linked to the curriculum, schematic play and the best practice guidance, Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (Education Scotland: 2020). Learning plans clearly showed the activities staff provided to support children to progress in their learning and achieve their individual learning goals.

Procedures were in place to enable staff to track children's progress and share their achievements with families. High-quality observations of younger children's play experiences were recorded and shared with families on the online system. A parent commented "Getting updates of observations made on a monthly basis is a great way to track my child's progress. They always have photos attached as well as detailed information". Staff had developed new All About Me folders for the older children which were well-organised and attractive, and arrangements were in place to enable parents to have easy access to these. Parent consultation evenings also provided opportunities for staff and parents to share information about children's learning and development. A parent commented they would find it helpful to receive "communication about activities of the day, or a planner showing what topics will be covered that week" as this would help them talk to their child at home about their learning experiences.

A few staff adopted a questioning approach to extend children's thinking during play experiences however, this skill needed to be developed across the staff team. Management had already recognised this and included a professional development session in their annual training programme. This should help all staff to develop their knowledge and use of effective questioning to promote children's learning and thinking skills.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was well-furnished, comfortable and homely. Children could access spaces to rest, such as, the library room for the older children. The sleep room for the younger children was attractively presented and created a relaxing environment for them to rest.

The indoor and outdoor environments offered developmentally appropriate spaces for children. For example, older children could free-flow between different rooms which offered different play opportunities, such as,

the art room. The layout of spaces for the younger children enabled them to move around and develop their skills in walking and balancing. Children's art work was displayed attractively which helped them to feel valued in the setting. A parent commented "Shawfair makes the most of their spaces. The rooms are beautifully set up and organised".

Good quality equipment was available outdoors to promote children's curiosity and problem-solving skills, such as, well-resourced outdoor kitchens and water tables. Staff should consider how they can enable younger children to independently access and transport water and earth to support their schematic play. Management and staff should review the Tweenies outdoor space and develop some shaded areas. During our visit, staff ensured children were kept safe by taking them indoors at the hottest part of the day. However, children could have more opportunities to play outdoors if shaded areas were available. A parent commented "I am very impressed with the vastness of the grounds - the playgrounds for each age group look like so much fun".

The setting and equipment were safe and mostly well-maintained. Improvements had been made to the security of the outdoor space by the installation of a new wooden fence. The provider employed a gardener and maintenance person which helped to maintain the premises at a good standard. Management kept a maintenance log and an effective procedure was in place to ensure tasks were addressed promptly. We highlighted to management the rising temperatures in some rooms as the day progressed. They should take actions to ensure these rooms are well-ventilated and remain at a comfortable temperature for children throughout the day. Management were responsive to our suggestions and immediately added these actions to the maintenance log.

Risk assessments had been carried out and were regularly reviewed by management. Management should continue to develop staff skills in carrying out risk assessments. For example, when completing the outdoor risk assessment they should give full consideration to the position of the nursery and access to open fields. We identified a few potential risks within the outdoor space for the older children and asked management to give consideration to these. For example, children accessed this area up a steep slope and although it is quite a small slope, some children would benefit from having a support available to enable them to navigate this. Management should also continue reviewing this outdoor area which is mostly earth and consider measures they could take to ensure the terrain does not deteriorate over time.

Infection prevention and control procedures supported a clean and hygienic environment for all.
For example, staff supported children to wash their hands at appropriate times. Management took time to monitor cleaning practices to ensure a clean environment was maintained. The nappy changing room for the younger children provided two changing stations. We asked management to review procedures if two children were being changed in the space at the same time. This is to ensure children's privacy and dignity are protected. The Care Inspectorate's guidance 'Nappy changing facilities for early learning and childcare services: information to support improvement' (Care Inspectorate: 2018) will support management in reviewing policy and procedures.

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

Management had been involved in the review of the company's vision, values and aims with colleagues from the provider's other services. These included a shared ethos on how staff would support children to learn

through their play experiences. To enable the vision, values and aims to be more individual to the service, management should involve children, families and staff in the next review. This would enable them to develop a shared vision for the setting which reflects the aspirations of the people using the service.

Effective quality assurance processes were having a positive impact on practice and improving outcomes for children. A high level of monitoring of different aspects of the service was carried out by management. For example, a meaningful audit of accidents and incidents had been carried out by management which had resulted in changes to the layout of a room to minimise any future accidents. The findings from these monitoring tasks were shared with staff using an online system which supported very good communication between management and staff. It was evident from our discussions with management and staff that these monitoring processes were helping to create a culture of continuous improvement. In the feedback we received from parents, all strongly agreed the service was managed well. When asked about leadership in the setting, a parent commented "The manager and deputy manager are very good at what they do, they are approachable, friendly and supportive and listen to any concerns, questions we have. It's really nice to see such an involved management team throughout the nursery and see how well they care for both their staff and the children in their care".

An improvement plan was in place highlighting relevant improvement actions to support the ongoing development of the service. The service had made very good progress with these actions and the improvements were having a positive impact on practice and procedures. For example, the staff induction process had been improved to develop a more supportive procedure. Newer staff told us about their experience of joining the service and how the induction process had helped them to feel confident in their new role. A parent commented "We are confident the manager and the team have our child's very best interests and development at heart and strive to continue to improve the setting and learning".

Self-evaluation processes were effectively supporting the service to continually improve for the benefit of children and families. Procedures were led by management who supported staff to evaluate the quality of resources and children's experiences. Staff used best practice guidance, such as, 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (Education Scotland: 2020) to reflect on the quality of children's spaces, experiences and interactions and had made improvements as a result of these evaluations. To support staff training, we signposted management to the quality improvement bitesize sessions and the Model for Improvement on the Care Inspectorate Hub. These resources should help to build knowledge and confidence across the staff team in the process of self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Children and families' views were actively sought to support the ongoing development of the service. For example, parents' comments were included in the professional develop reviews for staff. Further opportunities to provide feedback were offered through consultation surveys and a Question of the Month. Some suggestions by parents had been implemented by management which showed families were meaningfully involved. Children's views were sought and taken into account which enabled them to feel valued in the setting. For example, every six months children were involved in reviewing the snack menu which gave them the opportunity to put forward their preferences and new ideas. Staff then adapted the menu in response to children's feedback. These opportunities enabled children and families to influence change within the setting. A parent commented "I couldn't recommend Shawfair enough and feel completely comfortable having them care for my child. They always encourage feedback from the parents on how we think things could be improved which I really appreciate".

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

Staff felt very well supported by the provider and management. Long-standing employees talked about their dedication to the company and how well they had been supported professionally and personally. Effective communication and methods used to recognise staff achievements had helped to create a positive ethos within the setting where staff showed respect for each other and worked well as a team. A parent commented "The staff are fantastic and I feel very happy and confident to leave my child with them. They are the nursery's biggest asset".

Staffing levels were effective and ensured enough staff were available to meet children's needs and promote their interests. Support staff contributed to ensuring children's individual needs were met and supported the smooth-running of the setting. For example, an additional support needs assistant and a housekeeper were very positive additions to the staff team. The manager and deputy manager were both supernumerary and were available to assist in playrooms to cover staff breaks. This meant staff breaks were managed well and did not impact on children's experiences. A parent commented "There is always a good number of staff available in the room. Everyone is friendly and helpful".

Management and staff worked flexibly together and the supportive approach by all meant children benefited from a team that worked well together. The provider had made changes to the service's opening hours and the service operated four days per week. Management told us they had seen a number of benefits from this new model including being able to ensure consistency of care for children.

Effective staff deployment meant there was a mix of skills and experience in the different playrooms. Senior staff provided strong leadership for their colleagues and modelled good practice. Staff were proactive in identifying where potential gaps in staffing could arise and sought support from management to address these. A parent commented "Someone is always available to talk to if help or advice is required".

Staff training was monitored and planned by management. Staff accessed mandatory training courses to support the health, safety and wellbeing of children, such as, child protection training. Professional development opportunities were planned throughout the year. For example, a pictorial calendar recorded monthly training topics relating to best practice guidance and different aspects of child development. These opportunities supported staff to continue building their knowledge and skills. Staff should take time to reflect on what knowledge they have gained from training opportunities and how this has influenced their practice. Management should use staff professional development reviews, regular team meetings and their observations to evaluate how staff training has contributed to promoting high-quality outcomes for children.

New staff benefited from recent improvements to the induction process. They said they appreciated the staged approach, mentoring and opportunities to shadow practice. The new process ensured staff received the necessary support and guidance to understand and feel confident about their role and responsibilities.

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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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

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