

Beaconhurst School

Service name
Beaconhurst School

Service address
52 Kenilworth Road
Bridge of Allan
FK9 4RR

Type of care service
Day Care of Children

Provider name
Beaconhurst School

Service number
CS2003015579

Date of inspection
14 February 2007

Type of inspection
Unannounced

Period since last inspection
13 months

Care Commission Office
Springfield House
Laurelhill Business Park
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Introduction

Beaconhurst Nursery has been registered with the Care Commission since April 2002. Able to offer up to 50 morning and afternoon places in term-time for children aged from 3 years to not yet at primary school, the nursery also offered extended hours and lunch as added support for families.

The headteacher continued to have overall management responsibility. Matters of day to day organisation and running of the nursery were delegated to the very capable and highly committed manager. The team of early year's practitioners had risen from four to five since the last inspection. They were all suitably qualified and they worked ably to support each other and the work of the nursery.

The service continued to be in Partnership with Stirling Council.

Basis of Report

This service was inspected after receiving a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) to determine what level of support was necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service, action taken upon requirements.

This service was required to have a low level of support that resulted in an inspection based on any recommendations and requirements from previous inspections, complaint or other regulatory activity and key questions relating to the following national inspection themes:

- o Child Protection
- o Healthy Eating and Tooth-brushing
- o Safer Recruitment
- o Scottish Services Council Codes of Practice

Before the visit, the nursery provided an Annual Return and Self Evaluation containing information about the service.

During the visit which took place on 14 February the Care Commission Officer spoke with:

- o The Nursery Manager
- o All 5 early year's practitioners.
- o 7 children
- o 2 parents

There was further discussion with the Headteacher and Nursery Manager during the inspection feedback meeting on 15th February.

The Care Commission Officer also looked at a range of policies, procedures and records, spent time observing how staff worked with the children and considered the premises. Documentation viewed included the Information pack for Parents, the Nursery Handbook, the Staff Information Booklet and policies relating to Child Protection, Child Absence, Food and Nutrition, Tooth-brushing and Recruitment of Staff.

The Care Commission Officer took all of the above into account and reported whether the service was meeting the following National Care Standards for Early Education And Childcare up to the age of 16 :

Standard 3: Health and Well -being

Standard 12: Confidence in Staff

Action taken on requirements in last Inspection Report

There were no requirements noted for action in the last inspection report.

Comment on Self-Evaluation

The self evaluation provided very detailed information about the nursery. This gave the Care Commission Officer valuable insight into the operation of the service prior to the inspection.

Views of Service Users

The children the Care Commission Officer spoke with were happy to be in the nursery and were confident approaching and talking to staff. Most said playing in the garden was their favourite activity. The children also described routines such as snack and tooth brushing with ease and familiarity.

Views of Carers

Of the twenty four questionnaires distributed to parents and carers, eleven were returned completed. All who responded indicated that they were very happy with the service provided.

Three parents made no detailed comments. Of the eight who did, strengths they indicated were as follows:

"Nursery teachers are always very aware of (child's) potential. Good balance between work and play".

"(Child) feels very comfortable with all the staff".

"(Child) has a very positive relationship with the staff".

"Staff are always bright and cheerful and have very good relationships with the children".

"Nursery also include gym sessions which is a bonus, good outside play area".

"Excellent range of good quality toys and educational material".

"A matter was raised by me – it was dealt with swiftly and professionally".

"My (child) absolutely loves the nursery –teachers have made an effort to get to know the whole family and really helped transition. They could not be better".

"Excellent school dinners and very healthy fruit selection at snack-time".

"Staff always available and happy to talk about (child)".

"Excellent range of play materials".

"If I have concerns – these are dealt with really well".

"Much improved with new door lock".

Verbal feedback received during the inspection complimented the staff and attributed the success of the nursery to the staff team.

These responses and all other feedback received were shared with the Head-teacher and Nursery Manager for their information and further consideration.

National Care Standards

National Care Standard Number 3: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Health and Wellbeing

Strengths

This section of the report comments only on element 2 of standard 3 with reference to the national inspection theme of Child Protection and elements 3 and 4 relating to the national inspection theme of Healthy Eating and Toothbrushing.

Child Protection

Child Protection policy and procedure in the nursery were suitably informed by local and national Child Protection guidelines including those from the Scottish Council of Independent Schools. The nursery manager had arranged to receive a copy of the Area Child Protection Committee Guidelines as an additional source of reference. An appropriate Child Protection policy had been prepared to clarify procedures to be followed in the nursery. Four parents gave feedback to the Care Commission that they did not know about the Child Protection policy. The Care Commission Officer noted, however, that this was prominently displayed on notice -boards around the nursery for their information. Promoting the welfare of each child was a common goal of all members of staff. This was clearly stated in policy and evident in discussion and observation of practice. All nursery staff had accessed Level 1 Child Protection training and individual records were kept of this. Plans were being made for level 2 training for the early years' practitioners and level 3 training for the nursery manager.

Procedures were in place relating to child absence in the nursery and these were suitably documented.

Staff were aware of the Scottish Executive's Children's Charter and the Framework for Standards relating to the protection of children and young people. The Headteacher had taken suitable action to highlight and discuss these with the team.

Healthy Eating and Toothbrushing

The promotion of healthy eating was a major whole school initiative which had been furthered over recent months with the development of the new dining hall and menus. Discussion showed the nursery staff fully embracing the initiative and promoting it with children and parents. Children were able to bring their own packed lunch or choose from healthy hot meals or the salad bar. Healthy snacks and drinks were also available in the nursery and staff had taken into account the Scottish Executive's nutritional guidance for early years: food choice for children aged 1-5 in early education and childcare settings to further develop the range on offer. This regularly included a very good selection of fruit. Staff consulted children on what they would like for snack and the children were very willing and competent at helping to prepare the choices for the day.

The Food and Nutrition policy for the nursery, nursery newsletters and "Food News", which outlined the wider school promotion of healthy eating, all provided useful information to keep parents informed. Staff had also begun to note what children had eaten for lunch as further information for parents. Furthermore, they planned opportunities for children to learn about wider aspects of health and healthy lifestyle and encouraged good hygiene through hand-washing and by providing appropriate facilities for doing so.

Tooth -brushing had also been introduced as part of the daily hygiene routine for children and this was being carried out appropriately. The service is to be commended for designating particular staff to take the tooth-brushing initiative forward. The team member responsible was committed to ensuring the Scottish Executive standards for tooth -brushing and the guidance given by the local dental health educator were followed to implement the programme effectively in the nursery. All children had the opportunity to participate during the nursery day given written consent being obtained from their parents. The children were themselves driving the initiative forward with their enthusiasm for it. Appropriate records were being kept for participating children and the cleaning of tooth-brush racks.

Areas for development:

None identified at this inspection.

National Care Standard Number 12: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Confidence in Staff

Strengths

This report comments only on element 1 of standard 12. This relates to the national inspection themes of Safer Recruitment and the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

Safer Recruitment

Discussion with the Headteacher and nursery manager showed their understanding of and commitment to safe recruitment of staff and the records they should keep as evidence. Related policy was appropriate and documentation viewed showed suitable practices being followed in accordance with policy. There was evidence of appropriate enquiries being made and references being sought prior to appointment. Enhanced disclosures had been suitably undertaken for all employees and a programme for rechecking these was planned. All staff were provided with a contract of employment.

Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice

The Headteacher, nursery manager and staff were aware of the forthcoming requirement for non-teaching staff to register with the Scottish Social Services Council. Staff had each received a copy of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice. Work to revise nursery policy in accordance with the Codes was in progress.

All practitioner staff in the nursery were qualified and they and the nursery manager were being supported to access ongoing training for their continuing professional development.

Areas for development:

None identified at this inspection.

Enforcement

Other Information

Requirements

A requirement is a statement setting out an enforceable action required of a service provider in order that the service comply with current legislation, usually within a specific timescale.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement setting out proposed actions to be taken by the service provider aimed at improving the quality of service (based on good practice and professional judgement) but which would not be subject to enforcement action if not actioned.

This report was written by Fiona Stewart, Care Commission Officer,
06/03/2007