

# Tree House Early Care and Education Centre Day Care of Children

Bright Horizons at Robert Gordon's University  
Garthdee Road  
Aberdeen  
AB10 7AQ

Telephone: 01224 861840

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

20 August 2019

**Service provided by:**

Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd

**Service provider number:**

SP2003000319

**Service no:**

CS2004057803

## About the service

Tree House Early Care and Education Centre has been operating since March 2004 and registered with the Care Inspectorate since the Care Inspectorate was formed in 2011. The service is provided by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd.

It provides a day care of children service for a maximum of 99 children at any one time. The age range of the children will be from zero to those not yet attending primary school. The service will operate between the hours of 7:30am and 6:00pm, Monday to Friday. The service will comply with the following staffing: children aged zero to under two years 1:3. Children aged two years to under three years 1:5. Children aged three years and over 1:8. 100% of the manager's time shall be supernumerary to the staff ratios.

The service operates from a modern, purpose-built nursery situated on the Robert Gordon's University Campus within the Garthdee area of Aberdeen. The service is close to local bus routes and has a secure car park that allows parents to drop off and collect their children safely.

The aims of the service included:

- \* To provide the best care and learning experiences for children
- \* To provide the best level of service for parents and carers
- \* To provide the best working and professional learning environment for staff

The Care Inspectorate 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 well-being 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 services that can help them. There are eight well-being indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included.

## What people told us

We observed the children and saw that they had a happy and relaxed time at nursery. There were good systems for transitions, as a result we observed very new children to be happy and settled. We talked to children about their experiences, some comments included:

"This is my nursery"

"I like everything"

"I like to play playdough"

"We are growing tomatoes"

"I am going fast on the bike"

Nineteen parents returned completed questionnaires to us before the inspection. We also spoke to five parents as they dropped off and collected their children. All told us that over all they were happy or very happy with the quality of service provided. Some disagreed that staff worked with them and their child to develop an individual education or support programme. We looked at these aspects of care as part of the inspection and have included our findings in the report.

Parents comments included:

"The Tree House nursery is truly excellent. My child has significantly benefited from all the activities offered. My child's level of speech and communication skills with others is all because of the support given by all of the staff"

"Very happy with the nursery service. When I came to view the nursery I knew instantly this was the right to nursery environment for my child to learn and grow"

"Our child is always happy to go into nursery. The staff are always friendly and happy"

"Our child is well cared for within the setting, they have positive relationships with the staff. However there still seems to be a high staff turnover. This impacts on how comfortable a child feels in a room"

"Tree house nursery staff are always welcoming both me and my child and provide a happy calm a fun and safe environment "

"The environment provided is safe and fun with a focus on learning through play, which I believe is the key to children's development. The staff are fantastic and communicate well with me"

"Staff at Tree House are absolutely amazing. Our child adores nursery and has grown and developed immensely in their care. They truly care about my child and regularly keep us up-to-date with progress"

"Our child asks to go every morning and is always happy to be there when we collect at the end of the day"

"My children are very happy at Tree House nursery. All the staff were very approachable, and I feel confident that my children are safe and developing at the same time. I have recommended Tree House to a number of people and think all the staff do a great job"

"I have some concerns that the food is not very varied, and the children can get the same or similar meals multiple times in the week"

"I feel my child is very well looked after at Tree House. I know I can drop my child off have a peace of mind that they are having fun, learning lots and being cared for. My child always enjoys the lunches there and eats very well. They have a good nap routine too"

"I'm very happy with the care and development of my children at Tree House nursery. I can see how the nursery is growing and developing under the management team. They have had to rebuild the staff team following an unsettled period during the last year. However, measures have been taken to bridge this period of change as much as possible. The original and new staff are doing a great job thanks to a strong team"

"Lovely staff and always get to update on the activities my child does at the nursery"

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Staff and management had created a warm, caring environment for children and families. Parents and children were warmly greeted by staff on arrival to the service, supporting them to feel welcomed and included. These relationships encouraged open communication and information sharing.

To help safeguard children, staff had completed child protection training. They recognised possible signs of concerns and the correct procedures to follow if they were concerned about the welfare of a child. This helped to ensure children were safe and protected. We discussed with the manager examples of where auditing and reviewing chronologies and how information is shared could benefit children in their care.

Staff had built positive connections with other professionals involved in the care of children. This supported them to meet the needs of children who required additional support. We found however that associated plans were not always effectively reviewed to ensure that the most up-to-date guidance from professionals was in place as an approach.

Transitions for children were well-managed and staff worked in partnership with parents. All relevant information was gathered prior to children starting including their interests, needs and likes. This informed personal plans. Children moving rooms within the nursery were treated sensitively by staff who were aware of the importance of positive attachments for children. The pace of the move was determined by children's individual needs and supported their emotional well-being.

Meal times provided a good quality social experience for children. Staff supported children to be independent when serving and managing their own food and drinks. Children's allergies and preferences were well-managed. Food was of high quality and enjoyed by the children.

Children who required medication were cared for by staff who knew their needs and administered medication safely. We raised inconsistencies in how associated paper work was managed. The provider and manager should ensure that procedures in place support staff to meet the needs of children.

Since the last inspection staff had begun to improve the quality of observations and identified next steps for

children. This meant that staff were better placed to understand the needs of children and support them to reach their potential. These improvements should continue to ensure a high standard can be achieved consistently to ensure children progress.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

Staff maintained a clean and safe environment for children.

The nursery environment was welcoming and inviting for both children and families. Staff had implemented approaches to support children an arrival at nursery such as items of interest in the entrance hall. Staff and parents told us of examples of how this had supported children in the daily transition of home to nursery.

Displays were informative and well presented. This helped keep parents up-to-date with aspects of the nursery including the improvement plan and ongoing progress.

Ongoing research and developments into play areas had had a positive impact throughout.

The play rooms for the younger children looked more appealing and supported children's choice and independent play. The increased focus on loose parts, natural resources and sensory play had benefited experiences for children. This supported children's physical development and curiosity. A review had taken place in how to best meet the needs of children which resulted in very recent changes in how the two younger play rooms were to be used, along with their layout. This should be monitored and reviewed for its long-term effectiveness.

The playroom for older children was well equipped with a range of interesting, open-ended and natural resources which encouraged children to explore and investigate. We observed children show a keen interest as they investigated play dough and making 'soup' in the water tray with real ingredients.

Quiet areas for calm and relaxation were available. Children were able to spend time alone if they wished or in groups with their friends. Toys and equipment were laid out and presented in an attractive manner. This made it easy for children to access, helping to promote their independence and interests in learning.

For younger children on the first day of our visit outdoor resources were minimal and not attractive to encourage play and exploration. We discussed this with senior team and this had improved during the second day. Staff should be supported to ensure outdoor areas are ready to meet children needs.

The outdoor play area for older children provided a range of loose parts and natural play equipment. We saw children were confident to explore the space. Children were active as they explored, investigated and enjoyed activities. Staff supported children to manage and take appropriate risks during play. This helped children achieve in a safe way.

We observed a group of pre-school children enjoy making toast on the fire pit. Regular cooking sessions took place for pre-school children in small groups. Staff involved had undertaken a tailored course to ensure this was done safely.

We discussed with staff areas where further improvements can continue to be made in each room and outdoors. Staff should continue to review and evaluate the effectiveness of any changes and where further improvements could be made.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

Staff warmly welcomed parents and children on arrival at the nursery. They took time to exchange information and parents confirmed they found staff approachable. This created an open exchange of information that supported staff to meet children's needs.

We found interactions between staff and children were positive. Staff were warm, kind and caring towards children, providing reassurance, encouragement and praise at relevant times. This helped children to feel safe and secure within the service.

Staff were up-to-date with core training such as child protection, first aid, and food hygiene. An internal programme of online courses ensured that staff could access continued professional development at a pace that suited their learning. Staff spoke about how these courses helped support their work with children.

Staff were enthusiastic to be taking part in an ongoing video based training programme looking at the approach of curiosity, investigation and discovery for children. Staff told us about these professional development evenings and recognised the positive impact this had made to their practice and the outcomes for the children.

Some staff had worked to make nurture books. This had encouraged them to conduct their own research and learning and share this with others. This had helped them in the care of children and help to support positive outcomes.

We carried out a safe recruitment audit and found that staff had been safely recruited and were supported through a local and provider based induction process. Staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

There had been several significant changes to the staff group since the last inspection. We noted the staff were motivated and enthusiastic about their role and worked well together as a team to meet the needs of the children. This helped create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children. Staff felt they were well supported by each other and the management team and were well placed to ensure continued improvements to achieve the best outcomes for children continued.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The management team and staff were working to meet the recommendations made at the previous inspection. These formed an improvement plan and quality assurance calendar which were regularly evaluated and assessed. As a result, outcomes for children had improved.

Members of the management team had clearly defined roles which took into account individual strengths and experiences. This meant that staff were supported well in developing their practice.

Opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles were encouraged. This allowed staff to have a sense of worth and feel part of the team as a whole nursery, have their voices and opinions heard to help move forward improvements.

A quality assurance calendar allowed management staff to review areas of staff practice and service delivery to support improvement.

Monitoring of staff practice was more focused and included feedback and action plans that were specific to individual staff skills and needs. This was linked to good practice and national guidance documents and meant that staff were supported. An approach of using video recording to encourage staff to self reflect on their own practice with children was being trialled.

Self evaluation and audits had been carried out on a range of practice areas including environment, resources, staff training needs, and parent information evenings. Feedback from parents, children and staff had been sought. Areas identified were acted upon and when needed formed part of the longer term improvement plan.

The improvement plan included key areas identified from the last inspection and some areas that the service had since identified. These were reviewed regularly. This approach had supported the service in their continued improvements.

Team meetings were held to ensure staff were informed and involved in the service. Staff were encouraged to develop areas they were interested in, helping them feel valued and respected. Staff received supervision and appraisal meetings throughout the year. This helped provide an environment of support and continued development for staff. A new approach using feedback from parents as part of this process was being trialled.

The management team should continue to work to embed positive areas of practice to ensure continued positive outcomes for children.

## 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

#### Recommendation 1

The provider and manager should ensure that a wide range of age appropriate resources and equipment is readily available for children to explore and develop their thinking, curiosity, and investigation through sensory and problem solving activities.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "as a child my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials." (HSCS 1.31), and "as a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity." (HSC 2.27)

Links to useful document can be found here:

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/108777/lts-pre-birth-to-three-guidance.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/201173/national-practice-guidance-on-early-learning-2014.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/405223/loose-parts-play-toolkit.pdf>

**This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

Resource audits and staff training and helped to ensure that a range of age appropriate resources were in place. Children had more opportunities to explore and develop their thinking, curiosity and investigation. The management team recognised that there was still work to be done and this was a continuous approach.

This recommendation is met.

#### Recommendation 2

The provider and manager should ensure that staff at all levels are supported to increase their knowledge of current best practice in relation to motivating and challenging resources. This should be used to ensure improvements are made to the quality of children's experiences.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "as a child and I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice." (HSCS 4.11)

**This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

A range of training and support programmes had taken place for staff. Staff were now more aware of key elements of good practice and were adapting their practice with growing confidence. This had made improvements to the experiences of children. Staff were aware that this was an area that needed continued focus.

This recommendation is met

## Recommendation 3

The provider and manager should ensure that quality assurance systems are developed further and embedded in practice so there is continued evaluation and critical reflection of all areas of practice resulting in improved outcomes and experiences for children.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "as a child I benefit for a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having a robust and transparent quality assurance process." (HSCS 4.19)

**This recommendation was made on 28 September 2018.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

The provider and manager had implemented a more focused range of quality assurance systems. This included observation of staff practice, audits and a quality assurance calendar. The management team were aware that this was an ongoing approach that should now be embedded into practice.

This recommendation is met

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Enforcement

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

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
17 Jul 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
10 Nov 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
13 Jan 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
3 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
13 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
9 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
16 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

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