

Amber Kindergarten Day Care of Children

Camphill Schools
Murtle House
Aberdeen
AB15 9EP

Telephone: 01224 865893

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

29 March 2019

Service provided by:

Camphill Rudolf Steiner Schools Limited

Service provider number:

SP2003000021

Service no:

CS2003016365

About the service

Amber Kindergarten registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 31 children aged 12 months to seven years at any one time, of whom no more than eight may be under three years of age. In Amber a maximum of 19 children and in Mica a maximum of 12 children can be cared for at any one time.

Amber Kindergarten is in the Camphill Early Childhood Centre located on the Camphill Rudolf Steiner School's Murtle Campus. The school is in a semi-rural area to the west of Aberdeen. The early years programme is based on the Waldorf Curriculum. It is also informed by the later research of Karl Konig, other contemporary educationalists and researchers of child development, and by the Curriculum for Excellence.

The aims of the service include to provide a warm, safe, nurturing environment for your children, integrating care and education in a holistic way to support their healthy development and sense of wellbeing.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). This is 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 GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

The children present during the inspection were very young. They enjoyed showing us the different bugs they found whilst bug hunting outdoors. They were also happy to let us see what they were doing in the forest. They had used their imagination to use the trees, tree stumps, stones, leaves and other natural resources within the forest to become a pirate ship and a fire.

We received 17 questionnaires back from parents and carers prior to the inspection taking place. Fifteen indicated that they were 'very satisfied' and 2 that they were 'satisfied' with the quality of care and support their children received within this service.

Some of the comments we received were as follows:

"I have always been very satisfied by the care and education that they provide. I also always feel that my children are in safe hands and I don't need to worry about them. Whenever my children had a developmental crisis or went through a tough milestone there was always someone in the staff to be able to embrace them and accommodate them, helping them to connect and manage together. The level of skills that staff have is especially high".

"It's a beautiful setting with an exceptional attention to child's needs. Staff is very sensitive and tuned into child's needs. They have time to get to know the children and give them the attention they need".

"Fantastic staff. Very caring and compassionate. Beautiful surroundings, safe for children. Wonderful toys that let children be imaginative".

"I am delighted that (my child) is able to attend Mica/Amber. The care and attention the children get is wonderful. They are treated very respectfully and the staff skilfully create a beautiful calm and happy atmosphere. The facilities are wonderful and it is a very special place".

"I am satisfied with the friendliness and approachability of staff at Amber/Mica. They are always happy to help. My child feels confident and socially equipped because the atmosphere care much".

"(My child) is very happy and settled and build up positive relationships. (My child) enjoys the beautiful surroundings and great range of creative, appropriate activities. Involvement of parents and feedback regarding development has been better in the past, however staff are approachable to ask".

"The principles of inclusion and mutual respect are very important to us - and to (my child)! The parent/staff communication is excellent too!"

We spoke to two further parents during the inspection. One parent told us that they found the service "great, can't fault anything". They felt that the staff were "very good at looking at the child and their needs. Lots of opportunities for exploring. Nature very important. Able to get dirty. Make choices and push their limits. Opportunities to challenge their abilities.". The parent further told us that "staff are lovely. They are all down at the children's level. Take time, make space".

The other parent we spoke with also felt that a real strength of the nursery was the "natural environment". She told us that her child enjoyed looking at all the animals. She felt that staff had communicated very well with her to get the information they need to support her child well. She also got very good feedback from staff at the end of each session.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at the services improvement plan. We could see that the service has a clear plan for continually improving the quality of care and support, environment, staffing and management and leadership.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

We found the care and support to be very good and the staffing to be adequate.

Interaction between staff and children was found to be very positive and high quality. Staff were very responsive to children's individual needs, encouraged children and celebrated their achievements. This helped children to be confident and resilient.

Staff knew the children, their wider world and their needs very well. Where children needed a higher level of support we saw that managers and staff worked hard to ensure that they had all the information they needed to support the child fully. Staff had also accessed support and guidance from other professionals to guide them in developing effective support strategies.

High quality activities taking account of children's interests were observed throughout the inspection. Many of these were outdoors, for example identifying different birds, hunting for bugs and learning more about them. Staff took many opportunities the rich natural environment provided to help extend children's learning. Children were encouraged to be curious, to problem solve and use their imagination (see also areas for improvement).

We observed the children engaging in a weekly session at the woods which were on-site. Very good opportunities were provided to explore the natural environment and we saw children fully engrossed in imaginative play. Regular, natural opportunities were taken to support the children to learn how to keep themselves safe and manage risk whilst outdoors.

Staff were very enthusiastic and motivated. They used best practice guidance to support their practice and we could see this resulted in very positive outcomes for the children. One of the staff had undertaken forest schools training and we could see that this resulted in high quality experiences. Training centred around what staff needed to support them in their role. Currently input from a play therapist, for example, was helping staff to develop their practice in supporting children learn through play. Staff were finding the sessions very stimulating and informative.

Staff had a clear understanding of their role and their responsibilities in protecting children from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation. Training was undertaken on an annual basis which helped to ensure that their knowledge was kept up to date.

What the service could do better

We found that while overall learning was of a high quality children's learning journeys could be further developed to ensure that it is clear what staff are supporting them to achieve (their 'next steps'), how they are planning to do this and the outcome.

Care plans for children with medication needed to be further developed to ensure clarity about what action needed to be taken when the child showed symptoms and what action would be taken if the medication wasn't working. Staff had an appropriate level of knowledge however written information needs to be comprehensive to ensure that any new or relief staff can respond quickly and effectively to children's needs.

Information in children's personal plans did not reflect the very good knowledge staff had of the children. There were plans in place to introduce 'This Is Me' information sheets for all children which would again support new staff and also help the team to get to know new children.

Although there were very good opportunities to explore the Camphill Estate including, for example, the beautiful wooded areas, farm animals, duck pond, shop and café there were limited opportunities provided to explore the wider community. This would provide further learning experiences for the children.

Whilst we found staff completed a range of core training this did not include infection prevention and control. The management team indicated that they would look to include this within the core training programme.

We looked at how staff were recruited to the service and found it was not always consistent with safer recruitment best practice. Not all staff recruited since the last inspection had two satisfactory references in place prior to starting at the service. We also found that one staff member started working at the service before their Protecting Vulnerable Group (PVG) check had been completed. In addition we found that not all staff that required to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) completed this within the required six month timescale. Failure to ensure the safe recruitment of staff had created an unsafe environment for children for a period of time, leaving them in potentially vulnerable situations **(see recommendation 1)**.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. To ensure that children are kept safe the provider must put in place a system to ensure that any staff members working within the service are recruited in line with safer recruitment best practice.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" (HSCS 3.9).

'Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment'

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/national-safer-recruitment-guidance/>

Complaints

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

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 should ensure applications are made to professional bodies timeously to ensure new staff are registered within six months of starting in employment.

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

This recommendation was made on 27 March 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We found that not all staff who required to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) since the last inspection completed this within the required six month timescale.

This recommendation was therefore not found to be met. A new recommendation has been made in relation to safer recruitment.

Recommendation 2

The provider should ensure two satisfactory references are obtained prior to staff starting in employment.

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

This recommendation was made on 27 March 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We found that there was only one satisfactory reference received for a member of staff recruited since the last inspection at the time of their start date. A second satisfactory reference was later secured. We also found that a second reference was only secured for a second member of staff on the day the staff member started at the service.

This recommendation was therefore not found to be met. A new recommendation has been made in relation to safer recruitment.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
3 Mar 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
3 Dec 2015	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
10 Dec 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
23 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
24 Feb 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
26 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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