

## Care service inspection report

# Red Squirrel Nursery

## Day Care of Children

West Green Park

Liff

Dundee

DD2 5NF

Telephone: 01382 585378

Inspected by: Marianne Bain

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 18 February 2014



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### **Service provided by:**

The Red Squirrel Nursery Ltd

### **Service provider number:**

SP2006008490

### **Care service number:**

CS2006131515

### **Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:**

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

### We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Environment	6	Excellent
Quality of Staffing	6	Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership	5	Very Good

### What the service does well

The staff team work exceptionally well together. They have created a dynamic and exciting environment where babies and children enjoyed varied and fun learning experiences with a focus on outdoor activities.

### What the service could do better

The service should continue to build on the excellent practices observed during the inspection.

### What the service has done since the last inspection

A new manager has been appointed since the last inspection - there was an excellent working relationship seen between her and the provider. They have developed a new management structure which has led to internal promotions within the team and opportunities to learn new skills.

### Conclusion

Nursery staff were very enthusiastic and motivated and provided a very warm, caring and stimulating environment for babies and children. They were involving children, parents and carers in all aspects of the service and were committed to continuous improvement. The staff team had created a very happy and nurturing environment.

**Who did this inspection**

Marianne Bain

# 1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Requirements and recommendations

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.

- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reforms (Scotland) Act 2010 and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Inspectorate.

The Red Squirrel nursery is set in beautiful countryside, in the grounds of what was previously Liff hospital, close to Dundee. The building is purpose built and provides very good facilities for attending children. The outdoor play areas are varied and stimulating, further enhancing the physical environment for these young children and their families.

The nursery is currently undertaking a variation to their conditions of registration. They intend to provide a service to a maximum of 61 children from babies up to school age. There are five designated playrooms each catering for specific age groups.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

**Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Environment - Grade 6 - Excellent**

**Quality of Staffing - Grade 6 - Excellent**

**Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good**

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

### What we did during the inspection

During the inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including: A review of a range of policies and procedures, records and other documentation including the following:

- supporting evidence from the self assessment
- children's records and portfolios
- infection control policy
- child protection policy
- accident and incident reporting

- Discussion took place with all staff and the provider
- Observation of and discussion with most of the children
- Observation of staff practices
- Examination of the environment and equipment

### Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

### Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

### **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firelawscotland.org](http://www.firelawscotland.org)

## **The annual return**

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** Yes - Electronic

## **Comments on Self Assessment**

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment document from the provider. We were satisfied with the way the provider completed this and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under.

The provider identified what it thought the service did well, some areas for development and any changes it had planned.

## **Taking the views of people using the care service into account**

Babies and children were very happy and confident. They were enjoying a wide range of experiences and related very well to staff. Children in all playrooms were chatting happily and confidently with the inspector and involving her in their activities.

## **Taking carers' views into account**

Parents and carers were very positive about the service provided. Their views and comments have been included in more depth within the report. 6 questionnaires were received prior to the inspection - they all strongly agreed with the statement "I am happy with the quality of care my child receives".

### 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

#### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

##### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

##### Service strengths

We saw excellent evidence of how children and parents / carers were involved in improving the service. This included:

The service had a policy entitled "parents and carers as partners" which noted that parents were an integral part of the care and learning team in nursery, that all parents were welcome and that staff would inform parents about the range and type of activities available. Staff were observed to be meeting these aims at the inspection.

The entrance area had a variety of displays which were updated on a regular basis and provided information about current projects, mind mapping activities and general information about local events. Parents had been invited to comment on a variety of issues and their comments and feedback displayed.

Planning boards were used in each playroom to inform parents of the activities being planned and the anticipated learning that was intended.

Parent questionnaires were carried out on annual basis which gave parents the opportunity to give their views and opinions. The most recent questionnaire was carried out electronically and feedback being collated.

The manager and provider had an "open door" policy and encouraged parents and carers to seek them out to discuss any issues that may arise.

A Parent Committee comprises five parents and the manager and her deputy. The aim was to create a committee to review aspects of the overall nursery provision rather than a forum solely for fund raising activities.

A new initiative was the involvement of parents in the annual staff appraisal process. (See Quality Statement 3.3)

Newsletters were sent to families on a regular basis. They were attractively set out and contained a range of information about the nursery including staff issues, current activities and social events such as a summer fete held last year.

The nursery had developed a Facebook account which provided information about projects that children were working towards and other useful information. Staff monitored the Facebook page and made sure that children's identities were protected.

Staff in all playrooms were considering the needs of children of all ages and offering them choices. Babies and children were responding very well to staff interactions.

Parents evenings were held twice a year although all staff said that they would be available at any time to discuss any issues which parents / carers may have.

Specific comments from the pre inspection questionnaire included:

'The nursery is a friendly environment and any issue I have raised has been addressed and I have felt reassured that I can approach staff should there be any issues in the future. Staff not directly involved with my child are warm and caring towards her and are welcoming to me when picking up or dropping off.'

'Safe, secure and friendly nursery who provide care and educational and developmental need for my child in the right balance and mix - would highly recommend it to other parents.'

'I am very happy with the standard of care - staff are welcoming and cheerful and the children enjoy their time in nursery. It is not always clear to me who to contact re administrative and financial matters but it is clear who to contact regarding the childcare itself.'

'Cannot fault the care, staff or environment - our children are very happy there. The only negative comment is how they handle the finances - we are constantly asking for bills.'

### Areas for improvement

The issue of problematic billing was discussed with the provider who said that she was aware that billing had been a problem for some families and they had monitored the situation. They identified that 87% of families were happy with the arrangements but in attempt to "get it right" for everyone, the provider had recently appointed an external accountant to deal with such financial matters.

The service was hoping to launch their nursery website very soon which they hope will continue to strengthen the links between nursery and home.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

### Service strengths

We saw very good evidence of how children's health and wellbeing needs were being met. This included:

A range of procedures were in place to support staff in making sure children's health and wellbeing was appropriately addressed and included nappy changing, infection control, child protection and safe food hygiene practices. Staff were seen to be putting these into practice during nursery sessions, for example encouraging children to wash their hands before snack ,after messy play and after coughing or sneezing. Wide ranging risk assessments had been developed to show how staff would minimise any risk to children throughout the service which included outdoor play and activities. They were reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Nursery staff carried out risk assessments in playrooms before children arrived to make sure that the environment was safe.

Accident and incident records contained very detailed information. Staff had recorded the specific event in detail and any actions they had taken. Parents had signed entries to confirm that they were aware of them and were offered a copy of the record to take home. Where a parent noticed that her child had sustained a bruise which had been unobserved, staff reviewed CCTV footage to identify what had happened.

Staff were aware of their responsibilities regarding protecting babies and children. Staff records confirmed that they had all undertaken updated training since the last inspection. Identified staff had undertaken additional training and were the designated "child protection officers" within the service. They were aware of the additional responsibilities that this gave them.

The nursery was focusing on providing a Forest school experience. The daily routine included a very good balance of outdoor and physical activities. Children made excellent use of the lovely grounds and were taken out for walks and nature trails. All rooms had direct access to outdoor play on the verandah surrounding the building. Children enjoyed spending time in the spacious and enclosed garden area. Staff had been very creative in developing outdoor opportunities for all age groups.

Excellent facilities were available for caring for babies including a designated kitchen area, nappy changing room, playroom and sleep room. Sleeping babies each had their own bedding which was laundered on a regular basis. Staff routinely checked them every 10 minutes. Staff were providing babies and young children with a stimulating and attractive environment and were using Pre Birth to Three guidance to monitor and evaluate their experiences and development.

Food was prepared in the nursery kitchen and the menu focused on providing seasonal foods and 4 servings of fruit or vegetables per day. The menu plan was displayed for parents information. Meal and snack times were used to encourage children in developing good social skills and table manners. Children helped to set the table and were encouraged to be independent. For example, children in the pre school room were encouraged to serve themselves. Children were encouraged in good hygiene practices eg, washing their hands before eating.

Very good information was available for children with health problems, for example, allergies. Staff were aware of children within the rooms who had a specific health issue and were able to describe their treatment and management. A written procedure was in place to support staff when giving medicines safely. Staff were seen to follow the procedure.

### **Areas for improvement**

The service had very good systems in place for giving medication and although they had not been given recently, it was suggested that the storage of asthma inhalers and spacer devices could be reviewed to ensure that they were kept dust free and clean. It was also suggested that the instruction for giving an inhaler could be more specific and detailed, for example how many breaths should be taken with each puff and how to clean the spacer device. It was also suggested that they seek more detailed information for those for whom medication was recorded as "as required". Staff need to be aware of the precise circumstances when medication should be administered.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

#### Service strengths

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

#### Areas for improvement

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

### Service strengths

We saw excellent evidence of how staff ensure that the environment is safe. This included:

A locked main door and secure inner door controlled access into the nursery and visitors signed in and out of the service.

Daily registers were kept of children's attendance. A system was in place to contact families if children had not turned up as expected.

CCTV cameras were set up in each room with a monitor in the manager's office. One parent said that on one occasion when she collected her child he had suffered an injury which staff had not recorded and no one had seen. She said staff reviewed the CCTV footage and identified the cause which was subsequently recorded in the accident reporting system.

A wide range of risk assessments had been developed to minimise any risk to children in a variety of settings. For example when children were going out into the grounds for an activity staff were discussing how this would be managed.

Staff had paid attention to the safety and security needs of children. For example, younger children used one specific playroom to sleep after lunch so that they would not be disturbed by other children who were awake and active. Very good supervision of sleeping babies and children was observed.

Children were enjoying playing in a safe and secure garden area. They had waterproof suits and wellingtons so could be outside whatever the weather.

Parents agreed in questionnaires that children regularly get fresh air and energetic physical play, that the service is a safe, secure, hygienic and stimulating environment and there is enough space for children to play and get involved in a range of activities.

### Areas for improvement

The manager said that she would support staff in continuing to promote the value of risk benefits.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

### Service strengths

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

Comments from parents about staff included:

- Excellent - we can't fault the staff. They are all approachable and any small issues are dealt with promptly. The kids love it - communication is good.
- We are very happy with the service - staff are great.
- Staff are friendly and helpful.
- Staff are fantastic - they have endless enthusiasm and boundless energy. The management team is extremely flexible.
- Staff are absolutely fantastic - we love the warm, smiley greeting every day. Staff speak to children in a lovely way respecting them as individuals.
- Staff are excellent.

### Areas for improvement

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

### Statement 3

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

#### Service strengths

We saw excellent evidence of a professional, trained and motivated workforce. This included:

A very good management structure was in place - the management team was enthusiastic, committed and supportive which led to an exciting and creative service and enthusiastic, well motivated staff.

The provider was committed to providing a first class child care service. She was very active in the day-to-day running of the service and encouraged staff to discuss any issues or concerns with her. Staff attended team building and development events which the provider organised and in which she included a social event to continue the team building theme.

The manager and provider worked very closely together to create a motivated, skilled team. They were constantly discussing different aspects of the service from ordering resources to recognising individual achievements - children and staff.

The manager of the service was supported by a recently appointed deputy manager who was currently spending two days on managerial issues. Each room had a senior member of staff who took on the role of "room head" and oversaw the day-to-day sessions. There was plenty of opportunity for staff to continue to learn and develop childcare skills and knowledge. They had access to on-line training courses using "Educare".

A comprehensive induction programme was in place for newly appointed permanent and supply staff. A detailed staff handbook contained all the relevant staff policies and procedures which staff needed to adhere to. Two supply workers were spoken to - they were very positive about working in the nursery and felt part of the team - they were very clear about their role and responsibilities.

A range of meetings took place so that staff could share experiences and practice and review their work. These included monthly room head meetings, whole team meetings and room meetings where areas of practice and future developments were discussed.

During staff meal breaks staff moved into other rooms to provide cover for colleagues. It was obvious that babies and children were familiar with all staff and this familiarity made the transition into other rooms much easier.

Staff training folders contained evidence of wide-ranging training opportunities. Annual appraisal information was beginning to be collected. Parents were invited to participate by giving specific feedback on aspects of their keyworkers including the state of the relationship with the child and family, areas of good performance and areas for development. Their comments were all very positive.

Staff were positive, enthusiastic, skilled, motivated and confident. They worked very well together and were keen to build on their knowledge and skills and continue to improve the service. They understood and responded to children's emotional and physical development needs. A recent training event had taken place which had had a very positive impact on the team - they were all very enthusiastic about their learning and were implementing it into their work.

### **Areas for improvement**

The service said that they intend to continue to ensure that staff are able to access training courses that are relevant to their own interests and developmental needs as this maintains motivation and enthusiasm and in turn is extremely beneficial to children's learning

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

### Service strengths

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

### Areas for improvement

Please see the evidence recorded under Quality Statement 1.1.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

### Service strengths

We saw very good evidence of how quality assurance processes were used to assess the quality of the service. This included:

An annual improvement plan identified the areas of focus for nursery. The aims for this year include:

- embedding responsive planning
- developing portfolios of learning
- developing a quality assurance calendar
- developing a system for tracking children's experiences of the curriculum.

The manager and deputy were taking lead roles in establishing the quality assurance programme but were involving staff in discussions at team meetings and seeking feedback from parents to support their evidence. They were making good progress with their programme.

Other methods for evaluating the service included reviews in each of the playrooms of the planning activities and the impact on babies and children.

Staff responded very well to children's ideas and suggestions and they adapted the environment and activity plan so that they could be incorporated into the planning. A new system for recording pre school children's learning and development had recently been implemented - their folders showed very good evidence of what children had learnt and how learning would be extended further.

Parents were involved in the quality assurance process by completing questionnaires, responding to a "question of the month" and posting comments on nursery Facebook page. Staff and parents said that they felt their comments were well received and acted upon. For example, three parents raised some concern about the systems for billing - the provider has now sourced an external accountant to try to remedy the problems.

### Areas for improvement

The service said that they intend to continue to develop their methods for self-evaluation in the nursery and will continue to develop the quality assurance calendar.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## 4 Other information

### Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

### Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

### Additional Information

None noted.

### Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

## 5 Summary of grades

<b>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of Environment - 6 - Excellent</b>	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 2	6 - Excellent
<b>Quality of Staffing - 6 - Excellent</b>	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
<b>Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 4	5 - Very Good

## 6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
27 Apr 2011	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and Leadership 4 - Good
22 Apr 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 1 - Unsatisfactory Management and Leadership 4 - Good
7 Jul 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and Leadership 3 - Adequate

## Inspection report continued

17 Jul 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 1 - Unsatisfactory Management and Leadership 2 - Weak

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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### Translations and alternative formats

This inspection report is available in other languages and formats on request.

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