

# St. Sylvester's Nursery Day Care of Children

Abbey Street  
Elgin  
IV30 1DA

Telephone: 01343 569 228

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
1 June 2021

**Service provided by:**  
St. Sylvester's Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001905

**Service no:**  
CS2003008890

## About the service

St. Sylvester's Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 44 children aged from 2 years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 12 may be aged 2 to under 3 years. A maximum of 40 children may be cared for when the children attending are all aged 3 years to not yet attending primary school.

We carried out a site visit to the service on 19 May 21 and completed the inspection using e-mail to seek the views of parents, video technology to consult with staff and the manager, and viewed written documentation as well as the social media platform.

The service operates from a church hall located in the centre of Elgin and children share the same play space. It is located within the town of Elgin, close to shops and some local amenities. There is a small, secure, outdoor play area that can be directly accessed from the playroom and children can choose whether to play inside or outside. The service also uses a local church garden for active outdoor learning experiences in a more natural environment.

The aims and objectives of the service are:

- provide a wide range of open ended resources that inspire children's creativity and imagination.
- ensure that activities provided promote children's independence, helping to build on confidence and life skills. We will take account of age and stage of development in the provision of these activities, ensuring that they are inclusive to all children.
- staff will develop good relationships with the children and provide a warm, welcoming environment with caring adults that know the children well and take account of their individuality. Taking account of local and national guidance to ensure that children are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Responsible, Respected and Included. (SHANARRI)
- engage in effective communication with parents/carers and other stakeholders to ensure they feel included and informed about the centre. We will take part in regular consultation to help support developments in the centre and to gain feedback on what we do.

This was a focused inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the Covid-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

## What people told us

Parents told us that overall they were happy with the service. They considered that the communication throughout the pandemic had been thorough and they had been kept well informed of the changes. The way that staff had adapted to the changes, their friendly welcome and caring approach towards the children, was much appreciated during difficult times.

They considered that staff responded to the individual needs and interests of their child and that this had made a difference to their abilities and progress. Staff had created a fun and safe environment for the children and it was considered beneficial that children could use the outdoor space more readily and had the choice of indoor or outdoor play. Parents felt that things had improved since the appointment of an on-site manager, and the introduction of a social media platform enabled them to see the different activities that their child(ren) were able to engage in.

Two or three children had been keen to show us their learning folder and the different things they had been doing at nursery since they were little. They told us that they liked nursery and being with their friends and as they were getting bigger they would be going to school after the holidays.

## 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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4 - Good

### 5.1: Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19

- children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting
- effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances.

Throughout lockdown staff had kept in contact with the children and families to help sustain relationships and build new connections and offer support or advice as needed. Staff also used technology to share fun learning activities such as recycling games, making volcanos and dinosaur eggs and sharing early education sites.

Due to the size of the service, children were being cared for in one group, enabling them to have the familiar faces of their friends and staff. A video tour of the building and play areas had also helped with the preparation and support of children settling-in. A small number of children that struggled on their return had benefitted from a phased approach as it had helped them to adjust to the changes. Safe arrangements had been put in place so that staff were able to provide a friendly and reassuring welcome to the children on their arrival at the service.

The staff had sought information about the children, and engagement with families had helped staff to be aware of any of their needs and any changes. The personal care plan for each child helped with monitoring children's needs and parents/carers had been involved in updating information. We shared suggestions for the format of recording to enhance the responsive approach to development and care needs. Wider use of the SHANARRI indicators (Getting It Right For Every Child) may also help children to recognise and regulate their own feelings. Parents told us about the friendly and nurturing approaches of the staff towards their child(ren), and how this had made a difference as they had been able to see their progression.

Children had experiences that promoted their health and wellbeing both at the service and within the community. Children were able to choose from creative and exploratory play both indoors and outdoors; a mud kitchen, water play and construction seemed popular. The children clearly enjoyed a walk/visit to the church garden, where they were able to explore in a more natural environment and larger space.

Staff had an understanding of child protection and through the process of discussion, they had gained a shared insight into the potential adversities that children and families may have experienced, as a result of Covid-19 lockdown.

Communication with families recognised some of the challenges of physical distancing; a variety of methods had been used; this had included the introduction of a social media platform. Parents considered that they had been kept well informed of the changes and that staff shared information well, as a result their child was well supported and happy.

### 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff

- children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Staff had completed on-line infection control training related to Covid-19. They had also met together prior to the service opening to discuss the changes and how they would be implemented. This had enabled them to establish a shared understanding and consistent approach to the new arrangements associated with the national Covid-19 guidance. Staff considered this had helped them to feel less anxious and confident. The appointment of an on-site manager had meant that discussion about changes had taken place more readily, which staff had found beneficial.

Children were being cared for in a clean environment, that helped them to stay safe. Staff referred to cleaning procedures within the service, although we discussed the benefits of having cleaning schedules. These would help to ensure a consistent approach to enhanced cleaning and would also be a monitoring/reflective tool for the staff and manager. A cleaner was employed to clean communal areas and the wider play space, with sufficient cleaning materials being available.

Good hygiene practices such as hand washing was encouraged by the staff; they reminded children before eating, after outdoor play and going to the toilet. Some children showed us how they washed their hands and referred to a step by step poster next to the sink. However, a small number of children did not wash their hands well. We suggested that fun ways to refresh good hand washing with the children including role modelling/increased supervision, would help to ensure hand hygiene remained effective. The manager was also advised to revisit the guidance for face coverings to ensure appropriate practice was applied.

Arrangements within the service had been made so that physical distancing was being maintained between adults. Families had been kept informed of and reminded about the arrangements; visual prompts such as safe distancing markers and notices at the entrance also helped.

There were sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for personal care and cleaning routines. Appropriate facilities to isolate children who may be unwell were also in place. Clear expectations of children remaining at home when unwell and the Test & Protect programme were readily shared with parents/carers, as part of the necessary precautions to keep everyone safe.

### **5.3: Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19**

- staffing arrangements meet the needs of children and families
- staff are well supported and confident.

The service was appropriately staffed to meet the needs of the children. Additional tasks had been structured so that the care of the children and their quality of experiences had not been compromised.

Staff considered that the manager had involved and incorporated their views in respect of the changes due to Covid-19 when considering risk and applying the national guidance. There had been a change of manager from peripatetic to an on-site manager earlier in the year. Staff and parents considered that this had been beneficial in terms of communication, support and cohesive team working.

The small and consistent team worked well together and helped each other which enabled children to experience a happy and secure environment. Staff valued and welcomed the support given to them by the manager, both at a personal and professional level.

We advised the manager that formal observation supported consistency of practice and quality assurance. We also directed the manager to the compendium of guidance and the early years improvement programme on the Care Inspectorate Hub to affirm/enhance practice.

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

Personal plans should consistently provide a holistic and current view of the child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan should be reviewed and updated with parents at least once every six months, or sooner if required or requested, in line with current legislation. This would assist with meeting children's individual needs.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.' (HSCS 1.15)

**This area for improvement was made on 2 October 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Personal plans provided had been updated and had involved parents in the process. It was easier to identify and see how children's individual needs were being supported and met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The provider and manager should continue to support staff so that they are fully informed of current early learning and childcare guidance so that more responsive, child-led learning experiences are created.

Reference: Building the ambition - [hub.careinspectorate.com](http://hub.careinspectorate.com)

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling.' (HSCS 1.30)

**This area for improvement was made on 2 October 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Unable to assess at this inspection.

#### Previous area for improvement 3

Children should be supported to achieve their potential by effective management that promotes confidence in leadership roles, and provides on-going development and training of the staff team. This could be achieved through:

a) the development of a central training plan that identifies individual and group learning needs that is effectively monitored.

- b) an evaluation of training as to how it has improved outcomes for children.
- c) a focus on practice that is discussed and shared between all staff.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I am confident that people are encouraged to be innovative in the way they support and care for me.' (HSCS 4.25)

**This area for improvement was made on 2 October 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Unable to assess at this inspection.

#### Previous area for improvement 4

The provider and manager should establish a continuous, manageable and effective system of self evaluation, that seeks the views of all those involved to improve outcomes for children.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, 'I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve.' (HSCS 4.8) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

**This area for improvement was made on 2 October 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Unable to assess at this inspection.

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	4 - Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	4 - Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	4 - Good



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