Cherrytrees at Little Acorns
Day Care of Children
1a and 1c Duddingston Park
Portobello
Edinburgh
EH15 1JN

Inspected by: Linda Smith
Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 July 2012
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Service provided by:
Cherrytrees Childrens Nurseries Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003001989

Care service number:
CS2007145956

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     4  Good
Quality of Staffing        5  Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership  5  Very Good

What the service does well

The enthusiastic staff and management work well as a team and are professional, caring and knowledgeable. They are sensitive to the needs and circumstances of children. Management and staff work in partnership with parents and carers and offer very good opportunities for them to involved in the assessment and development of the service. Children are given access to outdoor play throughout their nursery day.

What the service could do better

In their self assessment the service identified a few areas for further improvement. In this report we have made four recommendations and these relate to:

- children’s diaries
- accident records
- maintenance jobs
- baby outdoor play area
What the service has done since the last inspection

Since the last inspection of the service there has been a change in the layout of playrooms for the different ages of children that are cared for. Instead of six individual rooms there are now three units which house three to five year olds, tweenies and babies. This has been quite a recent change, which is still bedding in and children appear to be benefiting from this. Maintenance work has been identified, carried out and is presently ongoing. The provider and management are working to ensure that any maintenance is not affecting the day to day running of the service by attending to work in the evenings and weekends.

Staff training has been ongoing. The nursery kitchen has benefited from being upgraded. Outdoor spaces have been further developed and this too is ongoing.

The nursery continue to get support from Edinburgh City Council in respect of curriculum planning and pre birth to three.

Conclusion

The provider, management and staff are all very committed and continue to develop the service. Children of all ages were given a good variety of experiences in a safe and happy environment.

Who did this inspection

Linda Smith
1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at: www.careinspectorate.com

The Care Inspectorate will award grades for services based on findings of inspections. Grades for this service may change after this inspection if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we uphold or partially uphold a complaint that we investigate.

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.

Cherrytrees at Little Acorns is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 117 children aged 3 months to 10 years old with a maximum of 33 aged 3 months to 2 years old.

Currently there are 168 children on the register who attend on different days of the week and at different times.

The nursery operates between the hours of 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

The service was accommodated in two detached buildings on one campus. There are three principal units, kitchen, staff room, office space and resource room. The nursery had a large grassy garden area and two further outdoor play spaces. A Holiday Club is also provided within the nursery building.
The aims of the service included:
“To provide a happy, loving and secure environment for each child where they develop and grow to reach their full potential.
To guide children through play to help them maximise their abilities and to encourage ideas of creativity and self expression, sharing consideration for others and an enthusiasm for new ideas.
To provide a high standard of education for all children appropriate to their development and age through the implementation of a balanced programme”.

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 4 - Good
**Quality of Staffing** - Grade 5 - Very Good
**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 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
We wrote this report after we carried out an inspection on 25 and 26 July 2012.

We issued 25 questionnaires to parents and carers of children who used the service. Sixteen completed questionnaires were returned to us before the inspection.

We issued the service with five questionnaires to give to their staff. Four completed questionnaires were returned to us.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources, including the relevant policies and procedures, records and other documents, including:

- Registration certificate
- Insurance certificate
- Aims and objectives of the service
- Parents information
- Thinking, talking floor books
- Children’s personal learning plans
- Smile Files
- Children’s diaries
- Photographs
- Parent notice boards
- Newsletters
- Parent questionnaires compiled by the nursery
- Planning sheets and folders
- Evaluation folders
- Cleaning records
- Risk Assessments
- Standards Quality and Improvement Plan
- Standards and Quality Report
- Three year Improvement Plan
- Staff appraisals records
- Staff training records
- Staff meeting minutes
Discussion with the provider, area manager, manager, depute manager, eighteen staff, one childcare student and the cook. We also spoke with five parents.

We looked at the interaction between staff and the children in each of the playrooms. We observed staff practice within the nursery and looked at the toys, resources and activities available for children. Throughout our visit we examined 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.firelaws.org
What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

At our last inspection we made six recommendations.

Recommendation 1
It was recommended that management regularly monitor the planning for each of the playrooms.

Progress: We found that this had been partially met. Further monitoring of planning for Curriculum for Excellence and for Pre Birth to Three was discussed with management and this is detailed in Quality Statement 4.4.

Recommendation 2
It was recommended that all staff attend food hygiene training.

Progress: Many of the staff had attended food hygiene training and we found that an ongoing training programme was in place to support this.

Recommendation 3
It was recommended that staff wear indoor shoes in the baby rooms.

Progress: We found that staff were wearing indoor shoes in these rooms.

Recommendation 4
It was recommended that management and staff review the space available for children’s play in Baby Room two.

Progress: The baby rooms have now joined up and are housed together in the baby unit.

Recommendation 5
It was recommended that risk assessments are kept in each of the playrooms and that all staff are aware of them and their content.

Progress: We found that risk assessment were kept in all of the units and staff were aware of them. We found that they were being used as working documents.
Recommendation 6
It was recommended that management roles within the nursery be clearly defined to support the smooth running of the service.

Progress: We found that management roles were more clearly defined but further progress could be made to address this.

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.

We received a detailed self assessment document from the service prior to the inspection. They identified areas where they thought they did well and areas for future development. The document was completed to a good standard and gave us a lot of information about the service and how it operated. The self assessment reflected most of our findings on the day of our visit. It is important for the service to reflect on how they operate in relation to our Quality Statements.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account
Children had built up very good relationships with staff and we saw them interacting with each other in a positive fashion. We saw children busy in their chosen activities and being well supported by staff. Children appeared happy and content. We saw them interacting well with each other and enjoying socialising throughout their play, snack and meal times. Children were more than happy to chat with us and they told us about what they liked doing when they came to nursery. They told us that they liked making things, playing with their friends and having fun. We saw the bonds the younger children had built up with staff. We saw young children being given the care and attention they needed when they needed it.
Taking carers' views into account

Before the inspection we sent 25 Care Standards Questionnaires to the nursery to give to parents and carers. Sixteen questionnaires were returned. Five parents strongly agreed and eleven agreed with the statement ‘overall, I am happy with the quality of care my child receives in this service’.

Representative comments included:

“We have been very happy with the standard of care offered to both our children at Cherrytrees.”
“The staff are very attentive and friendly and both our children seem really happy there.”
“Newsletters have become less frequent and I feel communication isn’t as good as it used to be.”
“The staff are very helpful.”
Whilst I’m confident staff take good care of my children the staff seem unhappy and this results in a negative environment.”
“Very pleased with how Cherrytrees have looked after and helped support our child.”
“My child has only been at Cherrytrees for 3 months but is very settled and I feel their speech has improved since they have started.”
“My child always comes home saying it’s very good fun at nursery.”
“Front gate not always left securely closed by parents picking up and dropping off their kids.”

All issues raised in our questionnaires were discussed with management at the time of inspection feedback. We found that some parents had approached management with some of these issues. We talked about these and saw evidence of how they had spoken with parents about them.

We spoke with five parents and one grandparent. They were all supportive of the service and told us that their children were very happy. They told us that there was always something going on in the nursery and they seemed to get lot’s to do. Parents told us that they were aware of the changes in the environment their child was now in. They told us that they were aware further improvements in the environment were needed but they were sure that these would be addressed in the near future.
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

During our visit we spoke with management and staff about how they involved parents, carers and children in assessing and improving the service. Since we last inspected this service the grade for this statement has remained the same. We found that Cherrytrees at Little Acorns offered them very good opportunities for involvement. These included:

- ongoing informal discussions with parents and carers;
- questionnaires, which were evaluated and findings fed back to parents;
- child and parent consultations;
- newsletters, which gave information of life in the nursery;
- suggestions box;
- welcome information for parents;
- parent and carer notice boards;
- parents evenings;
- children’s diaries;
- personal learning plans (PLPs);
- children’s smile files;
- mind mapping;
- web site;
- child led planning;
- circle and discussion times with children;
- key worker systems; and,
- thinking talking floor books.

Parents who spoke with us confirmed all of the above.
We saw staff asking children for their ideas and views about activities and resources. Staff interacted in a kind and caring manner and we saw that children throughout the nursery were well supported. Floor Books evidenced children’s ideas, interests, topics and activities they had been involved in. Children were happy to share their PLP’s with us and talked excitedly about them. There were many photographs on display to evidence children’s experiences.

We found that management and staff valued the views of parents and children and used these views to influence the care they provided, activities and future planning.

Our questionnaires told us five parents strongly agreed and eight agreed with the statement “the service has involved me and my child in developing the service, for example asking for ideas and feedback.” One parent disagreed and two parents indicated they did not know.

Areas for improvement
In their self assessment the service told us that they would “continue to find suitable ways of involving parents who are very busy” and “send smile files and PLP’s home in home work bags for parents to see”.

Cherrytrees at Little Acorns should continue to look at ways in which they can involve parents and children in service development. With recent changes, the nursery should ensure that parents are kept up to date with events and maintenance in the service.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good
Number of requirements: 0
Number of recommendations: 0
Statement 3
We ensure that service user’s health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths
We spoke with management and staff about how they ensured children’s health and wellbeing needs were met in their nursery. We found very good evidence on how Cherrytrees at Little Acorns met this Quality Statement.

Since we last inspected this service the grade for this statement has remained the same.

The service’s statement of aims and objectives was shared with parents and carers and included emotional, personal and social development of children.

Parents told us they felt very comfortable leaving their children at nursery and their children appeared very happy and content. They felt staff would take steps to ensure their child’s safety and well being. We observed very good hygiene practice, looked at policies, procedures and spoke with management, staff and parents. We concluded that children’s wellbeing needs were met.

Children’s diaries documented their nursery day and information about care patterns. Staff told us parents took them home in their child’s bag, however not all parents wanted to do this.

Lunch and snack menus were displayed and showed variety. Parents were reassured that any child who may have allergies or special dietary requirements were catered for. We saw the meals were geared toward healthy eating and children appeared to enjoy them. They were given good portions and variety on the days we visited. We saw that children really enjoyed the social interaction with each other and staff at snack and meals times. Cook safe procedures were followed at all times by the cook and staff.

Our questionnaires indicated that parents thought the service provided healthy and well balanced diets and met the needs of their child. The service’s questionnaires encouraged parents to influence menu planning.

The nursery took part in the National Tooth Brushing Programme and we saw children were happy and familiar with the tooth brushing routine. A dental nurse visited the nursery from time to time to ensure that the nursery had ample supplies of toothpaste and brushes and to inform staff of any change to best practice.
We found that the outdoor areas were being used constantly throughout the day. Each age group of children had direct access to an outdoor space from their playroom which allowed for free flowing outdoor play. We found that these areas were being further developed taking into account children's ideas and interests. The pre school room children enjoyed their outdoor snack times.

We found that children were being taken on foot to the beach, library and park. The holiday club children had helped to devise a programme of activities which included trips by bus, train and on foot.

Accidents and incidents were recorded and signed for by parents. Any prescribed medication was appropriately handled and administered.

Staff had attended Birth to Three training through Edinburgh City Council and in house. We observed training being effectively used within the playrooms.

**Areas for improvement**

In their self assessment the service told us staff training in first aid and elementary food hygiene was ongoing. They said they would continue to ensure all staff are interacting, supervising and planning for children in the garden.

Staff completed daily diaries for the younger children. These included information on eating, sleeping and toileting and general information about the child’s day. We found that staff had not signed these. (see recommendation 1)

We found that a few recorded accident records had not been signed for or given to parents. (see recommendation 2)

Parents provided meals and snacks for their children in the baby room. When we looked at service questionnaires we saw that some parents would like the service to provide meals and snacks. We discussed this with management and they told us that they would like to offer snacks and meals to all children. They would include an article in their next newsletters and would encourage feedback from parents about this.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 2
Recommendations

1. It is recommended that staff sign their name at the bottom of children’s diaries. This would show parents which member of staff had completed this.
   National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
   Standard 7 - A Caring Environment

2. It is recommended that staff ensure that all written accident records are signed for by parents or carers and a copy given to them.
   National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
   Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1
We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths
The comments we made in Quality Statement 1.1 also apply to this statement.

We have given this statement the same grade as Quality Statement 1.1

Areas for improvement
In their self assessment the service told us "we need to continue to evidence strengths and document these for public view in a floor book form". We agree with the service that this would be a good idea.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

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 spoke with management and staff about how they kept a safe nursery environment for children. We found good evidence in relation to this Quality Statement.

Since we last inspected this service the grade for this statement has remained the same.

Children and parents benefited from nursery accommodation and resources that were clean and in good condition. All safety requirements were in place. Playrooms were laid out to provide good areas of space for children to move around freely, play and take part in a range of activities. There were many examples of children’s art work displayed throughout. Our questionnaires indicated that most parents thought there was enough space for their child to play and get involved in a range of activities.

The entrance/exit to the nursery were safe and secure. Parents confirmed this to us.

The furniture, equipment and resources were suitable for the different age of children attending. Resources were well organised and accessible and we saw that staff encouraged children to choose toys and resources and to tidy up after they have finished with them. This helped encourage self help tasks and children’s independence.

Staff told us that they risk assessed indoor and outdoor spaces all the time to ensure the safety of children. We saw these assessments were working documents and updated as and when required. Written risk assessments were in place for all outings out with the nursery premises.

Emergency evacuation procedures were in place and practices were carried out regularly. There were procedures in place to ensure the wellbeing of children who were expected to attend nursery and did not turn up.

The child protection policy included key information and staff spoke with good knowledge and an understanding of their role in the protection of children. The policy was shared with parents and carers. The service followed the Edinburgh City Council’s child protection procedures. Staff had undertaken training in child protection awareness.

Parents who completed our questionnaires indicated that the environment was safe, secure, hygienic, smoke free, pleasant and stimulating.
Areas for improvement

In their self assessment the service they would "like to provide recycling opportunities and take the children to the recycling plant". We thought this would be a good idea.

There were a number of structural and cosmetic maintenance jobs planned for the nursery following recent changes in rooms. These included adding partitions in the nappy changing/toilet area in the Tweenie Rooms. We discussed this with management who agreed this would be one of the first jobs to be completed. We agreed this should take priority to ensure the dignity and respect of the young children.
(see recommendation 1)

The outdoor play area adjacent to the baby rooms provided a welcome free flow play area for the young children. We saw three young children tripping on an uneven concrete area. We discussed this with staff and management who recognised this as being a potential hazard.
(see recommendation 2)

Grade awarded for this statement:  4 - Good

Number of requirements:  0

Number of recommendations:  2

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the refurbishment work identified for the Tweenie toilet area be given priority.
   National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
   Standard 2 - A Caring Environment

2. It is recommended that the identified tripping hazard in the outdoor play area adjacent to the baby rooms should be addressed and made safe.
   National Care standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
   Standard 2 - A safe Environment
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

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 staffing in the service.

Service strengths
The comments we made in Quality Statement 1.1 also apply to this statement.

We have given this statement the same grade as Quality Statement 1.1

Areas for improvement
In their self assessment the service told us they would "continue to provide support for continual professional development".

Grade awarded for this statement:  5 - Very Good

Number of recommendations:  0

Number of requirements:  0
**Statement 3**

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

**Service strengths**

We considered how professional, trained and motivated the workforce were and observed their practice to see if it was in line with best practice guidance.

Since we last inspected this service the grade for this statement has remained the same.

We found staff were helpful, approachable and had a good rapport with the children. They were friendly and assisted the children. The children were happy in their care and the care routines in place were appropriate. We saw children approaching staff for reassurance. We observed various times in the nursery day and found that children were involved. We found that children appeared to enjoy their experiences and staff gave them enough time and support.

Staff were very good at interacting with and encouraging children. They kept them busy, talkative and involved them in making decisions. They were allowed to play at their own pace. Staff were confident about the service they provide and this is reflected in their practice, they were able to identify where improvements could be made. Overall, staff practice was responsive to children’s needs.

We examined training records and saw that staff had been consulted and attended a variety of training.

The parents/carers who returned the Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQ) indicated they were confident that staff had the skills and experience to support their child’s learning and development. We concluded after talking to staff and children and observing staff and child interactions that the service was performing well in this area.

**Areas for improvement**

In their self assessment the service told us they would continue to encourage staff to go on training events.

We talked about the staff changes within the service and about how different staff were now working with each other. It is important at this time for staff and management to communicate with each other to help to promote an ethos of mutual respect and trust in their working environment.
Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

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
The comments we made in Quality Statement 1.1 also apply to this statement.

We have given this statement the same grade as Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for improvement
In their self assessment the service told us they “plan to have a fund raising day so parents can participate in the improvement of the nursery”.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

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 looked at how the service involved those using the service, working or in partnership with the service in making the service better. We found that the management had systems in place to ensure this happened.

Since we last inspected the service the grade for this statement has remained the same.

Documentation was organised and easily accessible. The manager and area manager gave us the information we requested. Information was well managed and gave a good indication of what happened in the service.

We found that staff meetings were held and minutes were available and demonstrated areas of improvement to be progressed. We saw that questionnaires were given to enable the manager and staff to get feedback from people who use the service.

An Improvement Plan included information about self evaluation of children’s experiences, care and welfare and engagement of staff. Evidence to support how this worked and next steps were also shown.

Appraisals and employee development reviews were in place. The manager, area manager, depute manager and staff continue to evaluate and assess the service.

Parents have been involved in reviewing policies and procedures. These were displayed on notice boards.

We concluded after reviewing the evidence presented, talking to staff and children and observing staff and child interactions that the service was performing well in this area.

Areas for improvement
In their self assessment management recognised staff need to be “encouraged and supported”.

In our staff questionnaires staff felt that management should “follow through with the ideas they have for service development” and not “leave things half done”.

We found that systems were in place for management to monitor practice and planning within the playrooms. We felt that management roles could be more defined in this area and monitoring carried out on a more regular basis.
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
Public Liability Insurance was in place through Chartis with a renewal date of 13/12/12.

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 SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).
## 5 Summary of grades

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<tr>
<th>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</th>
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<td>Statement 1</td>
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<th>Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good</th>
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<th>Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good</th>
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<td>Statement 1</td>
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## 6 Inspection and grading history

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<th>Type</th>
<th>Gradings</th>
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<td>Unannounced</td>
<td>Care and support</td>
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<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Staffing</td>
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<td>Management and Leadership</td>
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### Inspection report continued

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<td>4 - Good</td>
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