

# Little Steps Childcare Day Care of Children

Garrybank  
Bankfoot  
Perth  
PH1 4DX

Telephone: 01738 788 188

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 August 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Claire Bell trading as Little Steps  
Childcare

**Service provider number:**  
SP2009975690

**Service no:**  
CS2009233142

## About the service

The service is provided by Claire Bell trading as Little Steps Childcare. The nursery is situated in the Perthshire village of Bankfoot. The service offers early education and childcare to pre-school children. In addition, they provide out of school care for school aged children. The children are cared for in three playrooms within a large modern building. The children have access to fully enclosed gardens where they can play. A Portakabin is used for the out of school care.

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011. Little Steps Childcare is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 68 children age from 0 to 12 years.

- On the lower floor, the nursery may provide care to a maximum of 12 children aged 0 to under two years in the designated baby room and cot room and a maximum of 23 children aged three years and over in the designated playroom and quiet room.
- On the upper floor, the nursery may provide care to a maximum of 20 children aged two years and over in the designated playroom.
- In the Portakabin, care may be provided to a maximum of 13 children aged four years and over.

The appropriate number of staff/child ratio will be 1:3 for children aged 0 to under two years, 1:5 for children aged two to under three years and 1:8 for children aged three years and over.

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors. We used a blended approach of onsite and virtual scrutiny. We started the inspection on 10 August 2021 and gave feedback to the provider and manager on 11 August 2021. As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality Indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator within Quality of Care and Support.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and 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 Getting it Right for Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

Little Steps Childcare aims are:

- 'To provide practitioners that are positive role models, who are enthusiastic, and promote a warm, sensitive ethos of mutual respect.
- To let each individual child, grow and develop at their own pace, meeting their needs and recognising their achievements.
- To encourage all our families to participate in the improvement and continued evaluation of Little Steps Childcare'.

## What people told us

We had the opportunity to speak with three parents by telephone during the inspection. They were all very happy with the care and support their children received and all commented positively on how they were kept up to date with information about their children's learning. Some of their comments included:

'A real strength of the service is their creativity, every time I look they have introduced lots of different and creative activities, things I would never have thought of. I wouldn't change anything about the service!'

'The staff are the overall strength for me about the service followed closely by the great outdoor area, this has been used so well during the summer and even more so due to Covid.'

'Lots of outdoor activities, which I love to see. Lots of trips within the local community and they use the community well. When the work was going on behind the nursery on the A9 they used this for learning activities so the children could understand what was going on.'

Children were very engaged in their play throughout their time at nursery. They were happy to chat to us during the inspection. They told us:

'The bees eat flowers.'

'I've got flowers at home.'

'I caught a fish!'

'Excuse me, I know how to cycle.'

'I'm going to get on my bike.'

'This is (X), she is my new friend.'

'It smells of green'.

## Self assessment

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

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Children were happy, settled and relaxed during their time at nursery. Staff knew children well, responding to their individual needs and respecting their choices and wishes. Staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their approach and gave children praise and encouragement which improved children's self-esteem.

Children were well supported to settle into nursery. Key information was shared when children were transitioning between playrooms which enabled staff to have a very good understanding of how to meet children's needs.

Children had lots of fun and laughter during their play which was well supported by staff. We saw that children were very engaged in their play in a purposeful and meaningful way. Children were encouraged to follow their interests and curiosities. For example, we saw some children had been curious about bees and this interest had been followed through and supported effectively by staff. We heard children talking about their learning. Observations of children's learning in the babies and 2-3 room were personal to each child. We suggested that the observations of learning in the 3-5 room are developed to ensure these have a clearer focus on children's individual learning.

Families were kept up to date with children's learning through a variety of methods including an app and regular newsletters. They commented positively on how this enabled them to feel included. This also enabled children to continue to be involved in learning experiences when they were not at nursery.

Children in all playrooms experienced a positive mealtime. There was a calm, relaxed atmosphere which enabled children to have lunch at a pace which was right for them. Children were well supported during lunch time as staff sat with them. This encouraged children to have positive discussions. Children were supported to be as independent as possible. We suggested that staff consider how they can increase children's independence and eat with children to model good eating habits.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. This included children being supported with good hygiene practices and regular cleaning of the environment to minimise the risk of spreading infection.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

The nursery was well maintained and had a welcoming environment. Children were able to direct their own play and activities in a way that they chose. They were encouraged to be respectful of their environment and took responsibility for their toys and resources. Staff had supported children well to understand changes in their local environment. For example, significant construction work was taking place on the A9 road next to the nursery and staff used this as an exciting opportunity for children to learn.

There was a wide range of interesting and exciting resources both indoors and outdoors. Children accessed resources independently which enabled them to lead their own play and make their own choices. Resources and toys were well matched to children's stages of development which supported and extended their learning. These included loose parts and open-ended materials which promoted children's curiosity and creativity.

The outdoor area was a strength of the service. Children were highly engaged in outdoor play and confident in exploring their environment. They had a vast range of opportunities which enabled them to take positive risks, use their imagination, be active, experiment and construct. Children were also able to relax, read stories and be creative. We found that both the indoor and outdoor environment offered children opportunities across the curriculum to effectively support their learning and develop their skills in understanding, thinking and problem solving.

Staff were responsive to children's individual needs and sleep routines. Children's sleeping arrangements had been considered to ensure each child had plenty of space. Staff worked with families to ensure children's sleep routines were right for them. As a result, children experienced care which was individualised and responsive.

Accidents and incidents were well recorded and shared with families through an app. This enabled parents and carers to acknowledge any accidents. Monitoring of accidents and incidents took place, however we suggested reviewing this to ensure common themes and any actions identified were recorded to minimise risks.

### Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

### Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of staffing has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

There had been some staff changes and a small number of staff had recently started within the service. Staff told us about their induction to the service which included being shown around the setting, getting to know daily routines, and reviewing policies. To support staff further, we suggested that the manager considers using the national induction resource to extend the induction process to include more detail. This would support staff more effectively with understanding their role and responsibilities and their individual development.

Staff recognised the importance of developing strong and secure attachments with children. They were skilled and tuned into children's individual needs enabling them to respond effectively to children's cues. Staff stood back to allow children to play independently. When needed, they skilfully intervened to support children's play and learning. We heard staff using effective questioning to extend children's thinking and help them to solve problems. Staff had time to support, speak and listen to children which supported them to achieve their potential.

Children were supported and cared for in a respectful, sensitive, and gentle manner. Interactions between staff and children were thoughtful and supported children to manage their emotions and regulate their behaviour.

Staff were enthusiastic and motivated which resulted in a positive ethos and effective teamwork. Team meetings and staff appraisals took place regularly. We saw the positive impact team meetings had on staff which supported them to build positive working relationships with each other. Team meetings also enabled staff to have professional discussions and implement their learning into their practice which improved outcomes for children. We found staff to be very reflective practitioners.

Staff were confident in their role in protecting and safeguarding children. They had taken part in training and development opportunities including child protection and first aid. Staff had reflected on their learning and as a result, were more aware of the impact the pandemic may have had on children and families.

### Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

### Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The quality of management and leadership has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Effective and robust quality assurance processes were in place which had a positive impact on children's outcomes and had supported staff to improve. Focused monitoring took place across the service which supported the staff team to have a clear direction to drive forward improvements within their practice. We discussed how the manager could make small adjustments to their follow up monitoring to clearly track progress on improvement actions identified within the audits.

Staff benefitted from a committed manager who had a clear vision for the development of the service. An up to date improvement plan was in place with high level improvement priorities identified. This had been reviewed to ensure targets were realistic and progress was being made leading to continuous improvement.

Staff told us they felt very well supported by the manager and provider. They had created an ethos where staff, children and families were encouraged to engage in the development of the service and share any ideas or concerns with them. A range of methods of communication were in place to connect and engage with families and gather their views. Parents and carers commented positively on their involvement in the setting.

We reviewed recruitment files and found that these procedures were effective. Staff had been recruited following safer recruitment practices.

Children and families have benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement since the last inspection. Strong leadership has supported staff to have high aspirations, and this has resulted in high quality practice where children and families are effectively supported. The manager and staff should progress with their improvement journey to enable them to continue to provide consistently high-quality care and support for children and families using the service.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

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

### Previous requirements

#### Requirement 1

In order to ensure children are supported by suitable staff, the provider must ensure that all staff working in the service are recruited in line with safer recruitment practices. The recruitment policy should be reviewed and updated to reflect current best practice guidance. This must be completed by 16 September 2019.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited.' (HSCS 4.24).

It is also necessary to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210) Regulation 9(1)&(2)(b) & 15(a) - Fitness of Employees and Staffing.

**This requirement was made on 10 September 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

The recruitment policy had been updated to reflect current best practice guidance. Staff were recruited following safer recruitment practices.

**Met - within timescales**

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

### Previous recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the service develop further their positive and restorative strategies in behaviour management to support the children in a sensitive and caring manner so that they learn to regulate their own behaviour. Staff should undertake relevant training to ensure an agreed and consistent approach.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'I am enabled to resolve conflict, agree rules and build positive relationships with other people as much as I can.' (HSCS 2.15).

**This recommendation was made on 10 September 2019.**



**Action taken on previous recommendation**

Staff supported children in a sensitive and caring way enabling them to regulate their own behaviour. This recommendation has been met.

**Complaints**

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

**Enforcement**

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

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
8 Aug 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
1 Aug 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
20 Dec 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 4 - Good
4 Nov 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
18 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
20 Apr 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

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

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.