

Summarised inspection findings

Bright Beginnings Ltd. Falkirk

Falkirk Council

17 July 2018

Key contextual information

Bright Beginnings Ltd. Falkirk is a setting provided by Bertram Nurseries Limited. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 74 children from birth to those not yet attending primary school.

At the time of inspection the setting was in partnership with Falkirk Council to provide early learning and childcare funded places.

1.3 Leadership of change

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The manager, depute and practitioners are committed to delivering a service that meets the needs of children and families. Practitioners throughout the setting provide positive role models for children. The setting's vision, values and aims are reviewed and shared with parents and practitioners annually. As discussed, they now need to look at ways these can be shared with children in a meaningful and developmentally appropriate way.
- The setting is in partnership with Falkirk Council to provide early learning and childcare.
- The management team attend early years managers' forums and senior early years officers' network meetings. This supports their increasing knowledge and understanding of early pedagogy, self-evaluation and curriculum development. Systematic approach to sharing this knowledge to build capacity in the team would be a positive development. Practitioners have developed good working relationships with the early years team teacher allocated to support the setting. Practitioners access an appropriate range of professional learning opportunities. Visits to other settings within the Bertram group have provided opportunities for practitioners to discuss and observe initiatives and learning approaches. Practitioners expressed an interest in visiting other settings to further develop their understanding of current best practice. They are encouraged to access professional learning delivered by the local authority and online training. Practitioners are committed to improving outcomes for children and families.
- During the inspection week the manager, depute and practitioners responded positively to professional dialogue with the inspection team. Practitioners are increasingly confident in taking on areas of responsibility in the setting with literacy and numeracy champions recently introduced. In addition, opportunities to lead initiatives such as eco schools work are contributing to on-going developments. The manager recognises the need to introduce a manageable, robust system to develop practitioners' skills and confidence in reflecting on the impact of this work on children's learning.
- Practitioners are aware of the improvement plan with the priorities and outcomes displayed in the setting. The management team should now consider ways to enable practitioners to contribute more meaningfully to the self-evaluation process and look more critically at their practice. As a result, more accurate evaluations will be made based on sound evidence.

Such approaches now need to be more strategically addressed to provide, over time, a robust cycle of self-evaluation. This would enable the team to clearly identify future priorities taking account of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.

- The setting has made a positive start in using national guidance, Building the Ambition to improve their learning provision. Practitioners are at the early stages of becoming familiar with and using the national self-evaluation framework, How good is our early learning and childcare? The manager, together with practitioners, should continue to build their skills and confidence in making carefully planned use of the framework. We discussed the need to increase the pace of change and how use of the guidance can support and drive improvement.
- As discussed, the management team should continue with their plans to formalise procedures for monitoring the provision in the setting. There should be a focus on the context and key priorities of the setting. Monitoring and improvement planning processes now need to be more robust to identify measurable targets for improvement that will have the most benefit for children's learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Babies and toddlers are happy and settled in the setting. Practitioners have warm relationships with the children and as a result, children are nurtured and supported. Well-judged practitioner interactions support children's language development and children are keen to engage with adults and other children. The environment for babies and toddlers is well-organised and children have access to a range of resources that enable them to develop their curiosity and confidence. Babies and toddlers also have regular access to outside spaces. Practitioners should continue to extend the range of resources inside and outside to support the development of schema and exploratory play for toddlers. Further development of sensory and messy materials will benefit the babies.
- Children aged three and over are settled, nurtured and secure in the setting and the ethos is welcoming and caring. Practitioners and children have positive relationships and practitioners know children well as individuals. A range of learning experiences is provided and children are able to choose from a variety of resources, including natural materials and loose parts. There is scope to further develop the learning environment to ensure that all children are being challenged in their learning.
- The pattern of the day allows time for children to explore their learning make choices such as when to eat snack or spend time in the garden. While most children are engaged in their play, a few children are not sustaining their involvement. They would benefit from further support to help them engage and to ensure that opportunities for learning are not missed.
- Practitioners are warm and responsive in their interactions with children. Children are given time to talk about things that are important to them, which means that they are keen to share their thoughts and ideas. Practitioners now need to develop the ways in which they challenge children's thinking and take learning deeper, including the use of skilled questioning and more extended conversations.
- A new approach to planning has recently been developed, which builds upon children's next steps. Consultation with children is at an early stage, and children would benefit from further opportunities to plan their own learning and develop their interests. Having a closer link between observations of children's learning and planned experiences would enable practitioners to extend children's interests and develop more exciting experiences. As discussed, using the principles of curriculum design would also support practitioners to plan rich learning.
- Practitioners gather observations during children's play and use these to update online learning journals. Parents and carers are able to access these and add their own contributions. This is a new system and is not yet evidencing children's progress over time. Children would benefit

from having more opportunities to share their learning journal with a practitioner. This would support their involvement in thinking about what they would like to learn next.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners working with children under three years use Building the Ambition to support their practice, including planning for learning. Further consideration should be given to how children's interests are built upon and how observations then lead to future learning experiences.
- Practitioners in the room for children aged three years and over are using Curriculum for Excellence to plan for the majority of experiences, with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Resources in the maths and language areas enable children to develop their learning through games and interactions. Making careful observations of children's interests will also enable wider aspects of learning to be identified and developed. This will mean that the children's interests can shape the curriculum. The local authority is developing progression pathways that should support practitioner understanding of learning and development. As planned, the setting should further develop their curriculum rationale.
- The setting has a focus on developing risky play. As part of this focus, the setting's gardens have been developed to extend the learning experiences available to the children, for example, balancing and climbing equipment. There is scope to extend the resources to further promote children's curiosity, inquiry and creativity as well as develop increased opportunities for risk and challenge. Children aged three and over particularly enjoy their visits to the local woodland, and this space provides a rich context for learning. Climbing on branches and navigating slopes gives children opportunities to assess risk and develop their physical skills in a meaningful way. More regular, focused woodland visits for all children would enable practitioners to build on children's skills in this exciting environment. As discussed, the learning potential of the outdoors and use of these valuable learning resources should be carefully planned for and implemented to ensure their potential is realised.
- Children's transitions within the nursery are well supported, and care information is shared to ensure that children settle quickly into their new environments. Transitions into local primary schools involve practitioners sharing pastoral information and prior learning. Children also benefit from planned visits to become familiar with the school they will attend.

2.7 Partnerships : Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- See choice QI.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | satisfactory

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Close, caring and nurturing relationships between practitioners, children and families are clearly evident throughout the setting. Practitioners value each child as an individual and welcome them into the nursery. They know each child and their personal circumstances. This helps them to be responsive to the wellbeing needs of individual children and families and ensures that children are supported appropriately. Parents and carers share information about their children with practitioners and appreciate the support they receive. They speak highly of the warm, inclusive ethos where they feel their children are safe, nurtured and respected.
- Overall, children play together well with a few beginning to form particular friendships. The wellbeing of children is promoted through a range of learning experiences. Children enjoy being in the two outdoor spaces available and the majority have daily opportunities for energetic play in these areas. Woodland walks support the children's sense of wellbeing and appreciation of the natural environment.
- There is scope to develop children's early leadership skills further. Children are observed to be capable and enthusiastic. The setting should encourage children to express their choices and opinions. This would better realise their potential and allow them to take a more active role in the life of the setting.
- Practitioners are developing their knowledge of the wellbeing indicators and use some aspects of this language when interacting with children. They are aware of the importance of nurturing children's wellbeing and respond appropriately to children's needs. A deeper and shared understanding of the indicators and how they are used to support children's wellbeing is now required. As practitioners' understanding of the indicators develops, it will be appropriate to further develop children's understanding through meaningful, real life experiences. This will help children understand how these indicators relate to themselves as individuals. As this work develops, consideration should be given on how appropriate links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) can be made.
- The team of practitioners are increasingly reflective about their practice and are keen to continue to improve outcomes for children and families. They undertake professional learning as required tailored to any medical needs of children to further their own understanding, knowledge and abilities. In particular, they are mindful of their responsibility to promote children's health, safety and wellbeing. Practitioners identify effectively where children may require additional support with their learning and the management team supports them to make links with the relevant external agencies to support children across their development.

- Practitioners are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and follow appropriate codes of practice. A recently updated set of guidelines from the provider on the completion of new personal plans and responsibilities will further support practitioners' delivery of statutory duties. Practitioners complete personal plans for all children, review them regularly and note and act upon any changes that arise.
- Practitioners celebrate and value children as individuals and have a sound knowledge of the diversity of children's lives and home circumstances. They treat children fairly and are aware of their responsibility to challenge discrimination. As discussed, practitioners should continue with this work to expand children's awareness of equality and diversity and make the most of opportunities available in the local community.

3.2 Securing children's progress

satisfactory

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Babies enjoy positive, nurturing relationships with practitioners who respond to their individual care needs well. As a result, they are settled and building confidence as they explore the range of resources and activities. Practitioners support babies to make choices, appropriate to their age and stage of development and to be curious as they play with a range of open-ended materials. Regular singing, talking to babies as they play and sharing of books is supporting their emerging communication skills and helping them to make their needs known.
- Children age two to three years are becoming increasingly confident and independent as they explore the learning environment. They make choices about where they would like to play and are learning to communicate well with each other as they create imaginative games. Caring, positive relationships with practitioners are supporting the development of their emotional and social skills. Children are confident to share their feelings and make their needs known. Outdoors, they are developing their physical skills by exploring different terrains and challenging themselves by climbing and using play equipment such as ride-on toys. Access to a range of puzzles, games and open-ended materials is supporting children's curiosity, imagination and problem solving skills. Sharing of books and singing songs supports early language and communication skills.
- Overall, most children age three years and over are making satisfactory progress in communication and early language. They converse with increasing confidence with each other as they play and the majority take part in conversations with adults. A few children demonstrate a wider vocabulary and an interest in learning new words. Children are developing their early writing skills as they create drawings and the newly introduced 'signing in sheet' is helping children to recognise and begin to write their names. A few children show an interest in books and can discuss their favourite stories and characters. We have asked practitioners to build opportunities for children to develop their love of books and deepen and apply their developing skills in early communication and language.
- Most children aged three years and over are making satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. They count with increasing confidence during play and are developing an understanding of measurement and weight as they make play dough independently and bake. Most children demonstrate an understanding of size and amount as they participate in creative play and use digital technologies. A few children show an interest in learning the names of new shapes and discussing their properties as they experiment with sensory play materials.

Children are not yet experiencing opportunities for exploring information handling or using money through daily play. Children would benefit from more considered, focused and frequent opportunities to develop and apply their developing numeracy and mathematics. This will support increased challenge in learning.

- Most children aged three years and over are making satisfactory progress in health and wellbeing across the curriculum. The majority of children are caring towards each other and are respectful as they play together or alongside each other. They are developing an understanding of emotions and the feelings of others. A few children require additional support with independence and concentration in learning. Children enjoy baking and helping to prepare foods for the group. They know which foods are nutritious and how they can make healthy choices through their daily routines. Outdoors, most children are developing their physical skills well as they explore, climb and create with loose parts.
- Children show an interest in the world around them. They ask questions about what they see and are keen to learn new information about features of the forest and things they find. Children are developing an understanding of their role in sustainability and looking after the environment through their 'eco work'. They enjoy planting and growing activities as well as recycling and composting.
- The setting's caring ethos promotes a climate of respect. Practitioners know children, families and their circumstances well. They use this understanding to support children in a way that meets their needs and promotes equity. Practitioners use praise effectively to promote positive attitudes to learning. As a result, children are becoming confident individuals and making progress in their learning over time. They are encouraged to share important events and achievements from home and the setting's 'wow wall' celebrates special pieces of work. Parents also contribute to their child's learning journal and add valuable comments. There is now potential to use this information to help practitioners build consistently on prior learning to help children to make the best possible progress.

Setting choice of QI: 2.7 Partnerships

- Engagement of parents and carers in the life of the setting
 - The promotion of partnerships
 - Impact on children and families
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- The management team and practitioners have worked well to establish strong relationships with children and families. They consider parents to be valuable partners in their work and seek their views wherever possible to influence improvements. They do this in a range of ways which meets needs including through electronic communication and social media. This is helping the team to make decisions which positively contribute to children's experiences in the setting.
 - Parents receive feedback about their child's learning through daily discussion with practitioners and information shared within the setting. Access to children's online learning journals also allows parents to view their experiences within the setting and share this at home. Parents spoken to during the inspection reported that these methods suited their needs. As planned, the team should continue to explore ways to share learning with parents effectively and communicate how they might also support their child's learning at home. There is potential to develop further and strengthen the link between learning in the setting and at home.
 - The setting makes use of a range of local resources to widen and support children's experiences. They carry out regular visits to the local library and nearby shops to buy resources that relate to children's interests, such as fruit for special 'tasting snacks'. Frequent use of local parks is also positively supporting children's learning about the area in which they live and the natural world. There is potential to develop these community links further to add increased depth and challenge to children's learning.
 - Practitioners have links with other settings in the Bertram group to help them share ideas and discuss developments in early learning and childcare. They find this to be a beneficial way of reflecting on practice. Practitioners have begun to develop their relationships with local schools and are exploring ways that they can work together on joint initiatives such as visiting the community care home for intergenerational learning projects. The setting's caring and respectful culture is supporting children to develop confidence in sharing their ideas. As planning processes develop, it will be useful to build on children's involvement and help them develop as effective contributors.

Care Inspectorate evidence

1. Quality of care and support

The service had an effective settling in procedure for new families to support them gather and share information with parents and to plan children's care and support. We found the service to be respectful of parents' wishes and to be responsive by providing daily routines that supported children's daily routines at home. The service strengths were in providing a nurturing, caring and responsive environment for children to play and have fun. Staff working with the children had formed positive relationships and had a good knowledge of children's wellbeing needs and provided a warm and caring environment to support these. To further support the planning of children's care and support the service were at the early stages of developing a new planning system including personal plans. We have recommended the service ensures the finalised planning process improves children's choices to participate in a wide range of experiences and access resources that are suitable for their age and stages to stimulate their curiosity, learning and creativity.

The service had been working hard to improve children's access to the outdoors. As a result children of all ages were encouraged to take part in daily outdoor active play and older children had regular visits to the local woods and parks. The service told us they planned to further develop children's learning experiences outdoors and to continue to develop ways for children to freely access the outdoor play areas.

Snacks and meal times play an important part of the services daily routine. To support children's health and wellbeing needs the service provided healthy, nutritious meals and encouraged children to have regular drinks of water and milk throughout the day. We found meal times to be relaxed, promoting independence and to be a positive sociable experiences for children and staff who sit around the dining table sharing stories.

The service is respectful of the needs and wishes of those using the service. They work hard to ensure they create a warm and welcoming environment where children can feel valued, loved and secure.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

2. Quality of environment

The service is provided from a safe, secure environment that is well maintained and kept clean and tidy.

Children under three years of age are cared for in the three downstairs playrooms. These playrooms were welcoming, homely and provided space for children to choose to play on their own or in small or larger groups. The service had continued to develop these play spaces by increasing the range of open ended and natural resources. The additional physical equipment such as climbing frames and slides had been added to encourage children to challenge their own physical development. The staff planned the play spaces using good practice guidance and as a result they told us children were more engaged in their play. The children under two years of age shared the front garden. They had direct access from the playrooms to the outdoors space providing regular access to fresh air and to explore the natural environment. The two to three years old children shared the back garden with the upstairs children. They also had direct

access from their playroom and enjoyed daily opportunities to play outdoors and participate in a range of physical play experiences.

Children over three years of age are cared for in the upstairs playroom. This area had recently undergone significant changes to provide a rich learning environment. As a result of the new resources and new layout the staff told us that they found children to be more engaged and to be more confident directing and choosing their own learning and play experiences. The service told us that they will continue to monitor the playroom and continue to make improvements were identified. The upstairs children had daily access to the back garden providing fresh air and physical exercise.

We did discuss some areas to further develop the environment during our visit, the management agreed to address these. These included improvements to the nappy and toilet changing areas and outdoor play spaces. We were confident that these will be addressed.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

3. Quality of staffing

The service had 20 staff employed to care for the children. We found all those required to were registered with the relevant professional body such as the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC).

We reviewed the service safer recruitment procedures. We were informed that five staff had been employed since the last care inspectorate inspection. We reviewed two of the staff files. We found satisfactory checks had been undertaken during recruitment to ensure those working in the service were safe to do so.

Changes had taken place within the staff team. We were informed that most staff vacancies had been filled and that with staff now in place, there should be more consistency for children and families.

We found some staff members had grown in confidence, become more reflective of their practice and had taken on more leadership roles within the service. To ensure consistency and continuity in staff practice we have recommended the service further develops the staff induction process, staff supervision and appraisals systems.

We observed staff to be welcoming, respectful and having formed positive relationships with the children and families. Staff greeted children warmly and provided a nurturing ethos by providing lots of cuddles and reassurance.

Staff should continue to work together to support the service to implement the service planned areas for continuous improvements.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

4. Quality of management and leadership

Since the last inspection the service had undergone changes in how the planned and recorded information related to the improvement plan and how staff planned to meet children's needs. The management was at the early stages of implementing these, they did tell us that they were

positive about these changes and were confident they were going to have a positive impact on the service they provided.

The service used good practice documents to evaluate the service provided. The service was becoming more confident and informed on how best to use these. The service should continue to use good practice documents and where identified gain support in this. We have suggested the service accesses documents such as Space to Grow and My Creative Journey published by the care inspectorate

The service had a very strong ethos of working in partnership with the families of those using the service. They regularly welcomed feedback and suggestions for improvement from the parents and other stakeholders.

We did discuss with the management team the benefits of accessing further support to implement the improvements identified during this inspection. They agreed that they would access support from the provider and other stakeholders to achieve these.

The service have worked hard to ensure they plan and provide care and support to meet children's wellbeing needs. The service demonstrated a willingness to continually improve the service provided and ensure children are at the heart of everything they do.

Care Inspectorate grade: good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are two recommendations.

Recommendations:

- The planning process should improve children's choices to participate in play experiences and have access to resources that stimulate their curiosity, learning and creativity. These experiences should provide the appropriate level of challenge to support children's needs. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that as a child, I can freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulates my natural curiosity, learning and creativity (HSCS 2.27)
- The service should improve how they assess and support the staff caring for children to provide high quality care and support by ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that if I have a carer, their needs are assessed and support provided and I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources. (HSCS 4.26 and 4.27)

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.