

Inspection report

West Lothian Council - Sure Start Day Care of Children

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Lomond House
Beveridge Square
Livingston
EH54 6QF

Inspected by: Kathryn Thompson
(Care Commission officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 11 January 2011

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Service provided by:

West Lothian Council

Service provider number:

SP2003002601

Care service number:

CS2007163812

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Easy read summary of this inspection report

There is a six point grading scale. Each of the Quality Themes we inspected, is graded using the following scale:

We can choose from six grades:



We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support		Very Good
Quality of Environment		N/A
Quality of Staffing		N/A
Quality of Management and Leadership		N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

What the service does well

From the discussion which took place with staff who were providing the creche at the inspection and written evidence seen at the feedback session. It was evident that the creche workers, the staff at the Family Centre and the group facilitators, continued to work closely with families to ensure that their individual needs were identified and met. The staff were observed to be very motivated and enthusiastic and provided exceptional care and support for the children.

What the service could do better

The staff team at West Lothian Sure Start should continue to work together to maintain the very good practice evidenced in this inspection report.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The creche workers now wear name badges as a result of a suggestion from a parent. Sure Start have held their ten year conference in which young parents who had attended Sure Start groups had made a contribution. For example this had included a parent writing a story about what had been helpful and what hadn't. Parents also acted out a play about being a teenage parent.

The Sure Start office has relocated since the last inspection. The new accommodation is in good decorative order, bright and well ventilated.

Conclusion

The staff team, were observed to be motivated, skilled, appropriately qualified and some staff were currently undertaking training to attain a relevant qualification to enable them to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). They have continued to demonstrate their commitment to the families with whom they work. The manager was very motivated and enthusiastic and her vision focused on providing families with high quality of care and support.

Who did this inspection

Lead Care Commission Officer

Kathryn Thompson

Other Care Commission Officers

Lay Assessor

Please read all of this report so that you can understand the full findings of this inspection.

About the Care Commission

We were set up in April 2002 to regulate and improve care services in Scotland.

Regulation involves:

- registering new services
- inspecting services
- investigating complaints
- taking enforcement action, when necessary, to improve care services.

We regulate around 15,000 services each year. Many are childminders, children's daycare services such as nurseries, and care home services. We regulate many other kinds of services, ranging from nurse agencies to independent healthcare such as hospices and private hospitals.

We regulate services for the very young right through to those for the very old. Our work can, therefore, affect the lives of most people in Scotland.

All our work is about improving the quality of care services.

We produce thousands of inspection reports every year; all are published on our website: www.carecommission.com. Reports include any complaints we investigate and improvements that we ask services to make.

The "Care services" area of our website also:

- allows you to search for information, such as reports, about the services we regulate
- has information for the people and organisations who provide care services
- has guidance on looking for and using care services in Scotland.

You can also get in touch with us if you would like more detailed information.

About the National Care Standards

The National Care Standards (NCS) set out the standards that people who use care services in Scotland should expect. The aim is to make sure that you receive the same high quality of service no matter where you live.

Different types of service have different National Care Standards. When we inspect a care service we take into account the National Care Standards that the service should provide.

The Scottish Government publishes copies of the National Care Standards online at: www.scotland.gov.uk

You can get printed copies free from:

Booksource
50 Cambuslang Road
Cambuslang Investment Park
Glasgow
G32 8NB
Tel: 0845 370 0067
Fax: 0845 370 0068
Email: scottishgovernment@booksource.net

What is inspection?

Our inspectors, known as Care Commission Officers (CCOs), check care services regularly to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the people in their care.

One of the ways we check on services is to carry out inspections. We may turn up without telling the service's staff in advance. This is so we can see how good the care is on a normal day. We inspect some types of services more often than others.

When we inspect a service, typically we:

- talk to people who use the service, their carers and families, staff and managers
- talk to individuals and groups
- have a good look around and check what quality of care is being provided
- look at the activities happening on the day
- examine things like records and files, if we need to
- find out if people get choices, such as food, choosing a key worker and controlling their own spending money.

We also use lay assessors during some inspections. These are volunteers who have used care services or have helped to care for someone who has used care services.

We write out an inspection report after gathering the information. The report describes how things are and whether anything needs to change.

Our work must reflect the following laws and guidelines:

- the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- regulations made under this Act
- the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should be able to expect to receive from a care service.

This means that when we register or inspect a service we make sure it meets the requirements of the 2001 Act. We also take into account the National Care Standards that apply to it.

If we find a service is not meeting these standards, the 2001 Act gives us powers that require the service to improve.

Recommendations, requirements and complaints

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

- 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 Act 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 Care Commission.

Complaints: We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service (or about us). Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints. Depending on how complex it is, a complaint may be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

How we decided what to inspect

Why we have different levels of inspection

We target our inspections. This means we spend less time with services we are satisfied are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care. We call these low-intensity inspections. Services where there is more concern receive more intense inspections. We call these medium or high intensity inspections.

How we decide the level of inspection

When planning an inspection, our inspectors, or Care Commission Officers (CCOs) carefully assess how intensively each service needs to be inspected. They do this by considering issues such as:

- complaints
- changes to how the service provides care
- any notifications the service has given us, such as the absence of a manager
- what action the service has taken in response to requirements we have made.

The CCO will also consider how the service responded to situations and issues: for example how it deals with complaints, or notifies us about incidents such as the death of someone using the service.

Our inspections take account of:

- areas of care that we are particularly interested in (these are called Inspection Focus Areas)
- the National Care Standards that the service should be providing
- recommendations and requirements that we made in earlier inspections
- any complaints and other regulatory activity, such as enforcement actions we have taken to improve the service.

What is grading?

We grade each service under Quality Themes which for most services are:

- **Quality of Care and Support:** how the service meets the needs of each individual in its care
- **Quality of Environment:** the environment within the service (for example, is the service clean, is it set out well, is it easy to access by people who use wheelchairs?);
- **Quality of Staffing:** the quality of the care staff, including their qualifications and training
- **Quality of Management and Leadership:** how the service is managed and how it develops to meet the needs of the people it cares for
- **Quality of Information:** this is how the service looks after information and manages record keeping safely.

Each of the Quality Themes has a number of Quality Statements in it, which we grade.

We grade each heading as follows:

6	5	4	3	2	1
excellent	very good	good	adequate	weak	unsatisfactory

We do not give one overall grade.

How grading works.

Services assess themselves using guidance that we given them. Our inspectors take this into account when they inspect and grade the service. We have the final say on grading.

The Quality Themes for this service type are explained in section 2 The Inspection.

About the service we inspected

West Lothian Sure Start was registered with the Care Commission in January 2008 to provide a creche service to a maximum of 20 children aged 0 - 5 years. Creches are held whilst parents/carers attend Sure Start support groups in the same building as the creche. At this inspection one facility was visited and there were 2 children present, who were being cared for by creche workers whilst their parents attended a meeting within the venue.

The creche operates between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday - Friday from a number of West Lothian Premises including schools, Child and Family centres and Community Education Centres.

The service has in place aims and objectives which state:

"We aim to give very young children the best possible start in life by working closely with parents, Grandparents and carers. We also work with other agencies. We will do this by providing a service which will:

Improve children's social and emotional development, their health and their ability to learn.

Strengthen families and communities by building on parents' existing skills, experience and knowledge".

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

Quality of Care and Support	5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment	N/A
Quality of Staffing	N/A
Quality of Management and Leadership	N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

You can use the "Care services" area of our website (www.carecommission.com) to find the most up-to-date grades for this service.

How we inspected this service

What level of inspection did we make this service

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 activities did we undertake during the inspection

From October 2010 the Care Commission has temporarily introduced an additional, less intense, inspection approach for services which have previously reached a good level of performance. This service qualified for this reduced inspection approach and was therefore inspected only against one quality theme at this inspection

Kathryn Thompson, Care Commission Officer, completed this report following an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 14 December 2010, between 13:00 and 15:00. Feedback was given to the manager at a meeting on 11 January 2011.

As requested by us, the service completed and sent us an annual return. The service also submitted a self-assessment form before this inspection.

We issued 15 Care Commission Care Standards questionnaires to parents of children who used the service. Three were returned before the inspection.

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

- * Evidence from the service self assessment form
- *Parent's evaluation forms
- *Aims of service
- *Certificate of Registration
- *Public Liability insurance document
- *Observing staff's interaction with the children
- *Discussion with the manager
- * Discussion with parents
- * Examination of toys and resources
- *Complaints procedure
- *Newsletter
- *Confidentiality procedure
- *Service consultation Activity
- *Group programme
- *Surveys and feedback forms

Discussions with the manager, group facilitators, creche workers and staff from the Family Centre who were present at the time of the inspection.

We also looked at equipment and the environment.

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

Each year we identify an area, or areas, we want to focus on during our inspections. We still inspect all the normal areas of a care service; these are extra checks we make for a specific reason.

For 2010/11 we will focus on:

- Quality assurance for care at home and combined care at home and housing support services.

You can find out more about these from our website www.carecommission.com.

Fire safety issues

The Care Commission no longer reports on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function. Where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Care service providers can find more information about their legal responsibilities in this area at: www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

Has the service had to take any actions as a result of or since our last inspection?

The provider must ensure that, where staff to be employed are required by law to be registered with an appropriate professional body, checks on the validity of such registrations are carried out and results clearly evidenced. This is to comply with SSI/114 Regulation 9(2)(c), Fitness of employees and Regulation 19(2)(d), Records. It also takes into account the SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers 1.2 Checking relevant registers Timescale for Implementation: within 2 weeks of receipt of the letter.

Action taken on the Requirement

We found that West Lothian Council Recruitment and Selection policy had been revised to reflect this process. In addition the evidence submitted showed that those candidates eligible for registration with a professional body, had relevant checks carried out and these checks had been clearly evidenced.

The requirement is:

Met

Actions Taken on Recommendations Outstanding

Safer Recruitment was examined at a corporate level in the last inspection year. This resulted in one requirement and one recommendation being made.

1. The provider should follow its Recruitment and Selection Policy with regard to seeking references for all appointments.

SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers 1.3, seeking and providing reliable references. Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment - Scottish Government.

In the evidence submitted we found that this recommendation had been satisfactorily addressed.

The annual return

We use annual returns (ARs) to:

- make sure we have up-to-date, accurate information about care services; and
- decide how we will inspect services.

By law every registered care service must send us an annual return and provide us with the information we have requested. The relevant law is the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 25(1). These forms must be returned to us between 6 January and 15 February.

Annual Return Received

Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

We received a fully completed self-assessment document from the service. This was completed with relevant information for each of the headings that we grade the service under. The service identified what they thought they did well and some areas of development were identified.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

The children present were too young to express their views. However from observation and discussion with the staff it was very evident that they were committed to ensuring that the children were cared for in a way that was consistent to the care they received at home. There was also a wide range of equipment made available to them.

Taking carers' views into account

We sent out 15 questionnaires to the parents of children who used the service. Three were completed and returned to us before our inspection. When we asked about the quality of care their child receives in the service all parents indicated that they were happy with the service provided. In addition one parent who spoke to us at the inspection said that they had found the group very supportive and was pleased that it

was going to continue after Christmas to make up for the groups which were cancelled due to the recent bad weather.

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

There were very good opportunities for parents to make comments that would improve the quality of care and support their child received. For example:

*We found that the service carried out an annual survey of their service in March.

*Group facilitators maintained regular verbal contact with families about their service, individual needs and any suggestions they may have.

*Parents received a verbal report on how their children had been during the creche session.

We saw that staff observed how the children and babies settled within the creche during the session, this monitoring their preferences for activities. For example their favourite toys and activities. The staff team described how they had observed how a child had particularly liked a toy and had advised their parent of this.

We were informed that as a result of a comment from a child, a child's feedback form has been set up. This has enabled the service obtain the views of the older children attending. In addition the staff team also listened to the parents views about their child's experience at the creche.

We evidenced that the results of surveys and questionnaires were evaluated. For example, parents commented on staff being "very helpful", "very nice" "very helpful and friendly", "very happy and welcome everybody." Two parents commented that the "creche is very good, nothing wrong at all", "friendly to parents and kids." Four parents commented on their child's positive experience. This practice enabled the staff to identify and make any improvements to the service provided to the families.

We were informed that the manager had short informal conversations with the children when she visited the creche and they said that enjoyed the toys with which they were playing at that time. Responses from children which were written down by adults stated that they enjoyed the creche and had "fun".

The parents we spoke to on the day of the inspection were very enthusiastic about their attendance at the group facility whilst their child attended the creche. They also talked of their shared experiences with their children at the creche and support from staff. Parents also indicated that they were informed about their child's time at the creche through the conversations they had with staff. In addition they stated that they were very comfortable about approaching staff with suggestions for their child's care needs.

In the Care Commission Care Standards questionnaires one parent indicated that they strongly agreed that staff shared information about their child's learning and development. One parent agreed with this statement and one parent disagreed.

Areas for Improvement

The service identified the following in their self assessment form:

"We aim to continue to have a parents' forum. The group will consist of parents/carers and will include a creche worker if possible."

"We hope to engage with the parents' forum to consider whether there are other ways of ensuring that children's views are heard.

We would support these areas for improvement and suggest that staff should continue to show how children and parent's views have influenced improvement in the care and support provided.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements

0

Number of recommendations

0

Statement 4

We use a range of communication methods to ensure we meet the needs of service users.

Service Strengths

We confirmed that the organisation had a communications policy and that the service used a very good range of communication methods to ensure they met the needs of children and families who used the service. In addition Sure Start produce their own Communication Report annually.

We saw a Newsletter which informed parents about results of customer survey, staff who had attained awards, the manager's report and information about the forthcoming office move.

We were informed that creche staff also spoke informally to parents and carers when they took their children to and collected them from the creche. Sure Start also had a website which allowed parents to post comments or email them via the team inbox, or for people to make enquiries about services they may require.

We were informed that some facilitators used post-it stickers for parents who wished to make comment on issues individually. In addition some parents communicated with staff by mobile phone, text messaging and email where they were also able to access the Sure Start newsletter.

We were informed that some staff had attended a "Signalong" course, which had helped them to communicate with children who had hearing difficulties. We confirmed that the staff team had completed evaluation forms about the course and had stated that they found it to be very helpful in the course of their work.

The service had introduced a child's response form which has been used by some children to express their views.

We found that parents were encouraged to complete or were given support to complete a questionnaire about the service at the end of each term.

Discussion with staff demonstrated that they were knowledgeable about why it was necessary to adhere to the principles of confidentiality. They showed a very good understanding of why it was important to be sensitive towards the needs of individual families when dealing with issues of a confidential nature. It was evident that their knowledge and understanding of confidentiality reflected their policy.

We confirmed that the organisation had an appropriate complaints procedure. We were informed that parents were also given a pre-paid response leaflet which parents were given at the beginning of their contact with Sure Start. The organisation also had a

system where a complaint could be made through the Council website. In addition we were informed about a complaint which had been made and was resolved internally. As a result of this complaint there was a review of toys and equipment/space available in one venue.

In In the Care Commission Care Standards questionnaires returned to us, one parent strongly agreed that they were kept informed about what is happening in the service, for example through newsletters and notice boards. One parent disagreed and one parent felt that this question was not applicable.

Areas for Improvement

The service identified the following in their self assessment form:

As s a result of a suggestion of the parents' forum they thought that they would prefer a newsletter of their own. The parents' group felt the current newsletter was useful in reporting on feedback and news of the service, but agreed with the parents' forum that a parent-led newsletter would be helpful. The staff team aim to support the parents leading on this initiative.

We would support this area for improvement a suggest that the service continues to maintain this very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

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

'Safer Recruitment was examined at a corporate level in the last inspection year. This resulted in one requirement and one recommendation being made. The Care Commission has received an action plan from the provider indicating that the requirements and recommendation regarding Safer Recruitment practices centrally have been actioned'.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Commission 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).

Summary of Grades

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - Not Assessed	
Quality of Staffing - Not Assessed	
Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed	

Inspection and Grading History

Date	Type	Gradings
28 Jan 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
3 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 2 - Weak Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and Leadership 4 - Good

Terms we use in our report and what they mean

Action Plan - When we inspect a service, or investigate a complaint and the inspection report highlights an area for improvement; either through recommendations or requirements, the action plan sets out the actions the service will take in response.

Best practice statements/guidelines - This describes practices that have been shown to work best and to be achievable in specific areas of care. They are intended to guide practice and promote a consistent and cohesive approach to care.

Care Service - A service that provides care and is registered with us.

Complaints - We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service or about us. Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints which can have more than one outcome. Depending on how complex the complaint is, the outcomes can be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

Enforcement - To protect people who use care services, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 gives the Care Commission powers to enforce the law. This means we can vary or impose new conditions of registration, which may restrict how a service operates. We can also serve an improvement notice on a service provider to make them improve their service within a set timescale. If they do not make these improvements we could issue a cancellation notice and cancel their registration.

Disclosure Scotland- Disclosure Scotland provides an accurate and responsive disclosure service to enhance security, public safety and protect the vulnerable in society. There are three types or levels of disclosure (i.e. criminal record check) available from Disclosure Scotland; basic, standard and enhanced. An enhanced check is required for people whose work regularly involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults at risk; or to register for child minding, day care and to act as foster parents or carers.

Participation - This describes processes that allow individuals and groups to develop and agree programmes, policy and procedures.

Personal Plan - This is a plan of how support and care will be provided. The plan is agreed between the person using the service (or their representative, or both of them) and the service provider. It is sometimes called a care plan mostly by local authorities or health boards when they commission care for people.

How you can use this report

Our inspection reports give care services detailed information about what they are doing well and not so well. We want them to use our reports to improve the services they provide if they need to.

Care services should share our inspection reports with the people who use their service, their families and carers. They can do this in many ways, for example by discussing with them what they plan to do next or by making sure our report is easily available.

People who use care services, their relatives and carers

We encourage you to read this report and hope that you find the information helpful when making a decision on whether or not to use the care service we have inspected. If you, or a family member or friend, are already using a care service, it is important that you know we have inspected that service and what we found. You may find it helpful to read previous inspection reports about his service.

The Care Commission

We use the information we gather from all our inspections to report to Scottish Ministers on how well Scotland's care services are performing. This information helps us to influence important changes they may make about how care services are provided.

Reader Information

This inspection report is published by the Care Commission. It is for use by the general public. You can get more copies of this report and others by downloading it from our website www.carecommission.com or by telephoning 0845 603 0890.

Translations and alternative formats

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

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

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

هذه بایتسد ىم وونابز رگىد روا رولکش رگىد رپ شرازگ تعاشا هى

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

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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.

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Improving care in Scotland