

# Firtrees Nursery & Out of School Care Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 3 November 2016

**Service provided by:**  
Amcol Scotland Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000911

**Care service number:**  
CS2003004432

## About the service

Firtrees Nursery & Out of School Care provides day care for children aged from birth to those attending primary school. The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since the Care Inspectorate formed in 2011. The service offers day care to a maximum of 288 children, as follows:

- 21 children aged from 0 to under 1 year
- 33 children aged 1 to under 2 years
- 50 children aged 2 to under 3 years
- 144 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school

The service is located next to New College Lanarkshire - Motherwell Campus. The building was specially designed to meet the needs of the number and age of children attending. It has fully enclosed, very well equipped garden areas. It is close to public transport, local parks and community facilities.

The service is available Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm, 50 weeks of the year.

The service is provided by Amcol Scotland Ltd, who have another three services registered with the Care Inspectorate. A manager is in post, with senior staff in each area of the service. Qualified early years staff provide the day-to-day care of children attending. The service is in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council to provide early learning and childcare for 3-5 year olds.

The service aims to "create a welcoming and positive ethos within a safe and stimulating environment where each individual feels cared for and valued."

This report was written following an unannounced inspection carried out by one care service inspector over the course of four days. Our visits took place on Tuesday 25, Wednesday 26 and Friday 31 October 2016. We returned on Thursday 3 November to complete the inspection and provide the manager with feedback on our visit.

At this inspection we focused on the how children's individual needs were being met and how the environment supported their learning and development.

We used the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included) to assess practice and looked at how the service used these to ensure positive outcomes for children and their families.

From April 2016, we will carry out a quality audit, to gather information relating to 'How Good Is Our School Aged Childcare'. The audit will focus on the quality of children and young people's play experiences and how their rights to play and have fun are promoted and protected. The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework - SHANARRI, Playwork Principles and Article 31 will underpin a list of outcome-focused questions developed for inspectors to work from when inspecting. The information gathered will form the basis of an end of year report 2017, along with information on service demand for school aged childcare throughout Scotland. Further information can be found at The Hub at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

We spoke with the many of the children, staff and management team during our visit and chatted to twelve parents/carers when they arrived to pick up their children.

We also spoke with a speech and language therapist who visits the service.

We asked the service to distribute seventy care standards questionnaires to parents/carers on our behalf. We received nineteen completed questionnaires prior to the inspection taking place.

## What people told us

We spent time with children of all ages during our visit. We chatted with many of them and observed them at play. We observed how staff cared and interacted with children and how they responded to younger children's cues.

Across the service children were happy, content and clearly enjoyed their nursery and after school care experience. They spoke enthusiastically about their favourite activities and about their special friendships. They talked about how staff helped them and about how they felt safe in their care. They commented:

"I like playing outside. I like digging and climbing"

"I'm going out to play with my friends"

"I love the Gruffalo, that's my favourite"

"I hope we're having pasta, macaroni is my favourite"

"The apples fell off the tree"

"We washed our dolls clothes, they're hanging outside"

"We know everyone here, even the new ones"

"I've got lots of friends and we like to look after the wee ones"

"I love it here. I disappear when my mum comes early"

Parents/carers spoke very positively about their child's nursery and after school experience. They spoke very highly of staff and management, describing them as "excellent", "fantastic" and "great". They told us that communication was very good and that they felt involved in the service.

Most parents/carers expressed a high level of satisfaction with the service in the care standards questionnaires. Most agreed/strongly agreed with the statements. One parent/carer indicated that although they were delighted with the service, they felt the menu could be improved. Another indicated that they would like to be involved more. We discussed this with the manager during our visit.

Some of their comments included:

"Staff are always very professional and caring towards my child. He has experienced a wide range of activities and has been nurtured and supported along the way"

"The meals surpass my expectations, my child has a healthy appetite and the food he receives is of an excellent quality and variety"

"My child has had an excellent early years education in Firtrees. The support and care shown by all staff towards my child has allowed her to flourish"

"Firtrees gave me peace of mind whilst spending time away from my child. He adores staff and looks forward to going to nursery"

"The staff provide an exceptional level of care and attentions to each child. The range of activities, play and education facilities that they provide is outstanding"

"My son has settled really well and looks forward to seeing his key worker every week"

"Excellent service provided by Firtrees, all the way from nursery to after school care. I am always confident that my children are well cared for, and have built positive relationships with staff. The environment is safe, stimulating and fun"

"The staff are great, friendly and professional and always willing to help"

"My child has become more confident, developed social skills and continued to meet milestones through the support from staff"

"My child has experienced all areas of the nursery. I have found staff to be extremely caring and knowledgeable"

"The workers made a special themed area for my child. I found this very touching and it made me feel comfortable that my child was being cared for"

"The nursery is very well organised and staff invest a lot of time in various projects throughout the year"

"I have always been very happy with all the nursery workers, receptionists and chefs"  
"Keyworker for my child has gone that extra mile. My child has progressed considerably through the support and encouragement received by Amanda. Her passion and commitment is exemplary"

## Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment from the manager. This clearly identified what the manager thought was working well and some key areas which could be improved. The manager told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self-assessment process and how their feedback directed the development of their plans for improving the service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

<b>Quality of care and support</b>	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of environment</b>	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of staffing</b>	not assessed
<b>Quality of management and leadership</b>	not assessed

## What the service does well

Across the service children's individual needs were being met in person centred way. The manager had a clear vision and strong value base. Her high standards and expectations were shared by staff, resulting in children experiencing high quality learning opportunities which reflected their individual needs. The service's welcoming, inclusive ethos created an environment where children, families and staff were respected and valued.

A key strength was the positive relationships staff had developed with children and their families. They knew children extremely well and spoke confidently about how they planned for them as individuals. Strong relationships had been established with parents/carers, which promoted effective information sharing about children's changing needs. This ensured continuity of care between home and the setting, supporting children to settle and feel safe.

Children's records confirmed that their needs were being met effectively. These contained clear information about their health, learning and development needs and how these were being supported by staff. Staff ensured that children and parents/carers were involved in setting individual plans, demonstrating that their views were respected and included.

Where children required additional support, staff and management worked effectively with professional agencies to ensure they received the support they needed. Professional agencies confirmed that staff were committed to working together to ensure that children were well supported to achieve their potential.

Staff understood the service's child protection procedures and participated in regular formal training courses and in-house refresher sessions. This supported them to safeguard children in their care.

Playrooms and outdoor areas were decorated and equipped to a very high standard, creating a rich learning environment. Areas were well planned and set out to take account of children's individual development needs and interests.

Staff understood the importance of children leading their own play. They nurtured children's interests and were skilled in their interactions and extending their play. As a result, children were developing confidence, becoming independent and responsible and experiencing risk.

Overall children benefited from warm, secure relationships in a safe, nurturing environment. They were cared for by staff who valued them as individuals and who were committed to improving outcomes for them and their families.

## What the service could do better

Although nappy changing was generally a positive experience for children, we found at times this was task oriented. We encouraged staff to continue to use this opportunity to further promote children's learning and strengthen relationships. The service's nappy changing procedures reflected best practice, however at times these were being followed inconsistently by staff. The manager has agreed to revisit this with staff and monitor practice closely.

The setting had recently made some significant changes to the 3-5 rooms. This appeared to have a positive impact on children's experiences. The manager planned to continue to evaluate these changes ensuring they continue to meet the needs of children.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## 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).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
27 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
3 Jul 2014	Re-grade	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
22 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
1 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
31 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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