

# Care service inspection report

## Strichen School Nursery

### Day Care of Children

North Street

Strichen

Fraserburgh

AB43 6SX

Telephone: 01771 637250

Inspected by: Maureen Mathieson

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 22 February 2013



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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### **Service provided by:**

Aberdeenshire Council

### **Service provider number:**

SP2003000029

### **Care service number:**

CS2003015726

### **Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:**

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

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

### We gave the service these grades

|                                      |   |           |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Quality of Care and Support          | 5 | Very Good |
| Quality of Environment               | 5 | Very Good |
| Quality of Staffing                  | 5 | Very Good |
| Quality of Management and Leadership | 5 | Very Good |

### What the service does well

The nursery has very good systems for involving children and parents in the life of the nursery. Children and parent's views are considered to be important and influence the way the nursery works.

Children are developing a keen interest in keeping fit, active and healthy and developing their physical skills well through nursery experiences.

Staff work effectively to provide a safe, supportive and suitable environment. They work together as a team well and with other settings to share practice and gather new ideas.

The head teacher ensures that all staff have a common sense of purpose. Very good systems have been implemented for ensuring that the nursery achieves a high quality service and good outcomes for children.

### What the service could do better

The nursery should make minor improvements to infection control matters, for example changing cleaning materials, bins and storage boxes.

The provider must ensure the teacher is trained in first aid for the benefit of the children.

### **What the service has done since the last inspection**

No recommendations were outstanding from the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, however it is clear that the nursery is continually reviewing and improving practice.

### **Conclusion**

The nursery is achieving a high standard of practice and we could see that this was benefiting the children attending. Parents also confirmed that they were very pleased with the service.

### **Who did this inspection**

Maureen Mathieson

# 1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 01 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information on all services is available on our website at: [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

Strichen School Nursery was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011.

Aberdeenshire Council is the provider of this service. The nursery is located within Strichen Primary School, in the rural village of Strichen, Aberdeenshire. The accommodation consists of one classroom with direct access to an outdoor area. A garden area and school facilities are also used by the nursery children.

Strichen School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children aged 3 to those not yet attending primary school.

The service may operate between the times of 9.15am to 11.45am. Monday to Friday during term time.

The overarching aim of the nursery is to provide opportunities for each child to develop to their full potential within an environment which is supportive, safe, inclusive and challenging. Children will be encouraged to reach their potential and they will be offered the opportunity to develop the skills and attitudes they will require in life to be responsible citizens and contribute to the society they will live in.

The aims are further supported by objectives taking account of the capacities associated with Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every child; national initiatives to support children.

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

**Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Environment - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good**

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website

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[www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

### What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection carried out by Care Inspectorate inspector Maureen Mathieson. The inspection visit took place between 9.00am and 2.40pm on 22 February 2013.

As requested by us, the provider sent us an annual return. The provider also sent us a self assessment form.

Before the inspection we asked the service to give out 10 questionnaires to people whose children use the service. 8 completed questionnaires were returned directly to us before the inspection.

During the inspection evidence was gathered from a number of sources, including:

Discussions with:

The head teacher

The nursery staff

The parents and carers of children who use the service.

Observations of how staff work with the children

Observations of children's engagement in and enjoyment of the nursery activities.

Observations of the environment, equipment and resources.

Examination of the relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents, including

Nursery Aims

Children's individual records

Curriculum planning

Snack menus

Child Protection Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Risk Assessments

Infection control policy

Service user questionnaires  
Complaints Policy  
Newsletters  
Management Monitoring

Feedback on the inspection was given to the head teacher at the end of the visit.

### **Requirements and Recommendations**

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

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.

A requirement is a statement that sets out what is required of the care service to comply with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and regulations and Orders made under the Act, or a condition of Registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Inspectorate.

### **Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

### **Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

### **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to



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take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firelawscotland.org](http://www.firelawscotland.org)

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

No recommendations are outstanding from the previous inspection.

## The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** Yes - Electronic

## Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment document from the service provider. We were satisfied with the way the service provider had completed this and with the relevant information they had given us for each of headings that we grade them under.

The service provider evaluated what they thought they did well and described the impact on children who used the service and service improvement. Relevant areas for development and planned changes were identified. The service provider told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self assessment process.

## Taking the views of people using the care service into account

The children present at the time of the inspection were observed to be happy, confident and highly motivated by the activities at the nursery. A few found time to tell us what they were enjoying at the nursery;

'look at me, I can hoola',

'I am learning to skip'

'I can write my name'

'Being star of the week is fine. I got to take Fergus home and he slept with me two nights.'

### **Taking carers' views into account**

Before the inspection we asked the service to give out ten of our care service questionnaires to parents and carers who use the service. Eight completed questionnaires were returned to us before our inspection. Responses showed that seven parents strongly agreed and 1 agreed that overall they were happy with the quality of care their child receives in the service.

Four questionnaires included written comments reflecting positively on the service offered and the staff:

'A fantastic nursery, the staff in particular are wonderful - friendly, approachable, likable and professional.'

'Strichen School Nursery is a wonderful place and I feel very lucky that my child attends this nursery and lives within the catchment area for this school. The staff are extremely professional, friendly and inclusive and in my experience do not hesitate to go the extra mile for a pupil or parent.'

'My child is very happy and settled at nursery and loves the wonderful caring staff. We have been delighted with the progress they have made and cannot commend the nursery and staff highly enough.'

'My child is having a fantastic pre-school experience. I see them developing every day, they love going and the nursery is more than preparing them for moving on to primary 1 next year.'

Two parents were spoken with during the inspection who were also very pleased with the nursery and reported that their children loved coming. They reflected positively on the high level of information given by the nursery when their child started and how the nursery makes very good efforts to help children get to know their local community.

## 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

#### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The nursery involves children and families who use the service and asks for their views in a multitude of ways.

Staff were observed to have established effective communication with parents; they were open and friendly and made time to talk to parents as they dropped off and collected their children.

Newsletters inform parents well about nursery life and how their children's views and choices have been taken account of in the provision of snacks and activities.

Newsletters described how children had chosen to visit places in the local community for example, the butchers shop, play park and the doctor's surgery to learn more about them. Staff display photographs electronically and in albums to inform parents what children have been doing.

The staff demonstrated a natural rapport with the children and valued children's views. Staff took time to listen to the children and to respond appropriately extending their learning wherever possible. We saw that staff give children plenty of opportunities to express their ideas, make choice and suggestions and discuss their interests and friendships. Physical strategies are used to evaluate and make choices, for example thumbs up using pictures or voting by moving to a choice, these help children in thinking about their preferences. Staff capture children's views on mind-

maps and use these to inform their plans. Staff share books of photographs, display the mid maps to show parents the contributions children make.

The nursery helps to make links between children's learning at home and nursery. Parents are encouraged to bring in 'Well done' sheets to share children's achievements at home. Nursery celebrates these achievements and adds them to children's progress files; children love looking at these and have pride in their success.

Parents are encouraged to actively help in the nursery with activities and outings. Parents are also invited to stay for 'drop in sessions' at the nursery; giving children an opportunity to share their work with their parents. It also gives parents an opportunity to see the quality of the nursery environment and the work of the staff. These opportunities give parents an insight into the work of the nursery and a basis for evaluating the quality of the service.

Questionnaires are distributed every year, to ask parents who use the service about the quality of the care and support they have received.

Questionnaires are completed with children each term; asking them what they like about nursery, their favourite snacks and activities indoors and out, what they don't enjoy and any suggestions for new toys and play activities.

Parents are offered individual meetings to discuss their child's progress and to discuss their written progress reports. Parent's feedback on the lack of privacy to talk to staff had resulted in staff raising parents' awareness that they can arrange additional meetings to discuss any matter or concern at any time. This was communicated in a notice.

The head teacher involves nursery parents in a focus group discussion twice annually to discuss nursery matters and gather feedback. Parent's feedback had resulted in the development of the drop in sessions.

Of the nine parents responding to our questionnaires all agreed, most agreeing strongly that the nursery has involved them in developing the service for example by asking for ideas and feedback and that staff asked for their child's views about the activities and used them to plan for the future.

### **Areas for improvement**

We discussed combining the children's 'well done' books and their learning profiles to make them a more coherent learning story and also making them more accessible to children and their families to use as a working document.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have an excellent performance in relation to this statement.

Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that they are meeting children's individual needs and record appropriate information. They know children well and support their emotional well being and learning well. Links are established with a range of professionals who support individual children and communication is effective in ensuring consistent plans. Additional support is provided to ensure that all children are included and have equal access to a range of activities.

An appropriate child protection policy was in place and the policy and school's responsibilities shared with parents. The head teacher and staff had a good understanding of their role and responsibility in protecting children from harm, abuse and neglect. Staff confirmed the head teacher updated training in child protection issues annually using local authority materials.

The nursery is included in the schools health promoting school aims. Children are learning about health and wellbeing in nursery activities; they have been learning about their body and how it works by looking at a skeleton model and puzzle. They are learning that their brain needs to be switched on to learn at nursery; children were concerned that the skeleton had no brain and chose to make him one from play-dough. Children were learning about looking after their teeth by brushing their teeth at nursery and playing with and talking about interactive models of teeth and toothbrushes.

Children talk about healthy food options when choosing, shopping, preparing and eating their healthy snack. Activities such as playing with puzzles help them to learn about healthy foods. Children bake cakes in the nursery using healthy recipes.

Children are extremely interested in learning to be active indoors and out. They choose to participate enthusiastically in sports activities outdoors; independently taking out hoops, balls, skipping ropes and beanie bags. They demonstrate their skills in using the resources constructively and choose physical activities as their learning target. The nursery provides weekly opportunities for indoor gym activities. Children also engage in a range of activities outdoors in the fresh air in their secret garden; for

example planting and growing. Staff take children on regular outings and walks to help them get to know about their local community; they had been sledging in the snow in the park. Children are encouraged to participate in fun, energetic activity at home through home school links, for example active schools bags.

### **Areas for improvement**

The head teacher and staff should continue to monitor and maintain the very high standards of quality. They should ensure they are rigorous in identifying any areas for improvement and implementing action plans to address these.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

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 environment within the service.

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The evidence recorded in Quality Statement 1.1 also applies to this statement.

#### Areas for improvement

In self assessment the nursery proposes to increase the frequency that children are involved in questionnaires to every term and to continue to monitor their effectiveness.

We discussed ensuring that art and craft activities are child led and encourage children's individual creativity and imagination as much as possible.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

### Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The nursery entrance was secure out with designated arrival and collection times. A notice in the entrance hall encourages parents to note in the diary children's known absences or when other people will be collecting their child.



The nursery classroom was observed to be acceptably safe and well maintained. Equipment and resources were suitable for the children and maintained in sound, clean condition.

Of the eight parents responding to our service user questionnaires; 6 parents strongly agreed and 2 agreed that the nursery provides a safe, secure, hygienic, smoke free, pleasant and stimulating environment and that there is sufficient space for children to play with a range of activities.

Children benefited from weekly timetabled access to the school hall for gym and the schools library facilities which was well equipped for the younger children. . Children also benefited from direct access to a safely enclosed outdoor play area enabling the children to regularly choose free flow indoor outdoor play. The school was fortunate to have a walled garden that was well used by the nursery to extend the learning activities for children.

Staff carried out risk assessments to ensure children's safety and well being and maintained records of these. Staff were diligent in supervising children's play and children demonstrated that they had been taught how to walk safely up the stairs to the library.

The nursery staff were aware of the latest guidance on preventing and controlling the spread of infection within childcare setting and had made good use of this to update record keeping.

The nursery had recently been extended to provide modern toilet facilities for children which are child friendly, bright and clean. Disposable gloves and aprons were available to staff for personal care tasks. Liquid soap and disposable paper towels were available for hand-washing. Staff were aware of the importance of good hand-washing routines in preventing the spread of infection. A low hand-washing sink within the play room helped to support children in good hygiene. Children demonstrated they knew about the importance of hand-washing and did this independently as an established routine.

Elementary Food Hygiene training had been undertaken by nursery staff and appropriate hygiene was observed to be maintained in preparing snacks for children. The national tooth-brushing scheme was implemented hygienically.

### **Areas for improvement**

Staff believed the antibacterial cleaning sprays utilised to clean surfaces were appropriate; however current guidance recommends limiting use of anti-bacterial cleaners unless infection is present. Staff are recommended to use a suitable detergent and hot water for daily cleaning.

The general waste bin used in the nursery was of flip top design. Replacing this with

a pedal operated design would improve the prevention and control of infection.

The new toilet facilities incorporated an unused space which the nursery staff were using for storing toys and equipment. In terms of hygiene this was not best practice, particularly as not all boxes had covered lids.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 1

### Recommendations

1. The head teacher and staff should review the areas highlighted in the report and make changes to support improved infection prevention and control.

**National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16; Standard 2 - A Safe Environment**

## Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The evidence recorded in Quality Statement 1.1 also applies to this statement.

#### Areas for improvement

In self-assessment the service expressed commitment to continuing to encourage parents' participation and involvement.

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

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Statement 3

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

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

Staff employed in the nursery were either qualified in teaching or qualified and experienced in child-care and education. In discussion they demonstrated enjoyment and enthusiasm for their work. They were familiar with national and local good practice guidance and initiatives. We saw that the staff skills resulted in very good experiences and outcomes for children.

Staff participate in Aberdeenshire Council's employee development schemes to

regularly review their work and identify their training needs. Staff described being well supported by the head teacher and felt they were actively encouraged to further develop their knowledge and skills.

Core training elements include elementary food hygiene first aid and child protection. Staff have previously received training in elementary food hygiene and have recently applied for training to refresh this. The nursery nurse holds a recognised qualification in emergency resuscitation. Additional first aid support is provided in school. Child protection training is refreshed annually in school by the head teacher. Staff described completing useful training in Crisis, Aggression Limitation Management that helps them in their work

Staff meet locally with other nurseries in the cluster for in service training and to share practice. Staff described useful training in co-operative learning and 'big writing'; a literacy initiative, which had given them ideas to put into practice in the nursery.

Of the eight parents responding to our service user questionnaires; seven parents strongly agreed and one agreed that they were confident that the staff have the skills and experience to care for their child and support their learning and development and that there are always enough staff to provide a good quality of care.

### **Areas for improvement**

The current nursery teacher had not yet undertaken a course in first aid; this is recommended for all nursery staff as core training. For the purposes of overall workplace safety, staff within the school are qualified in First Aid however, it is our expectation that all nursery staff have basic First Aid awareness to equip them for working with children and to deal with accidents immediately for example, during snack or on trips and outings.

See requirement 1.

In the self-assessment the head teacher and staff identified commitment to continuing to look for good quality training courses to develop staff's knowledge and skills.

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

**Number of requirements:** 1

**Number of recommendations:** 0

### **Requirements**

1. The provider must ensure that within 6 months all nursery staff complete core training in child related First Aid.

**This is to comply with:**

**Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) 2011/210 regulation 4(1)(a) A Regulation to Ensure the Health, Welfare and Safety of Service Users.**

## Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

#### Service strengths

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

The evidence recorded in Quality Statement 1.1 also applies to this statement.

#### Areas for improvement

At the inspection of the service in 2009 it was suggested that the nursery develop a participation policy. While the head teacher and staff have implemented participation strategies well, intentions have not been developed into a coherent written policy that can be used by the service and service users to evaluate performance and success.

The Certificate of Registration displayed in the nursery related to the previous regulatory body. The head teacher was informed how to access the new Care Inspectorate certificate of registration.

The nursery complaint policy also referred to the Care Commission details and needed to be updated to the Care Inspectorate.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

### Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

### **Service strengths**

Having sampled evidence given by the nursery in the self-evaluation of the service and taken account of findings on the day of the inspection; this service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

Records and discussion with staff evidenced that the nursery staff evaluated the effectiveness of their work, discussed the emerging needs of children, considered children's views and feedback from parents and reflected deeply on their work.

Staff evaluate themselves against criteria set by the head teacher and linked to core quality indicators in a nationally recognised quality assurance system. The head teacher monitors practice and plans using the same criteria to inform a coherent audit and formulate development plans. Feedback on performance is shared with staff who feel well supported by the head teacher. Nursery staff are included in whole school initiatives and participate in staff meetings.

Staff make good use of training, national guidance and networking with other nurseries to inform their practice and areas for development. As a result the practice in the nursery was fresh and stimulating for children.

The nursery has very effective systems in place to gather the views of children and their parents about the quality of their work. The views of children are respected, influence the programmes and encourages children in their learning and achievement. Feedback from parents results in action and change.

### **Areas for improvement**

The head teacher and staff should continue to monitor and maintain the very high standards of quality. They should ensure they are rigorous in identifying any areas for improvement and implementing action plans to address these.

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

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## 4 Other information

### Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

### Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

### Additional Information

### Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).



## 5 Summary of grades

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</b>          |               |
| Statement 1   | 5 - Very Good |
| Statement 3   | 6 - Excellent |
| <b>Quality of Environment - 5 - Very Good</b>               |               |
| Statement 1   | 5 - Very Good |
| Statement 2   | 5 - Very Good |
| <b>Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good</b>                  |               |
| Statement 1   | 5 - Very Good |
| Statement 3   | 5 - Very Good |
| <b>Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good</b> |               |
| Statement 1   | 5 - Very Good |
| Statement 4   | 5 - Very Good |

## 6 Inspection and grading history

| Date        | Type        | Gradings  |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| 25 May 2009 | Unannounced | Care and support      5 - Very Good<br>Environment          5 - Very Good<br>Staffing                5 - Very Good<br>Management and Leadership   5 - Very Good |

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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## Translations and alternative formats

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