

# Hoddom Nursery Day Care of Children

Hoddom Primary School  
Langlands Road  
Ecclefechan  
DG11 3DS

Telephone: 01576 300 613

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
6 February 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Dumfries & Galloway Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003501

**Service no:**  
CS2003015489

## About the service

Hoddorn Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 30 children at any one time aged from 2 years to not yet attending primary school of whom no more than 5 are under 3 years.

The nursery is located in a residential area in the town of Ecclefechan, Dumfries and Galloway. The service is based within the local school, and is close to other amenities. Children are accommodated in an open plan playroom with access to an enclosed outdoor areas.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5th and 6th February 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children using the service
- Spoke with staff and management
- Consulted with families through online questionnaires
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with visiting professionals

## Key messages

- Children were happy and settled in the nursery on the days of inspection
- Personal plans & templates had been reviewed and updated to ensure children individual needs and achievements were recorded appropriately
- The team should continue to develop the environment to support fun and stimulating play experiences for children
- The team should continue to embed self evaluation processes to drive improvements in the nursery
- Comprehensive intervention by the provider is required to address the ongoing issues of staffing with in the service.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

On both days of inspection, children who attended the nursery were happy, confident, and having fun with friends. We observed children experiencing patient, kind and nurturing care from staff which supported their health and wellbeing. We observed staff supporting children's emotional wellbeing in a calm, respectful and restorative manner. One parent told us "The staff are friendly and welcoming."

Following the previous inspection, the team had been working, in collaboration with children and families, to improve the snack and lunch time experience. Children could make choices on what they wanted to eat each day with the use of pictures. This ensured they were involved and their right to choose respected. Children were able to develop their independence and life skills by self-selecting and serving aspects of their meals. We observed children taking pride in their responsibilities by cleaning away their dirty cups and dishes after they had eaten. This enabled children to build their confidence and self-help skills. We highlighted the importance of staff consistently sitting with children throughout the mealtimes to further enrich the experience. Food choices were nutritious and reflect current guidance. Water was available throughout the day to ensure children remained hydrated. One parent told us what they liked about the service was the team "Encourage their child to taste different food."

Following the previous inspection the team had reviewed and updated their personal plan template. Plans were in place for each child and were shared regularly with families. We found staff used the information gathered within the new templates and one-page profiles to help meet the children's ongoing needs. The information recorded in personal plans was updated to record children's individual achievements and next steps. We asked the team to expand the details of strategies used for each child in the new plans. The team should continue to embed the new templates and procedures to ensure continuous high-quality care and learning for children attending the nursery. Most parents strongly agreed with our questions "I am fully involved in my child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan."

Children's health and wellbeing was supported by a clear administration of medication policy. We sampled the nursery's medication consent forms and health plans and found these were in line with current good practice guidance. However, we found some examples of forms required information to be more explicit. We suggested the manager could further enhance monitoring and quality assurance processes by sampling completed consents and medication records to ensure a consistent approach to recording by the whole team.

Children experienced sensitive and dignified support for their personal care needs. Staff were aware of safe nappy changing guidance and could access appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Children were supported to independently undertake personal care tasks such as washing their hands, faces, and brushing their teeth with prompting and praise from staff which helped develop life skills and their self-esteem.

### 1.3 Play and learning

On both days of inspection, we observed children leading their play and learning, as they could free-flow between all spaces in the playrooms and outdoors. Children had built good relationships with staff and their friends in nursery, and we saw lots of fun and imaginative play.

Children benefited from a variety of planned and spontaneous play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. On both days of inspection there were provocations set out to spark children's interests and curiosities. We observed children engage and explore the activities with friends and staff. Children enjoyed yoga and sticky kid activities led by the staff. One child told us "I like playing in the water." Another told us they like to "play in the sand and with my friend."

Staff were knowledgeable and had a good understanding of development, theory, and schematic play. We observed staff extend children's schematic play with new resources and ideas. We saw examples of schematic play being supported in the outdoor area. Children had fun engaging in rolling and throwing objects such as hula hoops of different shapes, weights, and sizes. One parent told us "This service has helped my child come on leaps and bounds."

The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to develop intentional and in the moment planning. The team had developed floor books which recorded activities, children's voices, and learning. We found planning approaches had improved and were now more child centred and responsive to individual children's interests and experiences. One parent told us "They encourage the children to explore their individual interest." However, we agreed with the service's plans to continue to develop and embed their new processes for observing, recording, and tracking children's progression in learning at the nursery. (We have repeated the area for improvement 1).

Children were supported to develop their language, literacy, and numeracy on the days of inspections. We observed children engage in some mark making, story times, counting, learning shapes and colours. We saw evidence of environmental prints in different areas of the playroom which further support children's language. We would encourage the service to extend these opportunities into the outdoor environment.

### Areas for improvement

1. To support children to achieve their full potential the manager and team should develop the tracking and recording of children's development to inform purposeful and meaningful play and learning experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors' (HSCS 1.25).

### How good is our setting?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where the strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Following the previous inspection the team had been developing the environment to provide a more stimulating and welcoming space for children. We could see areas had been decluttered and set out to enable children more choice.

However, we have asked the team to improve the cosy, homely spaces available for children to relax and rest. We discussed using some low lighting across the nursery spaces to help create a more calming space.

Children could lead their play as they could free flow between the indoor playroom and enclosed outdoor garden across the day. One parent told us "My child has the freedom to play inside or outside at any time of the day ". Children enjoyed their time outdoors and spent extended periods of their day engaging in a variety of play with the sand pit, water trough and tyres. The outdoor space provided children with some risk benefit play and opportunities to explore the natural world.

Staff we spoke to told us they were keen to continue to develop the outdoors space to provide children with a wider range of fun and challenging play opportunities. Parents told us they liked their children could access the outdoors all year round, but highlighted the environment would benefit from maintenance and upgrading.

Children could engage with some materials and resources to spark their interests, such as loose parts play. We noted that resources and materials available to children had improved. However, the team should now focus on extending developmentally appropriate resources, indoors and outdoors, to provide a rich and stimulating space for children of all ages and abilities. This will support children's individual play, learning and development. (We have repeated the previous area for improvement 1).

Infection prevention and control practices needed to be reviewed by the manager and team to prevent the spread of infection. We highlighted some spaces in the environment that may require upgrading, such as the ramp and toilets. The Head Teacher advised these maintenance issues had been logged with the facilities team and they are awaiting a timescale for the work to be completed.

Children and staff engaged in effective hand washing through out the day. We discussed children's access to an outdoor sink for muddy hands after playing outdoors, the manager advised they had began looking at options to support this.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were considered and realistic. Staff were aware of the care inspectorate SIMOA guidance. All parents who responded to our questionnaires agreed or strongly agreed with our question "My child is safe whilst in this setting."

## Areas for improvement

1. To support children to develop and reach their full potential, the manager and team should ensure the environment and resources are designed to support all children's care, play and learning needs.

This is to ensure the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states "I can use an appropriate mix of private and communal areas, including accessible outdoor spaces, because the premises have been designed or adapted for high quality care and support (HSCS 5.1)

**How good is our leadership?****3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where the strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

A clear vision, values and aims had been recently reviewed and updated for the service in collaboration with the children and their families. The children were meaningfully involved in the creation of the new values, which showed us their rights were respected and their voices listened to by the team.

Throughout this inspection we found the manager and team to be responsive to suggestions and committed to improving children's experiences and outcomes. They communicated well with each other. Parents told us "The leadership team are very good communicators" and that they "Always were kept well informed." Effective communication supported strong relations with parents and carers.

The culture of self-evaluation had improved since the previous inspection. The manager and staff, with support from the early years team, had created an improvement plan with priorities that were realistic and reasonable. Children and family's views were now sought to inform the development of the setting. Children's voices and opinions were now recorded in floor books which supported them to have some ownership of their time at nursery. Staff we spoke to also told us they now have opportunities to lead and drive improvements for example the lunchtime routine.

However, these processes were not yet robust enough to achieve sustained improvements. Robust monitoring systems, including self-evaluation, need to be more firmly embedded with a focus on monitoring children's experiences, evaluating the outcomes of any changes for children and continuing to improve the nursery. This will ensure that positive changes are sustained and will impact on the experiences for children. (see area for improvement 1).

**Areas for improvement**

1. To ensure the quality of children's experiences are improved, the manager and team should continue to embed robust quality assurance and self evaluation processes. This should include, but not be limited to, monitoring children's play and learning experiences, the environment and auditing of medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

## How good is our staff team?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where the strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Permanent and supply staff present on the days of inspection were friendly, open, and participated well in the inspection process. One parent told us "The staff team are amazing."

Staff we spoke to were proud to show us the improvements they had achieved in the nursery, such as new personal plan templates. However, they acknowledged the impact of ongoing staffing issues on their ability to sustain improvements in the nursery. Staff we spoke to were still committed to making improvements to achieve better outcomes for children in their care. Staff advised that due to staff shortages they had not been able to attend team meetings and training, which again, affected their ability to plan, develop and evaluate as a team.

On the days of inspection, we found children's access to the nursery had been reduced due to staff shortages. This limited children's opportunities to engage in high quality engagement and interaction daily. Parents told us they were concerned with the ongoing staffing issues, use of supply staff who did not know their children, and the impact this was having on their children's play and learning experience. We acknowledged current staffing challenges nationally and within Hoddon nursery in securing consistent staff for the services. However, the service provider must review systems to support the management of staffing when planned and unplanned absences occur to improve outcomes for the children, their families and current staffing team within the nursery. (see requirement 1)

### Requirements

1. By 20 May 2024, the service provider must ensure the organisation and deployment of staff meet the needs of all children.

To do this the provider must, at a minimum, ensure improvements are made to the management of vacant positions, unplanned absences and unexpected events to support equity and high-quality experiences for all children and families accessing the nursery.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 15(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "My needs are met by the right number of people" (HSCS 3.15).

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

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 28 June 2023, the provider must ensure children's health, welfare and safety. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

- a) The environment is clean, safe and suitable for children to play and rest.
- b) Effective handwashing is taking place, and modelled by staff, when required such as meal and snack times.
- c) Management have oversight to ensure they can identify and address gaps in infection prevention and control practices and risk assessments.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17).

**This requirement was made on 29 March 2023.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

There had been several improvements to the environment to support positive outcomes for children. For example, the setting had been cleared of clutter and broken equipment. The layout of the room had been changed to meet the needs of children attending and support more play experiences.

The manager and team had introduced checklists that were completed every day to ensure spaces were clean, safe and suitable for children attending.

Staff had attended refresher training on infection prevention and control, hand washing and food allergens.

We observed children and staff engaging in regular handwashing throughout the follow up inspection.

Risk assessments were completed for all areas accessed by the children and contained realistic mitigation measures to support the health and safety of children.

**Met - within timescales**

#### Requirement 2

By 28th June 2023, the service provider and management team must improve the outcomes for children and their families by introducing a robust and effective quality assurance process. To do this, the provider must at a minimum ensure:

- a) effective quality assurance, self- evaluation and improvement plans are in place, which have involved staff, children and parents to lead continuous improvement.

- b) the improvement plan and action plan following inspection is monitored and embedded into practice.
- c) that the manager and staff have the capacity, time and skills to support a programme of continuous improvement.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having a robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

**This requirement was made on 29 March 2023.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

The manager, in partnership with the Early Years Team, had introduced a quality assurance calendar, improvement plan and improvement floor book to support the continuous development of the team and the nursery setting.

The manager had submitted a detailed action plan following the inspection process with clear actions and timescales that were realistic and achievable. We were satisfied with the progress made on these actions.

The manager is now allocated time every day, off the floor, to complete managerial tasks and quality assurance processes.

**Met - within timescales**

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

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

In order to meet children's needs, the manager should further develop children's personal plans that identify appropriate strategies to meet children's needs, support progress and help children to achieve their full potential.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.1)

**This area for improvement was made on 1 April 2023.**

**Action taken since then**

Personal plans have been created which give clear details and set next steps for children. Personal plans were being used as live documents which ensured children were receiving the right care at the right time. Staff we spoke to were motivated to continue embedded the new templates.

We were satisfied with the progress the service has made. This area for improvement has been met.

**Previous area for improvement 2**

To support children to achieve their full potential the manager and team should develop the tracking and recording of childrens development to inform purposeful and meaningful play and learning experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors' (HSCS 1.25).

**This area for improvement was made on 1 April 2023.**

**Action taken since then**

The team had reviewed and introduced new processes to record intentional and in the moment planning with in the nursery.

However, the team required more time to be fully embed the new process and be confident in recoding and evaluating their observations of planning outcomes for children in the nursery.

We have repeated this area for improvement.

**Previous area for improvement 3**

To support children to develop and reach their full potential, the manager and team should ensure the environment and resources are designed to support all children's care, play and learning needs.

This is to ensure the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states "I can use an appropriate mix of private and communal areas, including accessible outdoor spaces, because the premises have been designed or adapted for high quality care and support (HSCS 5.1)

**This area for improvement was made on 1 April 2023.**

**Action taken since then**

The team had reviewed, decluttered and reset the playroom to support more play and learning opportunities for children.

However, the team should now focus on the resources and materials available in each area to ensure challenge and stimulation for all children attending the nursery.

We have repeated this area for improvement.

## 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).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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