

# Woodlands Family Nurture Centre Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
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**Service provided by:**  
Fife Council

**Service provider number:**  
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## About the service

Woodlands Family Nurture Centre is registered to provide care for a maximum of 112 children at any one-time age from two years to an age to attend primary school. No more than 23 may be age two to three years at any one time.

The service is situated in Methil, Leven, Fife. The setting has five playrooms where all children take part in a wide range of high-quality play experiences. Three playrooms are for children aged three to five years old and two playrooms are for children aged two to three years old. The setting also has designated changing and toileting areas for all children. In addition, children and families have access to a large family room, zen den, and a meeting room. There is a fully enclosed outdoor learning environment for children to access throughout their nursery session. This space is accessible from each playroom and the service boasts a secret garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 February 2024 between 08:30 and 17:30. We provided feedback on 22 February 2024. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration and any complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with six families using the service
- reviewed feedback from 17 families using MS forms
- reviewed feedback from 37 staff members employed in the service using MS forms
- spoke with senior management and staff
- observed practice and daily routines.

## Key messages

Children received outstandingly high levels of care and support from a passionate and dedicated staff team who created an inclusive, nurturing and loving ethos.

Highly skilled staff empowered and enabled children to reach their full potential.

Children experienced enjoyable mealtimes which were unhurried, relaxed, and full of meaningful conversations between children and staff.

The inspiring leadership team empowered all staff to be actively involved in improving the service. Staff influenced and lead change.

Exceptional staff deployment across the service ensured that all children and families received individualised care and support which consistently met their needs.

Families were an integral part of the service and their involvement in the service was highly valued and respected by staff and leaders.

Remarkably strong connections with children and families through innovative approaches ensured children and their families thrived and flourished.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent

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

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

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children felt safe, secure and loved. Children moved confidently around the service with a real sense of freedom and fun. Staff had developed very strong relationships with children and their families. These important, positive and nurturing attachments contributed to children being happy and settled. Families confirmed this and they told us, 'I love the friendliness and the nurturing environment that is portrayed by every single member of staff' and 'excellent staff! Very supportive and caring not just for the children, but parents/guardians/carers too.' These positive and well developed relationships ensured children and families were at the heart of the service.

True partnership working with families ensured that personal planning was highly effective and fully inclusive. Staff carefully gathered key information on children and families through initial home visits and individually tailored transitions. Staff were particularly empathetic to the individual circumstances of all families. This approach ensured children and families received exceptional support and significantly enhanced the emotional wellbeing of children and their families.

Families were influential in ensuring this information was relevant, current, and up to date. They were actively listened to, and their preferences were highly valued and respected. Children's voices were amplified and valued as they were actively involved in developing their own support plans. For example, children attended their own child's plan meetings when appropriate and were meaningfully empowered to add their feelings, choices and wishes into their support plan. This approach ensured person centred care and supported continuity between home and nursery. Children's overall health and wellbeing was prioritised, excellent personal planning approaches meant children's individual needs were always met as they experienced very high-quality care and support from all staff.

Children benefitted from high quality mealtime experiences across their day. Snack times across the service promoted independence and children were able to develop valuable life skills such as spreading, chopping and pouring. Mealtimes were well organised, enjoyable, sociable, relaxed and calm. Children and staff ate together and were engaged in conversations about what was important to children, this included reflections on their morning. Children were very well supported to eat well and were readily offered more food if requested. Meals and snack were healthy, nutritious and dietary requirements were well supported and respected.

Children received the right care at the right time, ensuring all their health and wellbeing needs were met. Medication processes were notably well organised, followed current best practice and were understood by all staff. Families were well supported to complete all required records. Monthly reviews of medication and medication records were completed and reviewed by a senior member of the team to ensure consistently safe practice.

Staff offered meaningful, emotional and practical support to children and their families. For example, by attending meetings at school to support older children in the family, and to access practical resources. This resulted in the older child being understood and represented, which made a positive difference for the

whole family. We considered this support to be exceptional and to have the potential to support better long term outcomes for individual and family life. Staff respected and valued that each family was unique and special. As a result, families and children received individualised support that ensured their needs were consistently met. This innovative, sector leading practice was providing excellent outcomes for children and families.

The setting was a central part of the Methil community. The pop-up shop at Woodlands provided families and the wider community with weekly access to a wide variety of highly nutritious and affordable food. This supported the health and wellbeing of children and their families and we recognised the wider impact on promoting improved health and wellbeing throughout the community.

Children were protected from harm by a highly knowledgeable and extremely confident staff team. Staff ensured children's safety and wellbeing was a priority as they fully understood the importance of identifying protection concerns early and getting the right support in place to ensure children were safe from potential harm.

We were confident that children and families would continue to experience excellent experiences.

### **Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children were very happy and having fun across the service. There were high levels of engagement and children were deeply involved in their play and learning. Children were exploring the play spaces both indoors and outdoors. The learning environment was inviting and stimulating. Resources and experiences enabled rich learning opportunities and promoted challenge. The staff skills and knowledge of child development ensured that children were challenged, at all stages of their development, to support continued progression and achievement. This approach encouraged children to make choices and lead their own learning, whilst developing a sense of ownership and respect for their environment.

Children benefitted from daily fresh air and exercise in the large outdoor environment. Children had access to a secret garden, this space encouraged children to spend longer periods outdoors. Staff recognised the benefits of regular outdoor play and we saw them supporting children with risky play. For example, sliding down the wet slide, climbing trees in the secret garden and using large loose parts including tyres, logs and pipes. This approach encouraged children to have fun, understand their own capabilities and develop confidence in how to be safe.

Planning approaches were child centred and very responsive to children's varied interests. Floor books were used to showcase children's voices. We saw that their, thoughts, ideas, and discussions were valued, respected and honoured. QR codes displayed within the floor books provided the opportunity for children to watch videos that had been shared with their families on Seesaw.

Children were proud of their learning journals and enthusiastically showed their photographs and achievements. One child explained the, 'good stuff' which was their photographs, was at the back of their folder. We suggested that the service could move trackers and adult led paperwork to the back of the folder to enable children to easily access the things they considered important.

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were creatively embedded across the service. Literacy had been a key focus area for development and through effective monitoring and evaluation, learning had been significantly

enhanced in this area. Staff had used relevant research to ensure their approach was effective. As a result, children were achieving and making very good progress.

Family involvement was at the heart of the service and daily opportunities were available for all families to join focused learning groups in the dedicated family room. Families attended with their children and their evaluations were used to inform planning of future groups. Feedback gathered showed that these groups were making a difference to children and their families. For example, parents were developing strong friendships and learning new skills to support their family. These opportunities ensured that families were included, valued and respected and could be a part of their child's play and learning.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

Children benefitted from a high-quality learning environment. It was clear that each area had been carefully considered. Staff and children had created inviting spaces, using soft lighting, a variety of materials and authentic resources to enhance the learning environment. The spaces centred around children's needs and interests, as well as responding in the moment to their learning. Children were busy and motivated as they explored their space. The rich spaces challenged children to have high aspirations and push forward with their thinking. This gave a very strong message that children matter.

Staff had developed several quiet spaces across the service to support children's emotional wellbeing. This ensured children had space to rest, relax and refocus. Children benefitted from these spaces, and they were regularly used and very well resourced. This supported children to feel safe and secure.

The secure nursery garden was accessible throughout the session from each playroom. This space enabled children to have fun, explore the natural environment, be active and use open ended resources. Children were supported to access outdoors in all weathers with the setting providing waterproof clothing and wellies. This enabled children to spend extended periods outdoors and keep cosy and dry.

Staff implemented very good infection, prevention, and control routines to minimise the potential spread of infection. These routines were strongly embedded into their practice. The environment was very well maintained, and we observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing throughout the session. This contributed to keeping children safe and healthy.

Children were supported to risk assess the outdoor space and staff were proactive at helping them to identify and understand potential risks. This ensured children were learning to be responsible and safe. Families strongly agreed that their children were safe while in the setting.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Strong and passionate leadership of the service led to very good outcomes for children and their families. The management team were a visible presence in the service. Staff told us they felt very well supported and confident in the management team. This led to very high staff morale which impacted positively on children's experiences. This approach also promoted a culture of continuous improvement.

The clear vision, values and aims supported staff to consistently meet the needs of children and families. Staff placed children's outcomes at the heart of their work. Highly effective partnership working and regular consultation with families, this ensured that they felt, valued and included in the decisions made and the developments in the service.

Self-evaluation was embedded in practice, staff spoke confidently about their involvement in the improvement plan, and they were progressing with the current priorities. The improvement plan was targeted, meaningful and focused on enhancing outcomes for all children. The inspirational senior management team empowered children, their families and staff to lead and shape improvements in the service. All improvements were based on collaboration with children, families and staff. This was achieved through a measured and planned approach. Continuous reflections and evaluations supported improvement. As a result, improvements in the setting were having a highly positive and sustained impact on outcomes for children.

We found professional learning was very well planned, reviewed, and matched to the individual development needs of staff. Regular and meaningful discussions supported staff to review and reflect on their personal development and practice. This meant children's care was based on relevant and up to date guidance and practice

The views of children and families were regularly sought and valued. Their views influenced change in the setting. Children's views and opinions were recorded in the planning and supported learning and progression across the service. This approach encouraged children to feel valued and respected.

## How good is our staff team?

**6 - Excellent**

We evaluated this key question as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.

The best use was being made of the wide range of staff expertise, skills and experience. This meant that children were benefiting from a highly passionate and skilled staff team who knew what to do and where they needed to be to ensure children could play and learn and experience nurturing care and support at all times.

All staff were extremely proud to work in the service and this pride was evident throughout our visit. The manager had responsibilities for managing another two services and staff across the three services shared their knowledge, skills and expertise with each other on a regular basis. Staff cared deeply about children and families and as a result they had developed close and positive relationships with families. Families told us they felt valued and highly supported. One parent told us, 'Someone is always there to talk to and support the child, but also the families. This highlighted excellent partnership working and ensured all children and families were effectively supported to achieve their potential.

Partnership working was extended to holiday periods to ensure children and families had opportunities for activities and experiences when the service was closed. This included 'Woodlands on Tour' and 'Heat and Eat' these community initiatives encouraged families and the wider community to participate in the 'Fife 50 Challenge' which is 50 things to do in Fife before you are five years old. Some of the specially planned activities were summer picnics and visits to local woodland. These outings were free of cost to families, with transport and food provided for all. 'Heat and Eat' was provided during the Christmas holiday period and families and community members were welcomed into the service to share a meal, stay warm and socialise. This encouraged everyone to feel supported, safe and included over a period which can feel cold and isolating for many. These innovative practices ensured there was some equity and opportunity for positive and fun experience for all children and their families when the normal nursery service was closed..

There was excellent communication between staff throughout the day and staff were very flexible and supportive of each other when routine tasks were being completed. This meant that children received very high levels of care and support at all times.

All children were heard and actively listened to as staff confidently used a range of communication systems, this included visual symbols, timetables and Makaton. This approach ensured that all children could express their needs, wishes and choices in a way that was right for them.

Staff were empowered to support each other, and an effective mentoring system was in place. The induction process was strengthened using the Scottish Governments Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) National Induction Resource. Children and families were introduced to new staff members and their photos were shared using digital app Seesaw. New staff were given time to settle in and observe practice. Weekly check in sessions supported staff to be reflective and participate in professional discussions. This ensured consistent approaches for children and their families and resulted in them receiving care and support of an exceptionally high quality. We were confident that these excellent practices were sustainable and that excellent performance in this area would be maintained.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent
4.3 Staff deployment	6 - Excellent

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