

# Johnston Nursery Day Care of Children

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Kirkcudbright  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Johnston Nursery Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019013430

**Service no:**  
CS2019378293

## About the service

The service is provided by Johnston Nursery Ltd and is in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council to provide funded childcare for children over the age of two years.

The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 48 children at any one time. Indoor setting may provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time. Of those 40; no more than 6 are aged under 2 years. No more than 34 are aged 2 years to those attending primary school full time. With no more than 10 aged 2 to under 3 and no more than 10 attending primary school. Outdoor satellite settings may provide a care service to a maximum of 8 children at any one time. Of those 8; no more than 8 are aged 3 years to those attending primary school full time.

The indoor service is provided from a self contained building, with an open plan play room for children over two years and a smaller playroom for children under two years. There is an onsite kitchen where home cooked meals are prepared daily and children have access to a spacious secure outdoor area. Being located with the town of Kirkcudbright, the service makes good use of the local amenities including local woodland areas.

The outdoor satellite service is provided from an enclosed local field and woodland area with access to outdoor toilets, a weather proof cabin and poly tent.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12th and 13th of March 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with a small group of children using the service.
- Consulted with families through online questionnaires.
- Spoke with majority of the staff and management team.
- Observed staffs practice and children's experiences.
- Reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were happy, confident, and having fun playing with their friends and staff.
- Staff worked together to plan a variety of fun and stimulating play and learning experiences
- Children had strong links with the local community.
- Children's daily access to outdoors and fresh air, supported their wellbeing needs.
- Children accessed an environment that supported high quality play and learning.
- Staff promoted a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, families and the children in their care.

## 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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

Children experienced warm, attentive, and nurturing care from staff. We observed praise, cuddles and reassurance from staff which meant attachments and relationships were strong resulting in children being happy, safe, and secure in the service. One parent told us "The staff are attentive, friendly and caring."

Children's independence was promoted by staff who encouraged them to undertake tasks, such as dressing for the outdoors or cleaning up after meals. This enabled children to build their confidence, self-esteem, and lifelong learning skills.

All children experienced snack and mealtimes that were relaxed, unhurried and sociable. Staff in all areas sat with the children to offer support and supervision, which meant they could respond immediately should an emergency occur, such as choking. Food choices were nutritious and in line with current guidance. Water was available through stations around the playrooms to ensure children remained hydrated over their day.

Children within the 3-5 space had opportunities to be involved in prepping some meals and snacks with the cook. This promoted healthy eating habits and developed life skills. Children within the 3-5 space were able to self-select and self-serve their meals and snacks at the table. Children who accessed the satellite space were able to choose to eat their meals outdoors at a picnic table or indoors in the poly tent available.

Children within the 2-3 and 0-2 space were provided support with feeding by the team that was right for their age and stage of development. We have suggested children within the 2-3 space could have more opportunities to develop their independence by self-serving some of their meals and helping set up the table.

Children were supported by staff who knew their individual needs and personalities very well. Personal plans were in place for each child and contained relevant information on their likes, dislikes, and routines important to them. Children were included in updating their personal plans as staff spoke to them about what they wanted to learn and what their interests were. Next steps were recorded on learning journals and reviewed with families. All parents strongly agreed or agreed with our questions "Staff know my child well, including what they like and what is important for their care".

Children received the right support by the manager and staff who recognised the benefits of collaborating with parents and other agencies. Regular communication with other key agencies ensured the team had up to date information and strategies to support children's current needs and any important changes in their life or personal plans.

Children were able to sleep and rest when they needed to which promoted good sleeping habits. Sleeping arrangements were in line with children's personal plans and sensitively considered by the staff in each space.

Children received support with personal care that was sensitive, dignified and in line with personal plans. Personal protective equipment was available that supported children and staff's health and wellbeing. We suggested the team review the disposable bins available in the changing spaces.

Children were able to lead their play and learning at nursery as they were able to choose what they wanted to do, when and who with. Staff had a very good understanding of Children's Rights. Children were empowered to make choices that influenced their care. This was evident through observations in the playroom and floor books.

Children were meaningfully involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences that promoted children's choice and independence. Children engaged in a broad range of play and learning experiences which sparked their curiosities and imagination. The team had recently introduced woodwork to the nursery and children were excited to engage with the real tools and objects on the day of inspection. One parent told us there is a "great range of activities to develop my child's skills and abilities."

Children benefited from a variety of play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. The team met regularly to review their planning and recording approaches to ensure they remained child centred and responsive to children's current interests. The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to embed, sustain, and evaluate the planning and recording process to ensure high quality experiences for children in their care are achieved. We suggested ways to record the evaluation stage of activities to support the planning cycle for the team. One parent told us "The activities the children participate in are interesting and varied."

Children accessing the satellite space were able to engage in a variety of outdoor play and learning experiences in the field, woods, and beach. Access to the outdoors supported children to engage in risk beneficial play, as well as enhance their connection with the natural world. One parent told us "I love that my child is not just being dropped off to be in one place all day. They are being nurtured and learning through play especially outdoors with nature and learning core values."

Access to the local community strengthened outcomes for children, as it helped develop a strong sense of belonging and connection to their town. The nursery accessed tennis in local courts, visited local cafes, museums, and libraries. Children access a variety of outdoor spaces in the local area such as parks, beaches, and forest areas. Children attended the local care home to support intergenerational literacy and craft activities. One parent told us what they liked about the service was the "strong sense of belonging and community."

## How good is our setting?

## 5 - Very Good

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

Children accessed an environment that was comfortably furnished and welcoming. The rooms had natural light and were well ventilated. There was ample space indoors and outdoors for children to play and explore together or alone if they chose to do so. One parent told us "The setting is very child centred, calm and welcoming."

Free flow access between the indoors and enclosed outdoor space ensured children's rights to lead their play and learning was respected. Children accessed the outdoors daily by visiting the enclosed outdoor garden space, little woods, and beach school. We asked the team to continue to monitor access to the outdoors for the 0-2 and 2-3 children.

Staff regularly reflected on how the spaces available were used to ensure they met the needs of the children. Toys and resources were structured to meet the needs and interests of the children attending. Children could lead their play as they could easily access toys and equipment at their level. Natural, open ended materials were available to stimulate children's curiosities and extend their play. Loose parts play was also available for children within the playroom. One parent told us "It is all beautifully laid out and designed with different areas to meet all the children's curiosities."

Infection prevention and control measures were in place in line with current guidelines. Cleaning schedules were established, and the setting was well maintained. Personal protective equipment (PPE) was available and stored appropriately for support with personal care needs. We asked the team to be mindful of good hand hygiene practice and to ensure children washed their hands after meals and when they had been playing outdoors.

Risk assessments were in place with relevant mitigation measures noted. Staff could tell us the importance of supporting children to manage risk and danger in their environment and their role in developing this. All parents strongly agreed or agreed with our question "My child is safe whilst in this setting."

Monitoring and supervision were well established with in the nursery to ensure children were always accounted for. Staff used walkie talkies to communicate with each other when children were free flowing between the enclosed garden and playrooms. This ensured children remained safe and secure in the environment.

## How good is our leadership?

## 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.

A vision, values and aims had been created for the service and staff were aware of their role in promoting them. Staff we spoke to were enthusiastic about working with families to support children to reach their full potential.

We found that the manager and owner put children, their families, and staff at the heart of the service and any improvements. They valued the feedback, opinions and views of children, families, and the team. Views of families had been actively sought to support the development of the setting. This was achieved through the FAMILY app, parent forum meetings and newsletters.

Children's voices were recorded in floor books and through displays within the nursery. Children told us they had chosen the new climbing wall and see saw in the little woods. This ensured children's rights were respected and empowered children to have ownership of their play, learning and environment at nursery. One parent told us "My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to develop this setting."

We discussed some feedback received from families through our questionnaires with the manager and owner. Some families told us they would like "the chance to meet more of the staff that work with your child rather than meeting them briefly when you drop off or pick up." Other parents told us they would like more information at pick up times. One parent told us "I wish I were given more information at handover about how my child had been in the day."

The manager agreed to review current arrangements for family's access to the setting on a daily basis and consider how this could be adapted to support more effective communication with key workers at the end of the day.

Aspirations for the nursery were shared by all staff and supported by the manager and owner which showed us the service had good capacity for change. The manager was supporting the team to engage in a culture of self-reflection and evaluation. We would encourage the team to continue to embed this cycle to drive improvements in the service and achieve positive outcomes for children. Staff told us "We have a positive, supportive and knowledgeable manager."

The manager of the service was visible, friendly, and approachable to children, their families, and staff. This created a positive environment which focused on relationships and communication further supporting the nurturing ethos in the nursery. One parent told us "I find that the management and staff are all very approachable and supportive."

The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to develop quality assurance processes to ensure good practice guidance is followed. This should include the storage of individual chronologies. Developing a consistent approach to recording accidents and incidents on the FAMLY app. Expanding the information recorded on children's health plans to ensure clear and concise procedures for staff to follow (we have repeated area for improvement 1 from the previous inspection).

We also discussed notifications that services must submit to the Care Inspectorate with the manager and have requested they revisit "Records that all registered children and young people's care services must keep and guidance on notification" available on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

### Areas for improvement

1. Children's medication should be administered following the instructions on the medication label. This should include, but not be limited to, accurate information recorded on the medication consent forms informing staff of how and when medication should be administered.

This is to ensure the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective. (HCSC 1.24)

### How good is our staff team?

**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.

Staffing levels met the recommended minimum adult to child ratio. The ratio had been adapted to meet the needs of individual children and to support the shape and size of play spaces. Staff were proactive in recognising when children moved between indoors and outdoors and were flexible in their deployment throughout the day which meant children led their play in a safe environment.

Staff communicated effectively with each other throughout the days of inspection. They were respectful in their engagement which supported a positive ethos within the service.

One parent told us "Staff are all very caring and consistent with all the children its always such a happy atmosphere of engagement and teaching."

Staff undertook qualifications relevant to their role and engaged in continuous professional learning. A variety of training and professional development was offered by the manager and owner to all staff which showed us staff were supported effectively to develop their skills and practice. New staff were supported to access the national induction resource which ensured learning was based on best practice documents and national policies.

Registration with a professional body, Scottish Social Service Council, was maintained by staff and monitored by the manager.

## 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

Children's medication should be administered following the instructions on the medication label. This should include, but not be limited to, accurate information recorded on the medication consent forms informing staff of how and when medication should be administered.

This is to ensure the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective. (HCSC 1.24)

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

#### Action taken since then

We reviewed children's medication and found they were stored following good practice guidance. Consent had been obtained from families prior to medication being stored in the premises, which was reviewed regularly with families. However, we have asked the manager to review the current template of health flow charts to ensure they give staff a clear and accurate description on how to administer individual medication.

We have repeated this area for improvement.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

Children should be cared for by people who have been appropriately and safely recruited. This requires a service to be well managed and to be implementing best practice guidance for safe recruitment. This should include, but not be limited to, safer recruitment checks being completed before new employees start date.

This is to ensure the quality of the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, I use a service that is well led and managed and care for by people who have been appropriately and safely recruited. (HCSC 4.23 & 4.24)



This area for improvement was made on 1 March 2023.

#### Action taken since then

We reviewed staff recruitment files and found these to be well organised with front pages recording all information contained. Files sampled indicated that safer recruitment procedures had been followed. All checks had been completed prior to staff starting employment.

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

## 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	5 - Very Good
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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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