

The Kidz Stop Ltd

Day Care of Children

151 Dean Road
Bo'ness
EH51 0HE

Telephone: 01506 828 007

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 March 2024

Service provided by:
The Kidz Stop Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004004701

Service no:
CS2003037432

About the service

The Kidz Stop Ltd is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 114 children aged from three months up to the age of 16 years. Sixty-four children aged from three months to those not yet attending primary school can be accommodated within the nursery building. The conditions of registration also state specific age ranges and numbers of children for each individual room within this building. The out of school care building can accommodate a maximum of 50 children.

The service is located in Bo'ness, Falkirk. The nursery accommodation is a large detached property with outdoor play areas. The out of school care is close by within a local community centre.

The service is close to local schools, shops, parks and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced follow up inspection which took place on Monday 05 March 2024 between 09:30 and 17:30 and Wednesday 07 March 2024 between 08:00 and 17:00. We visited both the nursery site and the out of school care building.

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, complaint information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. This included information about a serious incident where a child left the nursery garden unattended. As part of our inspection, we assessed the issues that led to the incident and the actions taken by the service since.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children at the nursery and out of school care site and spoke with three parents during the inspection
- received written feedback from 21 families via an online survey
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with a visiting professional.

Key messages

The service had made improvements that were having a positive impact on outcomes for children and families.

The quality of the environment had developed, resulting in improvements to children's safety and wellbeing.

Children experienced kind, caring and warm interactions from staff who knew them well. Some interactions could be further developed to ensure they consistently respected children's rights.

Ongoing reflective discussions and action planning had informed improvements across the service. Moving forward the service needed to consider how they were measuring the impact of changes to ensure a culture of continuous improvement.

Children's play spaces had been developed with resources that reflected their current interests. This created interesting play and learning opportunities for most children.

The outdoor areas had been improved meaning children experienced more meaningful outdoor play.

Following a serious incident, the provider had taken some action to prevent the risk to others. The service should continue to ensure children's safety and wellbeing through ongoing quality assurance and effective staff deployment.

The service had shown a commitment to working with key partners to bring about positive changes.

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?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

At the previous inspection we evaluated this key question as weak. However, improvements made to the service resulted in a re-evaluation to adequate at this inspection.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

As a result of improved staff practice children were recognised as individuals and treated with dignity and respect. Staff were attuned to most children's needs and effectively supported children's emotional wellbeing. Some positive practices were still being embedded and on some occasions children would have benefitted from a greater level of support and nurture. However, overall children experienced improved care and support.

While the requirement relating to this quality indicator has been met, we have made a new area for improvement to address the ongoing work needed to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (see area for improvement 1).

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

At the previous inspection outcomes for children were evaluated as weak for quality indicator 1.3: play and learning. This follow up inspection found that outcomes for children had improved. Staff had developed a greater understanding of how to support children's play and learning. Overall, environments had improved. These changes helped children to experience more interesting and meaningful play experiences.

While the requirement relating to this quality indicator has been met, we have made a new area for improvement to address the ongoing work needed to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (see area for improvement 2).

We have commented on the met requirements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection'.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience consistently positive interactions that prioritise their emotional needs, the provider should embed staff understanding and implementation of nurturing and supportive practices.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention' (HSCS 3.1) and 'My care and support meet my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

2. To ensure children experience high-quality play and learning experiences, the provider should support staff to further develop skills, knowledge and practice related to play and learning. This should include but not be limited to:

- ensuring spaces, resources and interactions provide consistently supportive and interesting provocations to aid children's play and learning,
- continuing to develop approaches to planning for children's learning,

- developing the quality of observations of play and learning to help inform children's next steps and support progression.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14) and 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS, 1.31).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

At the previous inspection we evaluated this key question as weak. However, improvements made to the service resulted in a re-evaluation to adequate at this inspection.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high-quality facilities

Improvements had been made to the quality of the environment. As a result, outcomes related to children's safety and wellbeing had improved. The environments were cleaner and more inviting. Equipment was safe and in a good state of repair. These improvements supported children's wellbeing. Risk assessments had been reviewed and updated helping staff to better assess the current environment and consider children's safety. However, ongoing work was needed to ensure the environment continued to improve. For example, risk assessments should be reviewed more frequently to ensure they reflect the current environment. Ongoing maintenance and continued development to the environment was needed to support the service to align with current good practice guidance for early learning and childcare.

We were concerned by a recent incident where a child left the nursery garden unnoticed. During this inspection, we considered the action taken by the service and observed staff practice. We found sufficient action had been taken in relation to this incident. The service should continue to ensure children's safety and wellbeing through ongoing quality assurance and effective staff deployment.

While the requirement relating to this quality indicator has been met, we have made a new area for improvement to address the ongoing work needed to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (see area for improvement 1).

We have commented on the met requirements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection'.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience a consistently positive and safe environment, the provider should ensure risks are continually assessed and managed through effective practice and ongoing maintenance work.

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

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

At the previous inspection we evaluated this key question as weak. However, improvements made to the service had resulted in a re-evaluation to adequate.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Quality assurance arrangements and improvement planning had developed and were now leading to positive changes. As a result, the quality of the service had improved. Outcomes for children and families were improving due to the changes being made.

While the requirement relating to this quality indicator has been met, we have made a new area for improvement to address the ongoing work needed to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (see area for improvement 1).

We have commented on the met requirements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection'.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure the quality of children's experiences improve further, the provider should ensure the service embeds robust quality assurance and self evaluation processes. This is to support a culture of continuous improvement that secures consistently positive outcomes for children and families.

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

At the previous inspection we evaluated this key question as weak. However, improvements made to the service had resulted in a re-evaluation to adequate.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

At this inspection, staff deployment was supporting children to experience improved outcomes. The mix of skills and experience of staff had been reviewed and changes made to staff groups. This resulted in children experiencing more consistent and nurturing interactions. There were enough staff to manage most daily tasks, which meant children's play was not interrupted unnecessarily. Some improvements were still needed to staff deployment during busy periods, for example, during lunch time in the toddler room. While the requirement relating to this quality indicator has been met, we have made a new area for improvement to address the ongoing work needed to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (see area for improvement 1).

We have commented on the met requirements in more detail in sections of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection'.

Areas for improvement

1.

To ensure staff can fully meet children's needs at all times, the provider should review and improve staff deployment during busier times of the day, such as mealtimes and departure times. This would include, but not be limited to ensuring there are enough staff present to meet the varying needs of all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: '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 01 September 2023, the provider must ensure that all children are recognised as individuals and treated with dignity and respect. This must be at all times and across all areas of the service. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure:

- a) staff develop their understanding of their role and responsibility of supporting children's emotional wellbeing and provide children with nurturing and caring interactions and support at all times; and
- b) they support staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of child development theory, building positive attachments and how children play and learn.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (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:

'I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention.' (HSCS 3.1).

This requirement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Overall, staff interactions and support was warm and caring, meaning children were respected and nurtured. Staff practice had improved meaning children's dignity was respected. For example, staff carried out personal care in more sensitive ways and most staff helped children to understand their daily routines through effective narration and gentle guidance.

Staff training and effective role modelling was leading to improvements in staff practice and outcomes for children. Overall, staff evidenced an improved understanding of child development theory and the importance of positive attachments. Examples of improved practice included, staff welcoming children warmly into the setting and staff providing more nurturing reassurance, comfort and support. As a result, children were treated with dignity and respect.

Staff training had focused on children's rights and the role of the adult. This had enabled staff to develop their skills and practice. Many staff had fun with children showing them that their play and learning was valued. Training in relation to supporting play was taking place and support from professionals within the local authority was leading to improved play and learning opportunities. The manager was aware that further work was needed to embed knowledge and skills across the staff team to ensure consistency for all children. Work was under way to support staff through ongoing training and mentoring.

While sufficient progress had been made to meet this requirement, there were some occasions when staff did not always engage as sensitively as they could. For example, on one occasion a child was upset and staff continued with the task of washing the child's hands rather than providing a greater level of comfort. The manager was aware that some staff needed further support to ensure all children were treated with high levels of respect. To support ongoing improvement, we have made a new area for improvement (see area for improvement 1, in 'How good is our care, play and learning?').

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 01 September 2023, the provider must support children to reach their full potential through high quality play and learning experiences. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure:

- a) staff have an understanding of child development, relevant theory and practice and use this to support high quality play and learning experiences;
- b) planning approaches are child centred and responsive to children's experiences; and
- c) children must have access to a range of rich stimulating play resources.

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:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This requirement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Overall, inspection evidence found children were experiencing more inviting and interesting play spaces, supporting their learning and development. Improvements had been made to the quality of children's play and learning meaning children were engaged in more sustained and interesting play. Relevant training and professional dialogue opportunities had enabled staff to develop skills and practice in relation to child development, play and learning. Improvements had been made to the quality and range of resources indoors and outside. The introduction of more, safe loose parts had supported children's creativity and inquiry opportunities. Staff had increased the opportunities for mark making and creativity. Improvements within the garden enabled children to be active. Children enjoyed opportunities to transport, work together and explore their creative ideas. Staff practice enabled children to lead their play. While progress had been made, further work should continue to ensure resources and interactions provided good levels of provocation. Within some playrooms and areas there were missed opportunities to ensure spaces and resources were as inspiring and inviting as possible. For example, within the 'Tweenie' room opportunities for schematic play

and sensory exploration could be more creative. On other occasions staff did not notice when areas needed replenished to help inspire children into play. One parent said, "I feel like the area would better if it was tidier, and more exciting for the children."

Staff were more attuned to children's play and learning needs, resulting in sustained play and learning opportunities. For example, staff were more aware of unnecessary interruptions to children's play. Changes to the routines and gathering times had meant children were no longer sitting for extended periods taking part in activities that did not meet their developmental needs or interests. These improvements supported children to be engaged and curious in extended periods of play.

Planning approaches were developing, and staff had an improved understanding of how children learn through interest based, child-centred experiences. Changes to planning approaches were at an early stage, but overall, staff took account of children's interests and needs. For example, most staff understood the need for children to explore schematic play opportunities so they can practice skills and have fun. However, there were some missed opportunities to extend children's play and learning through effective provocations and extension of learning. To support consistently positive play and learning experiences planning approaches should be developed further.

While sufficient progress had been made to meet this requirement, to embed practice and ensure outcomes improve further, ongoing work should be carried out to support the implementation of consistently high-quality play and learning experiences. To support ongoing improvement, we have made a new area for improvement (see area for improvement 2, in 'How good is our care, play and learning?').

Met - within timescales

Requirement 3

By the 18 August 2023 the provider must ensure that the environment is safe for children. This should include, but not be limited to:

- a) risk assessments carried out which identify the risks and minimise them ensuring that the environment is safe for children;
- b) maintenance issues recorded, reported and actioned in a timely manner; and
- c) toys and resources are clean for children to use.

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 Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'My environment is safe and secure.' (HSCS 5.17)

This requirement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Improvements made since the last inspection have provided children with a safer environment.

While, we were concerned about a recent incident, which compromised a child's safety we reviewed the actions taken by the service and were satisfied improvements had been implemented. Moving forward, the

provider should ensure staff continue to be vigilant to any risks within the environment and take appropriate action to address these.

Actions taken following the last inspection included the upgrading and decluttering of garden areas, broken resources being removed and fencing being replaced. These actions supported children to experience a safer and more welcoming environment.

Risk assessments had been created and implemented, helping to ensure safety measures were in place and staff had appropriate guidance. To maximise children's safety and further support staff, there were opportunities to revisit some of the updated risk assessments to include more recent reflections. For example, tables left in a corridor presented a risk, but were not included in the indoor risk assessment. To strengthen the approach to children's safety, we discussed the inclusion of additional risk factors within the current assessments. The manager was receptive to these discussions.

Staff practice had improved in relation to identifying and managing risk. For example, staff were alert to children's movements, did regular headcounts and were aware of how to minimise risks, such as trips and slips.

The approach to the management and actioning of maintenance had improved since the last inspection. As a result, children were experiencing a safer and more welcoming environment. Maintenance books in each room were used to highlight issues with management checking these to ensure items were actioned. Further quality assurance should be ongoing to ensure systems and processes remain consistent and robust. This is to ensure positive progress is maintained.

Children were respected as toys and resources were clean and in a good state of repair. Staff carried out effective cleaning measures to maintain cleanliness. Checklists helped guide them and ensure consistency. As a result, children were experiencing a clean and safe environment.

Almost all parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: 'my child is safe at the setting'. One parent said, "Overall, the environment has definitely improved since the initial report. It was really disappointing to see how many things had to be thrown out that the children were still using that were clearly not fit for purpose". However, some parents felt further work was needed, one commented "The nursery is outdated, it needs to spend time making each room more comfortable and engaging for the children." We provided the manager with additional comments from parents to help support the service to make ongoing improvements.

While sufficient progress had been made to meet this requirement, to embed practice and ensure outcomes improve further, ongoing work should be carried out to support the implementation of consistently high-quality environments. To support ongoing improvement, we have made a new area for improvement (see area for improvement 1, in 'How good is our setting?').

Met - within timescales

Requirement 4

By 29 October 2023, the provider must ensure that they have developed and implemented an effective system of quality assurance to monitor and improve all areas of practice and improve outcomes for children. This should include, but not be limited to, the areas raised in this report. This must include ongoing self-evaluation that leads to continuous improvement.

This is to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210 - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing.

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

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

This requirement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Improvements made across the service were having a positive impact on outcomes for children. For example, improvements in routines, staff interactions and play spaces had been supported through some quality assurance processes and self-evaluation. The service had worked closely with Falkirk Council to develop the quality of the service and make changes. One parent said, "The nursery has been working hard to improve all areas highlighted in the previous inspection. I feel it has made positive changes and is on track to improve its overall performance."

Most staff had been involved in ongoing self-evaluation and reflective discussions, which was supporting them to develop practice and understand the changes required. While some aspects of improvement were at an early stage, progress was being made.

In some areas effective quality assurance was leading to positive changes. For example, cleaning schedules were helping staff to keep the environment clean, in the moment interactions with the manager guided staff to improve their practice, and maintenance management systems had supported actions to be taken to address health and safety concerns.

A quality assurance calendar had been introduced and covered key areas of practice. Further monitoring and recording of the quality assurance could help the manager to effectively assess the progress made and develop further actions to ensure improved outcomes for children and families. For example, to support staff to develop their use of provocations and ensure play spaces are consistently inspiring, the service should implement more consistent tools to quality assure play and learning. This could support a cycle of continuous improvement.

Parents feedback remained mixed in relation to improvements. Some felt further work was needed to improve the quality of the service. One parent said, "The nursery has improved but it still requires work to bring up to standard with other nurseries." While sufficient progress had been made to meet this requirement, to support ongoing improvement, we have made a new area for improvement (see area for improvement 1, in 'How good is our leadership?').

Met - within timescales

Requirement 5

By 01 September 2023, the provider must ensure that children receive the appropriate care, support and access to provision. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure:

- (a) there are an appropriate number of staff to supervise and meet the needs of children;
- (b) experiences for children are not limited due to staffing levels; and

(c) deployment decisions take account of staff skills, knowledge and experience.

This is to comply with Regulation 15 (a) (staffing) 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 needs are met by the right number of people.' (HSCS 3.15).

This requirement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Improvements had been made and overall, children received the appropriate care, support and had access to the full provision.

There were appropriate numbers of staff to meet the needs of children and manage their safety. Inspection evidence showed enough staff to meet staff to child ratios and staffing levels had increased since the last inspection.

Overall, experiences were no longer limited due to staffing levels. For example, children enjoyed extended periods of play in the garden and staff were available and attentive to children's needs. There were enough staff present to answer doors, take calls and manage other tasks, meaning children's needs were met without unnecessary interruptions. However, further work was needed to ensure staff deployment was effective during busier times of the day. For example, during one lunchtime staff were task focused, having to leave the room to collect various items. This created a disorganised experience and meant children were not as well supported as they could have been. One parent commented, "The staff team really do seem to care for the kids and know them well. There have been a lot of changes recently and at times the babies go to toddlers at the end of the day which I'm presuming is because of lack of available staff." To ensure the needs and rights of the children are consistently met, consideration should be given to the effective deployment of staff at all times.

Improvement had been made to deployment decisions in relation to the mix of skills, knowledge and experience across the staff team. Less experienced staff were now based across the setting rather than being deployed in the same rooms. New staff had been hired with previous early learning and childcare experience. This resulted in children being cared for by groups of staff with the skills required to meet their needs.

Staff training and development had been a focus since the last inspection and the impact of this was evident across the service. For example, staff had a greater understanding of how to implement a nurturing approach to children's care. This contributed to the safety, wellbeing and overall experience for children.

While sufficient progress had been made to meet this requirement, to support ongoing improvements we have made a new area for improvement (see area for improvement 1, in 'How good is our staff team?').

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

For children to have the right care at the right time, the provider should ensure that where strategies are identified by parents, other professionals, outside agencies and the service, these should be consistently implemented.

This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 211/210).

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

'If I am supported and cared for by a team or more than one organisation, this is well-coordinated so that I experience consistency and continuity.' (HSCS 4.17).

This area for improvement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken since then

For some children staff were using the strategies outlined in personal plans and agreed with parents and professionals. However, for other children strategies were not consistently implemented and practice should be developed further to ensure all children receive the tailored support they need. For example, there were opportunities for the service to improve strategies of support in place related to children's communication and language needs.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain in this report.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's overall well being, the provider should ensure that policies are written in line with best practice and legislation. This would ensure that children received the appropriate care and support.

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

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 13 July 2023.

Action taken since then

The manager had worked to develop policies so they aligned with good practice guidance related to early learning and childcare, and the operating of a regulated care service. Policies in place helped guide the staff team and manager through their work. When reviewing policies we advised the manager of some aspects that could be further developed. The provider and manager should continue to develop the service's policies

to ensure they remain up to date and effective. This work should be covered within the service's approach to quality assurance and improvement planning (see area for improvement 1, in 'How good is our leadership?').

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The provider should ensure that staff understand their responsibility for keeping children safe and protected at drop off time.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.19: My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.

This area for improvement was made on 2 October 2023.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement was made as a result of an upheld complaint.

Inspection evidence found staff had an understanding of their responsibility in keeping children safe and protected during the out of school care drop off time. The procedures in place were agreed by parents. Through discussion with the staff and manager we highlighted areas of the procedures that could be improved further. For example, implementing individual risk assessments for each child to ensure clarity and practice. The manager and staff were receptive to these discussions.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
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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