

# Cherrytrees Nursery Day Care of Children

1a and 1c Duddingston Park  
Portobello  
Edinburgh  
EH15 1JN

Telephone: 01316 690 405

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
26 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Cherrytrees Childrens Nurseries  
Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001989

**Service no:**  
CS2007145956

## About the service

Cherrytrees Nursery is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 139 children at any one time. Of those 139, no more than 32 are of school age. At the time of our inspection, the service was not providing out of school care. The service is in partnership with the local authority to provide funded early learning and childcare. This service is one of four provided by Cherrytrees Children's Nurseries Limited.

The service provides accommodation over two floors where children are cared for in groups of similar ages within different playrooms. There is a separate entrance to the baby unit caring for children under the age of two years. Each age group has a designated enclosed garden area. The service is provided from converted premises in Portobello, Edinburgh close to local primary schools, shops and other amenities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 March 2024 between 9:00 and 16:00 and 21 March 2024 between 12:00 and 15:30. 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 several children using the service and received comments from 45 of their family
- spoke with staff and the manager
- observed staff practice and daily experiences for children
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were happy and secure in the care of staff who knew them well.
- Staff needed to develop clearer strategies to support some individual children.
- Children were having fun and could play outdoors when they wanted to.
- The nursery was well led by a committed and supportive manager and leadership team.
- Opportunities for training, which would broaden and support staff skills should be provided.
- Children were cared for staff who were dedicated and enthusiastic.

## 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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality indicator 1.1 - care and support

Children were well supported by staff to be happy and settled within the service. They confidently interacted with staff and each other and were having fun. Staff approached children in a kind and gentle manner, using positive language to help them feel safe and secure. Some staff needed to develop their skills and understanding of quality interactions with babies. Ensuring that staff interacted with children during care routines and balanced carrying out tasks with the need to give the youngest children time to respond and interact, would further strengthen relationships and confidence of babies.

Personal plans were in place for children, these recorded information to keep children safe, and included medical needs or recognised support needs. They had been reviewed regularly with parents but had not always been updated to reflect where things had changed. Staff knew the children in their care well and were ensuring that support for routines such as toilet learning were in place. However, not all plans contained further information to support children's continuity of care, such as strategies of support (see area for improvement 1).

Children were well supported in their transitions through the nursery. Staff used information documents, meetings between keyworkers and discussion with parents. Staff could describe the settling in process and ensured that change was taken at the child's pace to increase confidence and security.

Preschool children experienced positive snack and lunchtime experiences which were relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Staff were aware of any dietary needs, which helped them to keep children safe. Children enjoyed finding a place to sit and chatted happily to their peers, which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and further develop language skills. They were supported to become independent and learn new skills during the making of snack and serving themselves during mealtimes. The mealtime experience for younger children did not provide the same quality of experience. We have asked staff to re-visit the lunch routine to improve organisation and ensure that staff sit with and support children during the mealtime experience.

Meals and snacks promoted healthy eating. Preschool children made soup and baked bread at snack time. They also had regular opportunities to plant, grow and harvest their own food in the nursery garden. One child told us 'We've just planted tatties, they won't be ready for ages!' Opportunities to grow food supports a sense of achievement, self-esteem and improves children's understanding of the natural environment.

All age groups had access to dedicated outdoor spaces. Staff understood the significant benefits of outdoor play and how this impacted on children's health and wellbeing. The majority of children could spend significant periods of time outdoors if they wished. These outdoor opportunities needed to be consistent across the nursery.

### Quality indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Preschool children were engaged in sustained play throughout the day, they were confident to ask for additional resources and were responded to positively by staff. A group of children were interested in making spears and staff ensured that this play was supported by resources and discussion to allow the play to develop safely. As a result children were able to explore their interests and have fun together. Play experiences could be enhanced further through the use of open-ended materials and loose parts, which were readily accessible and enabled children to explore their play in more depth and develop creativity and curiosity.

Overall play in the younger age groups was well supported, they benefitted from play experiences that reflected their interests and needs, along with the core provision of resources and experiences. Staff had knowledge of child development to enable them to provide play experiences for the youngest children. Further work could be carried out to develop the staff's understanding of schematic play in practice. This would help them to better support schemas, where children learn through repetition of actions or behaviours to find out how things work.

Literacy and numeracy was well considered for preschool children through daily opportunities to explore number, books and stories in the outdoor and indoor play environments. Children had access to a selection of different types of books including fiction, nonfiction and photo books. Preschool children used the outdoor cosy sheltered area to tell each other stories or have them read by staff. There were opportunities for writing, counting, and making things which provided children with a rich learning environment. For younger children there were good literacy opportunities and staff took time to read or sing with children. More literacy and numeracy opportunities could be provided outdoors for younger children to enhance the learning environment.

Online learning journals were in use for all age groups. These needed some improvement to ensure that observations were regular, meaningful and of a consistent standard across the nursery. Parents commented that they would like more detailed information about their child's development. The quality of observations had been identified by the manager and senior staff as an area for improvement for the coming year.

There were planning approaches in place with intentional plans based on themes and seasons and some responsive planning. In the preschool planning it was clear where the observations of children were influencing the activities. In other age groups the link was not so clear. Senior staff were working across the nursery to standardise the quality of planning for play as the quality and recording of plans varied. Further development of quality assurance around planning would highlight any gaps. The desired outcome is planning that reflects individual needs and supports children to develop at a pace that is right for them.

## Areas for improvement

1.

To ensure that children receive individualised care and support throughout the setting, information that has been gathered about children and their needs, should be used to develop appropriate strategies to meet children's needs and support developmental progress. These strategies should be shared with all staff to ensure a consistent approach to care and support.

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 1.15).

## How good is our setting?

### 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement

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

Children had access to accommodation which was comfortable and well furnished. Rooms were bright, well-ventilated and provided welcoming and well organised environments for children's care and learning. Displays of information, children's artwork, environmental print, plants and real-life images made the playrooms look interesting and homely. This sent a message to children that they mattered.

Playrooms and outdoor areas had been arranged and resourced to take account of children's ages and stages of development. The preschool room had been re-arranged to enable the use of several rooms, this had provided children with improved choice and independence. Playrooms for younger children provided opportunities for children to choose their own resources to support their interests and there was good use of real-life and some open-ended resources.

All age groups had access to outdoor play areas. Most children had direct access to outdoor play from their playroom, which enabled them to choose if they wanted to play indoors or outdoors throughout the day. Outdoor areas provided a range of play opportunities including wheeled toys, balancing, climbing and planting. Most children spent significant period of the day outdoors and parents said that this was a major strength in the nursery. We asked staff to ensure that all age groups had access to fresh air and physical play more than once a day.

Infection, prevention and control (IPC) procedures were in place and most staff supported these procedures well. Handwashing procedures took place but did not always follow good practice guidance. We have asked senior staff to continue to monitor IPC practice.

There were procedures for maintenance, repair and refurbishing areas of the nursery. Improvements have been made to the toilet facilities to ensure that children's privacy and dignity were always maintained. Procedures were in place for assessing risks, children were involved in this process where appropriate. Staff understood the benefits of enabling children to take calculated risks during their play. This play was supported outdoors and during the regular trips and outings as part of the outdoor learning activities.

Some areas of the nursery were covered by CCTV. This was used appropriately to ensure children's safety at the entry and exit points. Children's personal information was stored safely. Where information was in paper form this was kept secure. Information stored electronically was password protected and privacy systems were in place.

## How good is our leadership?

### 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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

The management structure in the nursery was clearly defined and shared with staff and parents to ensure that everyone knew who was responsible for leading the service. Staff, parents and children benefitted from an open and approachable leadership team.

Managers had carried out observations of staff, modelling of good practice, team discussion and the sharing of the nursery vision, values and aims. This helped support staff to invest in the work they needed to do to achieve positive outcomes for children. The manager and senior staff could identify that there was work still to do, as staff were at different points of their professional development. There was a focus on staff wellbeing, which promoted a positive culture and the development of respectful relationships.

There was a system for quality assurance and self-evaluation. These processes had included gaining the opinions and views of parents, children and staff to help assess the quality of some areas of the service. The improvement plan was clear, shared with parents, through a floor book, and regularly evaluated to ensure progress. Auditing of processes and procedures needed to ensure that it was meaningful exercise resulting in the maintaining of good practice or identifying where improved practice was needed.

Staff opportunities for meetings and discussions enabled them to share practice, discuss children's care and plan for play experiences. These meetings were supported by senior staff to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to share their views. The senior team gathered once a month to discuss quality assurance, forward plans and changes. There were also opportunities for more informal discussions and staff confirmed that the managers door was always open if they needed to have an impromptu meeting.

To build on the positive relationships that staff and managers already had with parents, there were plans for a number of social opportunities for parents to spend time in the nursery. We have sign posted the manager to the Care Inspectorate document *Me, my family and my childcare setting: A practice note for building stronger connections and meaningful relationships*. This good practice guide could be shared with parents as they are welcomed back into the building at the beginning and end of the day.

## How good is our staff team?

4 – Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality indicator 4.3 – Staff deployment.

Staff were committed to providing good quality care for children. They supervised children well, helping to maintain their safety and wellbeing. The management team covered within rooms during busier periods to provide additional support to children. Overall, staff absences were well managed meaning children were cared for by familiar adults who understood their needs. Effective staff deployment helped children to experience nurturing and consistent care.

Staff were flexible and worked well as a team. Good communication between staff enabled them to respond to children's changing needs for example, where a child needed a cuddle or settled down to sleep. This approach enabled staff to deploy themselves in ways that prioritised children's needs.

The staff team were respectful to each other and worked well as playroom teams. There was a focus on staff health and wellbeing. As a result staff said they felt supported in their roles. One commented "I'm genuinely proud of working at Cherrytrees Edinburgh and believe it is a good setting to be a part of."

The staff structure included business staff who carried out many of the administrative duties. This enabled manager and leadership team to spend periods of time using their skills and expertise supporting staff by modelling good practice, observing staff and getting to know how teams were working.

A staff appraisal was carried out annually. This process identified strengths and areas staff may need to further develop. Staff said they found the appraisal process a supportive one. In addition there were observations of staff practice which were then used as a reflective practice tool for mentoring and discussion tool with individual staff. This was being used as support and supervision to develop practice and build confidence. We suggested to the manager that this purpose could be made clearer to staff as many said they did not get support or supervision.

Staff experience and skills varied across the nursery. Staff teams had been thoughtfully put together to ensure that staff strengths were utilised and less experienced staff were supported. As part of the staff development plan manager now needed to access a broad range of training to fill some of the knowledge gaps (see area for improvement 1).

## Areas for improvement

1.  
To ensure that children are cared for by skilled and knowledgeable staff, opportunities for a broad range of training, reading and practice development should be provided. Methods to assess the impact of training should be used to ensure that staff practice and knowledge is being successfully developed.

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).

## 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

To ensure children are cared for in an environment that maintains their dignity, and follows best practice for infection prevention and control, the service should make the necessary changes to the toilet and nappy changing areas. The manager should monitor the environment as part of the quality assurance system.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected' (HSCS 1.4). 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 June 2022.**



**Action taken since then**

Changes had been made to toilet and nappy changing areas to ensure that they provided children with privacy and dignity. A plan of refurbishment would ensure that the areas continued to be upgraded over time.

**This area for improvement was met.**

**Previous area for improvement 2**

To ensure children are protected from harm, the provider should monitor the recruitment of staff to ensure procedures follow best practice guidance, such as, Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited (HSCS 4.24).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 June 2022.**

**Action taken since then**

We audited three staff recruitment files. Appropriate recruitment procedures had been carried out to ensure that staff were suitable to work with children. Checks were recorded to ensure that the process was complete prior to staff starting work in the setting.

This area for improvement was 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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