

# First Class Day Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
4 June 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Jean McGrow trading as First Class  
Day Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000929

**Service no:**  
CS2003004517

## About the service

First Class Day Nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 37 children. The age range of children whom care will be provided for is, six children from 0-2 years, 15 children from 2-3 years and 16 children from three to those not yet attending primary school.

Care is provided from a single storey property located in Airdrie, North Lanarkshire. The service is close to shops, public transport links and local amenities.

Care is provided from a dedicated birth to two room, with one further open plan playroom for children aged two to five years old. Children also had access to a large, secure and natural outdoor play space.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 June 2024 between 09:00 and 16:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 children using the service
- reviewed feedback from 10 families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced warm and caring interactions, which helped them to feel nurtured and valued.
- Children were engaged in play opportunities for extended periods of time.
- Children were developing their curiosity, imagination and problem solving through high quality play experiences.
- Daily opportunities for all children to play outdoors were provided, which had a positive impact on children's social, physical and emotional skills.
- Staff were skilled, knowledgeable and committed to the continuous development of the service.
- An ethos of continuous improvement was evident within the service where quality assurance and improvement was a key focus.

## 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?	5 - Very 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 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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were happy, settled and secure. They were confident in their interactions with staff and each other. Staff used meaningful praise, chatting and singing with children as they supported them. This helped children feel valued and loved.

Staff knew the care and support needs of individual children well, this was supported with warm, caring and nurturing approaches to both their personal care needs and their learning needs, ensuring an inclusive play and learning environment. Staff interactions were unhurried, calm and responsive to children's needs. Children were treated with respect and value. Parents told us "staff know my child well and take the time to learn about [their] interests and needs" and "the staff's dedication to knowing each individual child is a great benefit."

The service had developed their approaches to ensure parents and carers were more involved in nursery life. Planned events such as stay and play days and grandparent days had been well received by families and contributed to strengthened relationships that supported meeting children's needs. This also created strong links between children's home life and nursery. One parent told us "the service organise stay and play visits every month allowing positive relationships to be built between myself and staff, as well as having the opportunity to observe my child in the setting."

Children's needs were supported by effective personal plans which ensured staff caring for children had a clear overview of their individual needs and preferences. Consideration had been given to how wellbeing indicators and children's rights were reflected in children's plans, to capture a true reflection of their learning and development. Regular consultations and reviews with parents had taken place which enabled them to be fully involved in their child's care. 'All about me' information outlined children's needs, likes, dislikes and interest and were regularly reviewed to ensure they captured children's current preferences. Parents told us "staff will regularly keep me updated in my child's development by sharing [their] personal plan, highlighting targets [my child] has achieved and what [their] next goals are. These are always available to review and staff will set aside time to discuss these in depth" and "I am regularly involved in the planning of my child's targets and development. It creates a great home link which enables us to be on the same page working towards the same targets."

Children were encouraged to make independent choices at snack time. We observed snack time to be a time for children and staff to talk together and connect. This experience promoted children to develop skills in literacy and numeracy through conversation and problem solving. For example, exploring different types of bread, discussing different flavours and creating their shopping list to make their own bread.

Lunch time had been developed to ensure a calm, unhurried and sociable lunchtime experience for children. Children were actively involved in lunch preparations, identifying how many children were having lunch and setting the table for relevant numbers. Children were confident in this approach, with interactions from staff supporting self esteem, independence and numeracy skills. We discussed how children's independence could be further developed. For example, providing further opportunities for children to self-serve meals.

Suitable procedures were in place to ensure safe administration of medication. Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs. Medication was stored appropriately and easily accessible. We discussed developing an overview of medication stored on the premises, the service agreed to action this.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Staff provided a mixture of spontaneous and planned experiences to support children's learning through play. A rolling snack and free-flow approach meant children's play was not unnecessarily interrupted and they could make meaningful play choices, promoting child led play. Children told us "I like playing with my friends and playing in the jungle garden. We get to run down the hill" and "I love my nursery, we get to play in the garden."

Children had fun while at nursery, where their play and learning was supported by having access to a range of stimulating play spaces. Children could move freely within the play areas and were confident self selecting materials to explore and investigate. Children had opportunities to use their imagination and explore their natural curiosity. For example, children were re-enacting the story of the bear hunt, using natural materials, promoting their senses and enriching children's descriptive language.

Literacy and numeracy were evident within all areas of the playroom. Staff provided information books in all areas, this provided opportunities to support and extend children's learning. Children also had opportunities to explore their literacy skills through contributing to floor books, making their own story books/story reviews and adding their voice to their learning journals. We discussed how opportunities to further develop mark making skills could be embedded. For example, adding more mark making opportunities within all play areas.

Younger children had opportunities to develop their communication and language skills. For example, we observed staff singing nursery rhymes and using picture books to introduce new words. Staff used their knowledge of child development to offer experience to support and stimulate children learning and development. For example, ensuring children had space to investigate, crawl and explore their walking skills.

Planning approaches were child centred and followed children's interest. Floor books were used to record children's experiences and allowed them to revisit their learning. Staff were developing their skills at balancing observation and interactions to create the right experiences. They responded to children's needs and interests using a variety of planning approaches from intentional to 'in the moment' planning. We discussed some approaches to further enhance this. We observed children engage in play experiences for prolonged periods of time showing high levels of engagement, excitement, wonder and awe. For example, children were using natural materials at the outdoor mud kitchen to create potions.

## 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 and families benefitted from a setting that was well furnished, stimulating and inviting.

The entrance area displayed photographs and information about staff which supported a welcoming environment. Each child had access to their own space to store their personal items, which helped promote a sense of belonging. Parents described the setting as "a welcoming environment" and told us "I couldn't ask for a better environment for my [child] to learn and develop."

Playrooms were clean and bright. The inclusion of soft lightening, furnishings and natural materials, created a warm and nurturing space, where children could feel safe and ensured children had spaces to rest and relax.

Younger children had access to a well resourced playroom, designed to meet their needs and interests. They had direct access to a sheltered patio to play, as well as opportunities to explore the larger garden.

Careful consideration had been given to the layout of all playrooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interest and develop their ideas. One parent told us "they are always changing the room to suit the needs and interests of children." Children had access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem solving. For example, block play and loose parts (resources that can be moved, taken apart and put together) were available, which encouraged children to use creative thinking and problem solving strategies as they developed their ideas through play.

Health and wellbeing was promoted through outdoor play experiences. The large, natural outdoor area provided a range of spaces for the development of physical skills and exploration. Outdoors spaces had been well considered to offer children a range of opportunities. Spaces for exploring large motor skills, such as climbing, cycling and large action games. Opportunities for risky play were provided with children assessing their own risks. For example, balancing on tyres and climbing up the natural climbing structure. Children made good use of this and were confident when using all areas of the outdoor space. At the time of inspection the service had plans to further develop their 'jungle garden' and we agreed this would continue to support positive experiences for children.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to ensure children didn't come to harm. This included secure entry systems, secure garden as well as regular headcounts and communication between staff. Children and staff could confidently share approaches they used to keep children safe. One child told us "SIMOA is all about keeping safe. We have an elephant that looks after us, we take him to the supermarket. We need to hold hands and stay with the [staff]."

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, supporting a safe environment for children. The nursery was clean and handwashing took place regularly. Nappy changing areas were clean, with protective personal equipment (PPE) being stored appropriately. We discussed some changes to the baby room changing area and these were actioned immediately. The service should continue to reflect on best practice guidance to ensure the changing areas reflect current approaches.

Children's opportunities to play and learning were enhanced through strong connections within the community. The service had made good use of local space, using supermarkets and libraries to support children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

## 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

Children benefitted from a positive culture of continuous improvement. The management team promoted a positive attitude to change and recognised the importance of including all stakeholders in developing a shared vision, values and aims. High quality practice and improving outcomes for children was at the forefront of the service's improvement plans. One staff member told us "in first class day nursery, we are a strong working team and we want what's best for the children and parents."

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm, and inclusive environment. Effective methods of communication, such as newsletters, surveys and parent feedback supported parents to be included in evaluating aspects of the service and driving improvement. Parents told us "the nursery often ask about what they could do better in the nursery and always ask for feedback at the end of each stay and play" and "the service continually ask for feedback in areas they can improve on and they encourage partner participation." We discussed how the service could further develop this approach to evidence how parents' and children's involvement shape the delivery of the service.

Parents were happy with their level of involvement in the service. They told us they were kept informed of their child's care through discussions. Parents were encouraged into the premises for stay and play days, meetings with staff and for celebrations. Parents felt the stay and play sessions were a strength of the service. Parents told us "the service have also organised various workshops for parents that I have attended allowing positive relationships to be created between staff and other parents, I have loved attending these and have also helped my own well-being being part of a community where I am welcomed and have a sense of belonging" and "staff put so much effort into days for parents to join in, they are so committed to helping parents and children."

Effective systems were in place to monitor the quality of the service, which included how well they were doing in areas, such as delivering the curriculum, good practice guidance, staff deployment and meeting children's needs. The management team had a very good understanding of self evaluation and routinely reflected on how well they were doing. They clearly understood the service strengths and identified where further enhancement could be made. For example, ensuring children rights were at the heart of their approach.

The management team were committed to making improvements and worked closely with staff. Staff felt supported by management team and that their views and suggestions mattered. They had regular meetings to discuss progress and reflect on practice. Leaders supported staff within playrooms by role modelling good practice and guiding staff. This supported staff to develop their practice and ensure positive outcomes for children. We discussed how further developing staff leadership roles would continue to support continuous improvement. For example, developing champion roles for staff.

### How good is our staff team?

**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 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff worked well together to create a positive, caring and welcoming environment for children. The staff team had a wide range of skills and different levels of experience working in a child care setting.

They worked well as a team and demonstrated they were committed to provide a high quality service. Parents were confident that the service was staffed with a passionate, professional and driven team who wanted only the very best for every child. Parents told us "staff are wonderful and present with excellent knowledge and creativity. They are extremely supportive of families and children" and "the staff in the service are so good with the children. The work that they put in is off scale."

The service was appropriately staffed to meet children's needs, which allowed staff to be flexible in their approach. For example, to support children's choice and free flow between indoor and outdoor play areas. Effective communication between staff ensured effective supervision quality engagement with children across the day. As a result there were minimal interruptions to staff engagement with children.

Staff worked as a team, communicating about children's needs. They met regularly to plan play and learning and made good use of planning meetings to share important information about children's needs. All staff knew children's individual needs well which helped to ensure they received consistent and responsive care across the day. One parent told us "each member of staff knows my child on a personal, as well as professional level, which makes the experience of the nursery more comforting as parents. They understand the needs my child has and are so helpful. My [child] is thriving with the help of the staff and really enjoys going to nursery everyday."

Staff told us they felt supported by the leadership team. Regular communication enabled staff to feel included and valued towards the development of the service. Staff had engaged in a variety of training opportunities and professional reading to develop their knowledge and skills. Staff who were new to the service received a detailed induction to develop their awareness of the service and the needs of children. We discussed with the service how this could be further enhanced through the use of best practice guidance, 'Early Learning and Childcare - The National Induction' this would help ensure a robust induction processes.

Staff were extremely caring, kind and respected children's rights. They listened to children's voices which showed them that their views were valued and important. Positive relationships and nurture were at the heart of their practice.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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