

# Bright Sparks Nursery Day Care of Children

65 Telford Road  
Edinburgh  
EH4 2AX

Telephone: 01313 153 214

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
26 July 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Edinburgh Childcare Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004004489

**Service no:**  
CS2015335199

## About the service

- Children were nurtured through their positive relationships with staff.
- Parents benefitted from opportunities to be involved in the nursery.
- Personal plans must be improved to provide clear information for staff.
- Staff would benefit from further support from management.
- Resources should be improved to provide children with high quality play experiences.
- Management need to have a clear oversight of what is happening within the nursery.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 23 July 2024 and an announced visit on 25 July 2024. 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 ten people using the service
- received responses to our questionnaires from nine families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Feedback was given to the manager and depute on 26 July 2024.

## Key messages

Children benefitted from positive relationships with staff

## 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

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were warm, kind, and caring with children and responded to their verbal and nonverbal cues. Where children required support with personal care, interactions were nurturing supporting children's, security, confidence and positive relationships. Children were offered choices and actively listened to by staff. Parents comments included "The staff in the room clearly know our boy very well, care about him lots and genuinely enjoy spending time with him. All of this was so apparent when we spoke to the room leader at parents evening and in the detailed, thoughtful report she wrote" and "Individual attention is given and parents are given comprehensive updates at the end of the day".

Settling in visits were organised with the child's key worker, to enable relationships to be built prior to the child starting at the nursery. The manager described how settling in visits were tailored to the needs of the individual child and parent. This helped to build trusting relationships at the earliest possible stage. Babies had daily diaries which were completed daily by staff, this also provided an opportunity for parents to communicate with staff. This helped facilitate a partnership approach with families.

Throughout the day staff engaged and interacted positively with children. A display in the pre-school room of the SHANARRI indicators evidenced the conversations staff had with children about how they felt Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included. This was demonstrated through children's drawings, words, and photographs, giving a strong message to children that they mattered.

Meals and snacks were provided by the service. We have asked the service to review their menus to ensure that they are in line with 'Setting the Table' (NHS Health Scotland 2018) to ensure portion sizes were correct. Staff sat with children whilst they ate to promote a safe and relaxed atmosphere. We discussed how staff could use mealtimes as an opportunity to develop a more positive sociable experience, though enhanced conversations. All children had water bottles in the playrooms which were easily accessible throughout the day which contributed to children being hydrated.

Children's safety and emotional security and wellbeing were supported through sensitive arrangements for sleep routines. Routines were reflective of individual children's needs and family wishes and promoted good habits around sleep.

While families completed personal plans for their children before starting at the nursery, staff did not consistently follow up to ensure they fully understood the information. Additionally, personal plans were not regularly updated in accordance with legislation, and changes were not always clearly documented. It is essential that updates to personal plans involve both staff and parents to confirm the accuracy of information. When information from parents was shared, it was not always recorded, and with staff transitions between rooms, there was potential for important details to be lost. This lack of consistency and continuity in care routines contributed to poorer outcomes for children (see requirement one).

Children did not always benefit from links with other professionals as the service did not always actively seek information from other professionals to support children. Where there was information, this was not recorded well and there were gaps in information, this did not support children to reach their full potential.

We spoke with the manager about this and discussed how they needed to be pro-active in contacting other professionals involved with children. At the previous inspection the service had been encouraged to improve recording systems, including chronologies of events and communications with other professionals to provide a more consistent approach. This had not yet happened (see requirement one).

### Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

The quality of opportunities for children to have fun and lead their own play and learning varied throughout the nursery. Children in the pre-school room (young learners) had access to two playrooms, the 'messy room' had paint, sand, water, playdough and some opportunities for children to be creative, imaginative and lead their own learning. However, areas within this room were not well resourced and children did not have free-flow access to this room. Overall, children had too few opportunities to have fun and be actively involved in leading their play and learning. There were missed opportunities to support children's creativity, choice and learning. This was due to the lack of resources within the environment and lack of appropriate adult input into planned experiences. Staff in the pre-school room should be supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum for Excellence and an understanding of how children develop and learn (see area for improvement two).

In contrast, children in the toddler room were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning through a range of resources and activities. This was evidenced through our observations, discussions with staff, learning journals and planning floorbooks. Parents from the toddler room commented "I like the amount of different activities my child gets to do on a daily basis"; "The resources are updated regularly and children are provided with a range of different activities each day to keep them learning and entertained"; "Staff prepare lots of activities for the children and take care of their needs".

Staff in the baby rooms were beginning to use observations of children to plan for individual children's learning and development. This had not yet been fully introduced. The environments in the baby rooms were resourced well and had opportunities for children to explore sensory activities such as sand water and paint, as well as cosy and sensory areas for them to rest and explore.

Throughout the nursery, consideration should be given to the richness of the environment, in all areas, such as home corners to allow children to role play; the opportunities for children to understand and apply concepts of numeracy and opportunities for choice to lead their own play and learning. This could be achieved by a well resourced environment (see area for improvement one).

While we observed some quality examples, learning Journals were not consistently used to effectively track and monitor children's progress and development. This inconsistency led to a lack of meaningful and personalised observations that captured significant moments in children's learning. To enhance children's development, staff should be supported in making more detailed observations that demonstrated each child's development and help in planning further support. Management should regularly review learning Journals to ensure these practices are followed and provide the necessary support to staff.

Parents have expressed concerns about the inconsistency in learning Journal entries, noting that: 'More updates on the learning journals are needed as some parents are unable to be at pick-up,' and 'There's a large variation between staff in how entries are made. Some provide detailed, thoughtful reflections linked to developmental outcomes with multiple images, while others offer only brief descriptions. At times, over a week can pass without any entries, and sometimes there are group photos but none featuring our child specifically.' Addressing these concerns would ensure more consistent and meaningful communication with parents, ultimately leading to better support for children's learning and development.

## Requirements

1. By the 14 October 2024 to ensure children's health, welfare and safety, you the provider must ensure that every child has a comprehensive and up to date personal plan in place.

To do this, you must, at a minimum, ensure that:

- a) Personal plans outline how staff will meet the children's health, welfare, and safety needs.
- b) Personal plans are reviewed within the above timescale.
- c) All staff have an appropriate understanding of each child's current needs and use this knowledge to fully meet them.
- d) Managers take responsibility for liaising with other professionals and record chronologies and communication clearly to support children.

This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) and 5(1) & (2) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

## Areas for improvement

1. To support children to achieve their full potential, the provider should ensure children experience high quality play, learning, and development opportunities. This should include a well resourced environment both indoors and outdoors to allow children to lead their own play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

2. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure staff access training appropriate to their role, and apply their training in practice. This should include, but is not limited to observation writing, becoming familiar with the curriculum, and providing high quality play and learning environments.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, and skilled' (HSCS 3.14).

## How good is our setting?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

#### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

The setting was comfortable and welcoming with plenty of natural light. The entrance hall had been redecorated to make it more welcoming. Both baby rooms had recently been redecorated and were warm, clean and inviting spaces. Noticeboards had been updated to provide up to date information about staff, menus and newsletters. This helped to create an atmosphere where everyone felt included.

Improvements to the garden were included on an improvement plan and some work had been carried out to enhance the area. New resources had been purchased to enhance the provision but these were not set up staff, demonstrating a lack of consideration to providing children with an enriching play and learning experience in the outdoors. There was a lack of consideration given to the garden as a learning environment. We discussed with the manager how this should be further developed.

To ensure children's safety, staff should work together to promote a safe environment, considering the stage of children's development and potential risk of everyday items. For example, ensuring the wire that hung down by the cots was made safe to ensure that children could not reach it and removing heavy tins of food from the baby room home corner (see area for improvement one).

Although staff involved children from the pre-school room in risk assessing the garden, the assessment was too generic and lacked specific details of the actual environment. For example, the risk assessment did not identify the pile of rubbish present on the first day of inspection or the nettles growing beside the mud kitchen on both days. To ensure children's safety, management and staff must conduct thorough and specific risk assessments of the environment, to identify all potential hazards before the children use the space. This would help create a safer environment and promote better outcomes for the children's well-being (see area for improvement one).

### Areas for improvement

1. To promote children's health and wellbeing the provider should ensure that all children are cared for in a safe environment. Staff should promote a safe environment both indoors and out, by identifying and removing risks to children.

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

## How good is our leadership?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

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

The vision, values and aims of the service were displayed, shared with staff and parents, helping parents be aware of what was important for the setting to meet the needs of children and families. Parents views had been sought at last years 'cheese and wine evening' and the manager said that due to the success of this, they planned to repeat this to gather the views of current parents. One parent commented "The nursery has an excellent summer family fun day and a Xmas event where kids can meet Santa, which is lovely and the former also affords an opportunity to meet other parents which is great. I also like that they hosted a cheese & wine night, which was a fantastic idea to help parents build relationships with each other and hopefully something they will build upon". This further demonstrated the importance of working in partnership with parents and how the setting had been successful in doing so.

There was a lack of management oversight of what was happening within the nursery. Some areas of the improvement plan had begun to be actioned, such as improvements to the outdoor garden and improving communication with parents. However, these did not go far enough and there were significant gaps in practice that management had not identified or addressed for example, the environment, planning, quality of experiences, observations and staff practice, as described in this report (see requirement one).

The deputy had been in position for nearly a year, however their role was not clear. To enhance the quality of service for children and families, it is important for the management team to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This would ensure that the improvement plan and quality assurance processes were applied consistently. Additionally, a stronger management presence in the playrooms was needed to support staff and model best practices. Feedback from parents on management visibility varied: some appreciated the prompt and helpful communication, while others expressed a desire for more frequent in-person interactions. Comments included: 'Very good at getting back to us with queries,' 'I have never met the manager but had positive interactions via email,' 'It would be beneficial to see the management team more often,' and 'The on-site management team is excellent.' Addressing these concerns would improve engagement and support within the nursery (see requirement one)."

One room leader carried out meaningful and useful quality assurance with their room and had used this information to make positive changes to the environment. Unfortunately all of these improvements had not been sustained. We discussed with the room leader the need to revisit these to ensure that improvements were sustained and built upon. They were very receptive to this input and ideas of how to take this forward. Managers should support room leaders and staff to make and sustain improvements in the environment (see requirement one).

Staff had accessed training such as First aid and child protection, this supported children's overall safety and wellbeing. To further improve their knowledge, staff now need to access training about the curriculum and experiences for children. Managers need to support staff to learn about and implement positive changes using early learning and childcare theory, guidance and training. The manager said that they had a new training provider which staff would be able to access to increase their knowledge. This should be monitored to see how this impacts on practice and supports positive outcomes for children. This should be a priority and supported by management (see requirement one).

The Care Inspectorate had not received any notifications from the service since August 2021. We discussed with the manager the notifications that the service has a legal obligation to inform of us and emailed them a copy of 'Records that all registered services (except childminding) must keep and guidance on notification reporting' (care.inspectorate.com). The manager said that she had problems accessing the Care Inspectorate system so we directed them to the Care Inspectorate helpdesk to rectify this. This would enable them to carry out their regulatory responsibilities as a registered care service.

## Requirements

1. By the 30 October 2024 to ensure children's health, welfare and safety, you the provider must by ensure that:
  - a) There is a clear management structure in place which details the overall responsibilities of individuals responsible for managing aspects of the service.
  - b) A quality assurance process is identified to enable the improvements identified in this report, to be monitored, sustained and built upon.
  - c) Managers are present in play rooms to monitor staff practices and children's experiences.

This is to comply with Regulations 3, 7(2)(c) and 17(1) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).



**How good is our staff team?****3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

**4.3 Staff deployment**

Staff communicated well with their colleagues when a task took them away from their responsibilities. Staff worked well together, to ensure effective supervision and engagement across the day. Parents were very complimentary about staff, their comments included: "Great staff who are always very helpful and knowledgeable", "Lovely team, couldn't fault them", "The staff are extremely friendly and caring", "Staff are all very friendly approachable and kind" and "Staff are excellent and go above and beyond".

The manager said that they were in the midst of changing staff teams to provide more consistency within the teams, and improve staff morale and team working. On speaking with staff there was confusion about what was happening within the teams and who the room leaders would be. We discussed with the manager the need to consider the skills, knowledge and experience of staff when promoting them to ensure decisions impact positively on children.

While there were always more staff present than required during the inspection, this did not consistently provide positive outcomes for children. For instance, the pre-school room was not prepared which restricted children's free flow between rooms, the garden was left unprepared for children to play there, and during staff breaks at lunchtime, a child had to wait 15 minutes to be changed after spilling water on themselves. Management needed to evaluate how staffing levels impacted children's experiences and ensure that adequate staffing positively influenced their overall care, play and learning experiences.

**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?	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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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

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