

# Arnhall Nursery Day Care of Children

Garden Cottages  
Keir Estate  
Dunblane  
FK15 9NU

Telephone: 01786 822 391

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
20 February 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Pear Tree Nurseries Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2006008293

**Service no:**  
CS2007166934

## About the service

Arnhall Nursery is a day care of children service provided in the Dunblane area. The nursery is situated between two buildings with access to a large enclosed outdoor space all children share. There are additional forest areas around the service that children have access to. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 107 children aged from three months to those not yet attending primary school of whom a maximum of 39 will be aged under two years.

The service is situated in a rural village within Keir Estate. Children are cared for in designated buildings with access to their own toilet facilities, kitchen areas and spaces to have their meals. Families have direct access to each building secured with key fob systems.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors, which took place on Wednesday 19 February 2025 and Thursday 20 February 2025 between 09:15 and 16:00. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received feedback from 23 families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

**Key messages**

- Children's play and learning experiences had been enhanced through a wide range of rich and stimulating resources across play spaces.
- Children experienced very warm, caring and nurturing support from staff who knew them well.
- Children were happy and having fun while they played.
- Children were kept safe by a staff team who continually trained and refreshed their knowledge in safeguarding them and their families.
- Staff were confident to take lead roles and support other staff members.
- Children were confident to lead their play and learning.
- Children experienced daily access to outdoor play and fresh air through different opportunities. This supported children's overall wellbeing.

**From this inspection we evaluated this service as:**

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	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 experienced kind, warm and caring interactions from staff. Staff were down at children's level engaging in play and conversations. For example, staff were role playing with children, they listened and followed their play ideas. This helped children to feel valued and respected.

Children had personal plans in place, where important information was gathered to support their needs. These were created in partnership with parents which helped to promote consistent care for children. All information was reviewed regularly with parents and changes to children's needs were documented, for example, changes to children's routines. A parent told us, "I have spoken to staff when I want them to focus on a particular area of development". Another shared, "staff are happy to be updated on changes to our child as and when needed". Updates were not always clear. We discussed with management ways to streamline this information to ensure it was easily accessible in the event of emergencies or when reviewed with families.

Medication was stored appropriately within the service. For example, medication was in individual sealed boxes with children's details. This helped staff to quickly identify which medication they required. We reviewed medication administration forms and identified some areas for improvement. For example, ensuring all forms kept in medication boxes were signed and dated by parents. Management had identified improvements were required through their auditing processes and new forms had been developed. This would ensure children were kept safe if they required medication while they attended the service.

Mealtimes were a relaxed, unhurried and sociable experience for children. A rolling lunch allowed children to choose when they wanted to have their meal. Children had opportunities to develop their independence. For example, feeding themselves, setting the table, self-serving their meal, pouring their own drinks and clearing their space when finished. Most children completed these tasks independently. We asked the staff to be mindful of the size of utensils available to children. For example, smaller jugs would allow younger children to complete these tasks independently and confidently. Overall, children had a positive mealtime experience.

Children had opportunities to rest, relax and sleep when they needed. Cots and sleep mats were available for younger children to sleep on. Children's sleep routines from home were respected and followed. Older children had comfortable spaces within their play environments with cushions, low sofa's and blankets to rest when required. As a result, children's overall wellbeing was well considered and supported.

Children were kept safe while they attended the service. Staff were trained and confident in child protection procedures. Regular professional discussions took place as a team. These opportunities supported staff to confidently identify concerns and they knew who their child protection officers were. A policy and procedure was in place and regularly reviewed by all staff. This ensured staff were able to follow correct processes and provide appropriate support to children and their families when needed.

### Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were seen to be having fun and fully engaged in their play and learning. They experienced a balance of spontaneous and planned activities and had opportunities to lead their own play and learning. For example, tuff trays were set up with resources that reflected their interests at the time, such as the Gruffalo story. This helped to develop children's imagination and retell the story in their own way.

Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were provided to children throughout their learning environment. Resources were woven throughout the play spaces, such as signs and symbols, natural resources, different sized items and play equipment. Children's different stages of development were well considered. For example, lower water and sand trays allowed children to access these play opportunities comfortably. Children were heard in engaging in mathematical language. For example, one child said while role playing in the home corner "I want to make pasta soup so we need more pasta and only one onion". Another child was heard telling their peers while taking part in a craft activity, "We need bigger paper with small balls to make a card". These opportunities helped children to develop their language and knowledge in a meaningful way.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to their interests. A review of planning with the staff team helped the team to ensure experiences were meaningful to children. Children's individual planning took place and tracked their learning and development progress. Staff shared this approach helped them to really get to know their individual key children. A parent told us, "The staff have been amazing at giving advice on how to support my child's learning at home". Next steps and goals are set for children. Another parent shared, "I know what the goals are for my children and if I want to work on particular targets at home, it is included". We discussed with management to consider time frames for when next steps should be reviewed. This would help staff to identify how children had progressed and any support they needed to achieve and thrive.

High quality observations took place that supported children to extend their interests and learning. These observations were taken over a number of different platforms, for example online platforms, settling in reports and individual planning. Children had access to their online journals at times through the use of the smart board. We discussed with management and staff team ways to develop this further and allow children to take ownership of their learning as they wished. For example, scrap books or jotters with their observations and ideas captured. This would help children to share their achievements and success with others as they wished.

Children had opportunities to explore their immediate local community. For example, they had daily visits to the local estate and forest areas. The service had plans to develop these opportunities further to explore their wider community once transport options had been finalised. This would further develop children's sense of belonging and to be part of the wider community.

## 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 were cared for in a bright, comfortable and welcoming environment. Play spaces were clean and free from clutter. The use of soft furnishings such as, cushions, curtains and plants in areas helped to create a homely feel. There was ample space for children to explore and extend their play ideas.

Children had dedicated spaces to keep their belongings and art work displayed around their environment. This gave children the message that they mattered.

Children were kept safe while they explored their environments. Risks were assessed and documented in detailed risk assessments. These were reviewed annually or sooner if changes occurred. We discussed with management to ensure clear dates of when reviews were required or took place to support staff with procedures to follow. Additional risk assessments were in place, for example daily checks of indoors and outdoors. The management identified support for staff was required while exploring the outdoors with buggies. We would encourage the service to continue to make these improvements with the whole staff team. Robust planning for these procedures would help to keep children and staff safe.

Children's wellbeing was well supported through effective infection prevention control measures. Cleaning schedules were in place that helped staff to monitor cleaning procedures of the environment and resources. A dedicated cleaner undertook daily cleaning of the whole nursery, including floors and touch points. Children and staff washed their hands at appropriate times of the day, for example before eating or after wiping their nose. This ensured the likelihood of the spread of infection was reduced.

Children were encouraged to explore risky play. Different large outdoor equipment provided children with opportunities to develop large physical movement and risk assessing within their play. The use of SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) Care Inspectorate campaign supported children's understanding of risk. This could be developed further for example, children taking an active role with risk assessing their environment. This would support children to understand how to keep themselves and friends safe in different environments and situations.

## 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 service were at early stages of reviewing their vision, values and aims. These were being developed in consultation with parents, children and staff. These consultations would ensure a shared understanding of what the service means to families, children and the staff was established.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in the service. Regular communications through digital platforms, questionnaires and daily chats took place. A parent told us, "Staff take time to handover verbally at the end of the day but also via regular updates on the digital app". Another parent shared, "We are invited into the room at pickup which helps us to find out about our child's day". Management had shared they plan to implement stay and play sessions throughout the nursery again. We would encourage the service to continue with these plans. This would give families different opportunities to come and take part in their children's day.

Quality assurance systems were in place. Actions required to be completed throughout the year were broken down into monthly tasks. For example, staff training, monthly focus areas and improvement planning. Monitoring of audits, such as accidents and incidents, policies and procedures and medication could be developed further. This would ensure correct procedures were in place and gaps and trends were identified.

A meaningful improvement plan was in place.

The staff team actively participated in making these improvements throughout the service. For example, staff took leadership rolls such as outdoor learning to promote links with families and share learning. The improvement plan was a working document displayed for staff to contribute to. Evaluations took place as a team and next steps identified through observations, evaluations and discussions. This helped the team to understand their improvement journey and to improve outcomes for children.

## 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 were kind and nurturing towards children. Children and families were supported by staff members who knew them well. A parent told us, "The whole team are lovely, they always make an effort to talk to us". Another parent shared, "Always very friendly and informative on pick up and drop off and always makes time to talk about our child". As a result, positive relationships had been formed.

Staff had a mix of knowledge, skills and experience. They were confident to take lead rolls and support other staff, for example with planning processes. This helped staff to build their confidence in their roles and to ask for help when needed. As a result, there was a strong staff team who valued each other.

Children benefitted from a staff team who communicated well with each other. For example, when staff were taking children out to the garden or when staff were leaving the room. They would let the other members of the team know where they were going and who was with them. This contributed to keeping children safe and protected. The use of walkie talkies supported the whole team to communicate in different rooms when required. We asked the service to be mindful of the volume of the walkie talkies at times. This would ensure children's play was not interrupted by loud noises.

Staff were appropriately deployed throughout the day to meet children's needs. Busier times of the day did not impact negatively on children's experiences. For example, staff breaks were covered by other staff in different rooms. This helped to ensure children had opportunities to continue with their play before and after their lunch. A parent told us, "Sometimes we see staff from other rooms which is reassuring". This helped staff to build relationships with children and parents throughout the nursery.

Staff undertook regular training that linked to children's needs, identified improvements within the nursery or individual staff. Staff shared they valued their regular training opportunities and felt their practice is continually improving. Reflection logs of training took place as a whole team when they had attended training together. For example, staff identified how the training would improve their practice and outcomes for children. We shared with management that individual reflection logs completed on all training would further support staff practice and identifying areas for development.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good



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