

# Cheeky Monkeys Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
26 February 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Ashley Craik trading as Cheeky  
Monkeys

**Service provider number:**  
SP2008010131

**Service no:**  
CS2008180295

## About the service

Cheeky Monkeys provides a daycare of children service in the small town of Auchterarder, Perth and Kinross. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 86 children between birth and entry into high school at any one time.

Children are cared for within two buildings. Younger children up to two years of age are cared for in a house which is situated in front of the purpose-built nursery where older children play are cared for. Both buildings have an outdoor space and are close to local shops, parks, and other amenities. The service is provided by a private provider and is in partnership with Perth and Kinross council to provide funded Early learning and childcare places.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 and 26 February 2025. 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 children using the service and reviewed 22 responses to our questionnaire from their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

**Key messages**

- Children's needs were met as they were listened to and loved by staff which nurtured their sense of security and confidence.
- Effective use of personal planning meant that children's current needs were identified and supported well.
- Staff morale was high, they worked very well together and had formed respectful working relationships. As a result, a positive team ethos contributed to very good outcomes for children.
- The Management and staff team were enthusiastic and committed to improving outcomes.
- A real strength of the service was the children's links to their local and wider communities.

**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?	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?

4 - Good

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

### Quality indicator 1.1. Nurturing care and support

Children's overall wellbeing was supported very well by staff that provided children with nurturing and responsive care. Staff were calm, friendly, nurturing and affectionally told us of children's personalities, interests, preferences, and dislikes. They valued children as individuals, knew them well and had high aspirations for them. Families told us, 'The staff are hands down a complete asset to the nursery and I can't fault them!', 'It is very reassuring as a parent having to leave their child in another's care to know they are being well looked after, nurtured and their development catered for in such a professional and caring manner' and 'The staff team and managers are the strength of the nursery'. It was evident that strong attachments had been built. As a result, children felt respected, safe, and enjoyed their time at nursery.

Effective use of personal planning meant that children's current needs were identified and supported. Families were valued by staff as partners in their child's care and a range of opportunities were offered to them to discuss their child's likes, dislikes, and current interests. For children requiring additional support, strategies were in place. This meant important information was gathered, relevant and up to date and resulted in staff who knew children very well.

Children benefitted from unhurried and sociable mealtimes. Food was homecooked, balanced and nutritious and staff joined children at lunch, promoting meaningful conversations. This contributed to the sociable experience for children and allowed an opportunity for emerging language skills to be developed. Younger children were supported to eat and drink at a pace that was right for them and enjoyed nurturing interactions as staff sensitively supported them with self-help skills. There were some missed opportunities for choice and independence for children aged two and three years of age. We discussed with staff how this could be improved to allow children opportunities for self-service. This could improve children's independence skills and provide an element of choice at lunchtime.

Children's rights were sensitively respected as staff asked children if they were ready to have their nappy changed. Experiences were nurturing and respected children's privacy and dignity. Staff quietly talked children through their personal care routines which helped them feel safe and secure.

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children, staff were knowledgeable on how to respond if they had concerns. While key information was available, we signposted the manager to best practice guidance 'Guide to Chronologies' to support effective practice and ensure if needed, children got the right support at the right time.

We viewed medication paperwork and identified some details that needed to be added to forms. For example, staff should record the expiry date of medication they have accepted into the service. This would further support staff to administer medication safely. We signposted our guidance 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' to assist them with this.

### Quality indicator 1.3. Play and learning.

Staff provided children with a range of play experiences that were planned in response to their views and ideas. This meant children were engaged in fun experiences that captured their interests in a meaningful way. For example, we saw children work cooperatively together to create large structures from magnets and wooden blocks. One child told us, 'We make lots of models'. Children were learning about DNA, electrical circuits and how to care for younger children through their 'Sibling project.' On the first day of inspection the older children were fully engaged in a Yoga class. These experiences supported children to be responsible citizens, kept them active and promoted their overall wellbeing.

Children's opinions and views were valued as floor books were of high quality and demonstrated staff listened to children. This meant children were fully involved in leading their play and learning which supported them to develop and flourish.

The nursery gardens were interesting and exciting play spaces where children were fully engaged in their outdoor play. We saw they raked stones, lifted them into wheelbarrows and transported them to the mud kitchen. They climbed on larger play equipment and enthusiastically showed us objects that rolled down a large piece of piping. One child told us, 'Look at this slide, I go fast, watch me,' and 'Look we have bouncy balls over here.' This told us children enjoyed their physical and outdoor play.

Children's learning and progress was recorded and shared with parents via an online platform. Observations were individual and focused on children's successes and achievements. Families told us, 'Extensive handovers and information on the learning journals make me as the parent feel part of their journey through nursery' and 'I have continued updates on all my child's development and each milestone they are reaching.' We highlighted a few children's next steps in learning were too vast to be developmentally appropriate for their age and stage. The service had identified this area of practice as part of their ongoing improvement work, and we were confident this would be actioned.

Staff sensitively supported children to be independent and problem solve and most were skilled in effective questioning. This empowered children to make their own choices and extended their thinking skills. Staff engaged children in conversations which meaningfully encouraged them to regulate their emotions and express their wishes. This resulted in children that played cooperatively and happily together contributing positively to their emotional wellbeing.

Language, literacy, and numeracy opportunities were very well supported both indoors and in the nursery gardens. Children benefitted from numeral and vocabulary rich environment's, which included a range of reference books linked to children's interests that enhanced their curiosities. We saw children regularly and confidently practiced their early writing skills with various materials provided. Using an iPad a child proudly showed us the book they had created by accessing their QR code from a wall display. They demonstrated how they added emoji's and stickers to the pages of their book. This approach provided children with a knowledge of books, digital technology, and a sense of achievement.

A real strength of the service was the children's links to their local community. They often travelled round the town on the community bus, visited a forest area, a care home, and an allotment where they grew flowers and planned to grow vegetables. The children were active participants in various fundraising activities and helped grow and care for pots of flowers for 'Auchterarder in Bloom.' These opportunities provided children with a positive sense of belonging within their 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 quality key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2. Children experience high quality facilities.

Children and families experienced welcoming and well-ventilated facilities which were clean and well maintained. Children were cared for in two separate buildings, one for babies and the other for children aged two to five years. Both buildings had secure entrances which helped keep children safe and secure.

The 'Baby house' provided younger children with a home from home experience. Play spaces had significantly improved since the previous inspection. All rooms were warm, inviting and nurturing. Babies had direct access to the garden from one of their playrooms and were given the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor spaces. This enabled them to have choice and independence of where they played.

Staff understood children's schematic play and supported them well to learn and make sense of the world around them at a pace which was right for them. Staff supported children with their communication skills. For example, they used Makaton signs, songs, and rhymes, to effectively support children's early language development and understanding. As a result, children were happy, settled and progressing well.

The playrooms in the nursery were busy with happy children having fun. Resources were age and stage appropriate and displayed in a way that provided children with choice. Since the last inspection older children's activities had been enhanced with real life experiences and natural materials. We encouraged the staff to offer more of these high-quality resources to children aged two to three years. This would further support children of this age to be curious and provide them with a sense of wonder.

Children benefitted from safe and cosy areas to sleep and rest. Staff responded sensitively to their needs and followed their individual sleeping patterns to ensure they had a consistent routine. This supported children to feel nurtured and secure.

Staff had a good understanding of infection prevention and control practices. For example, hand washing routines were embedded in practice and the service was clean and tidy. We highlighted to staff in the two to three room the nappy change room door faced directly onto the area where children consumed food. The staff were responsive to our suggestions and had started planning how they would move this area before the inspection was concluded. This will further support staff in keeping children safe and healthy.

Staff had explored our SIMOA (safety, inspect, monitor, observe, act) keeping children safe campaign with children and how this supported them to ensure children were always accounted for. They empowered children to take responsibility to assess and remove risks in their environments prior to play and when walking around their local community. These approaches taught children how to manage positive risk while keeping themselves and others safe. We asked the children about their SIMOA elephant they had named 'Banus.' They told us, 'He goes on trips with us, and 'He' keeps us safe'.

## 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 quality key question as very good.

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

The nursery vision and aims informed practice and supported effective teamwork. Their shared values contributed to the positive relationships formed with each other, children, and families we observed throughout the inspection.

A realistic improvement plan with achievable targets supported most staff to have a good understanding of the vision of the service and their role in improving outcomes. The management team and staff were passionate and enthusiastic about their roles and responsibilities. They participated in regular meetings which enabled professional discussions and allowed them to reflect on their practice. This meant staff had a very good understanding of reviewing and evaluating developments within the service. They demonstrated confidence in making the changes that were needed to improve experiences and outcomes for children and families.

Children benefitted from quality assurance and self-evaluation processes that ensured staff provided them with good quality care and high-quality experiences. We encouraged the service to continue with their plan to develop these systems further. This will support staff to provide children and families with consistently high-quality outcomes.

Children and families' voice was evident throughout the nursery and all families that responded to our questionnaire told us they felt meaningfully involved in service developments. For example, children often voted and were consulted on their play experiences and activities. A display in the entrance of the nursery evidenced families had been asked what the service was doing well and what could be better. The manager thanked families for their feedback, responded to their ideas, and improvements were made. This showed us children and families' views were valued and respected and contributed to improving outcomes. one parent told us,'

The provider, also the manager, was committed to improving the service. Since the previous inspection they had dedicated more time to monitoring and overseeing the provision they provided. This resulted in improved outcomes for children and families. The manager successfully empowered staff to grow both professional and personally. Staff told us 'My manager has an open-door policy, if I needed to be supported with something out of work, she would always try and help me as much as possible and 'Management are always approachable to deal with individual needs of 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 quality key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 4.3. Staff deployment

Children were cared for by a staff team who were compassionate, friendly, and responsive to children's needs. They had worked hard to establish positive relationships, with each other, the children, and families. They communicated in a respectful way and spoke with enthusiasm and passion about their roles and responsibilities. This demonstrated a commitment to their work and created a positive ethos for children and families.

Staff were deployed in a way that meant there was a good mix of skills, knowledge, and experience across the nursery playrooms. They worked very well together and were flexible to meet the needs of the children. This contributed to children who felt loved, valued, and were kept safe.

Staff were committed and motivated to learn and used their developing knowledge to improve outcomes for children. Staff were happy in their roles and had undertaken extensive training since the previous inspection. This included courses on: Makaton, Realising the Ambition, Partnerships with parents, observation, assessment, and planning and Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). They told us how their training had developed their knowledge and how they used learning to improve experiences for children. As a result, they had developed professionally, grown in confidence and provided children with very good outcomes. We asked the manager to consider how individual staffs learning could be shared more widely within the staff team.

New staff within the service were well supported by the existing staff team. Effective mentoring supported staff to ensure they were confident in their practice. To support staff further, we encouraged the manager to consider using the national induction resource to extend and build on the current induction process. This would provide new staff with a more robust and reflective induction to support them in their role.

## 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 enable babies and younger children to be cared for in an environment that meets their needs and supports them to reach their full potential, the provider and staff should as a minimum ensure:

- a) Babies and young children experience an environment that is, well furnished and homely.
- b) Play spaces offer a range of resources and materials to effectively challenge and stimulate children's age and stage appropriate learning, creativity, imagination and curiosities, both indoors and outdoors.

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); and 'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

**This area for improvement was made on 23 May 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Environments and play spaces for babies had significantly improved since the previous inspection. The baby house was well furnished and the staff had successfully created a 'Home from home' ambience. Resources, activities and experiences were age and stage appropriate and provided children with opportunities to be imaginative and creative. Children benefitted from real life experiences and natural resources which promoted their imaginations and stimulated their natural curiosities.

This area for improvement has been met.



## Previous area for improvement 2

Children should experience nappy changing facilities which support their health, safety and welfare needs. To do this, the provider should at a minimum ensure nappy changing facilities follow current best practice guidance. We signposted the service to Space to Grow and Nappy changing facilities for early learning and childcare services: information to support improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

**This area for improvement was made on 25 May 2023.**

### Action taken since then

The nappy change room in the Baby house had been renovated. An appropriate changing unit had been added and children's privacy and dignity was respected as a wall had been erected between the two nappy changing units.

This area for improvement has been 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	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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