

Bruce Nursery Day Care of Children

65 Osborne Place
Aberdeen
AB25 2BX

Telephone: 01224 646 836

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 March 2025

Service provided by:
Nurseries Direct Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004006192

Service no:
CS2004063621

About the service

Bruce Nursery is situated in a residential area in the west end of Aberdeen. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 71 children from birth to those not yet attending primary school as undernoted:

Twenty-four children aged 0 to under two years, 16 children aged one to three years, and 31 children aged three years and over.

The service is provided in a former residential building, which has been adapted and extended to provide dedicated playrooms for each age group. Children have access to an outdoor play space. The service is easily accessed by bus and is near to local shops and facilities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 3 March 2025 and Tuesday 4 March 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 attending the service.
- Reviewed completed parental questionnaires.
- Reviewed completed staff questionnaires.
- Spoke with staff and the manager.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing support.
- Good use was being made of loose parts and open ended resources to enrich children's play and learning.
- Children enjoyed relaxed, unhurried, sociable snack and meal times.
- Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective partnerships.
- The manager and staff were committed to the ongoing development of the service.
- Quality assurance processes should continue to be embedded to secure sustained improvements across the service.

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: Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and having fun as they played alongside or with friends. Children were confident and familiar with the daily routine, giving them a sense of security. Children's wellbeing was supported through nurturing care and support from kind, caring and friendly staff. Staff valued children's voice and sensitively listened to their requests, which told us that their views and opinions mattered. Children were effectively supported through well timed and thoughtful interactions, which contributed to their sense of security and promoted their overall wellbeing. They were offered cuddles and reassurance with warmth and affection which helped them to feel safe and secure.

Children and families benefited from a service that valued the importance of establishing strong working relationships with families to support children. This ensured that children received appropriate levels of consistent care and support. Parents were warmly welcomed into the service at drop off and collection time. Parents commented 'Daily opportunities to observe learning and check in, stay and play opportunities organised', 'The staff have a friendly and professional approach and we always feel comfortable to discuss our child's needs, learning and progress' and 'The staff are always kind and friendly and interested in my child and how he is'.

Staff were able to confidently discuss the needs of the children they were caring for and how they were supporting them. Children's overall wellbeing was being supported through effective use of personal planning. Following a previous inspection, personal planning had been identified as an area for improvement. There were now appropriate systems in place to record information to ensure everyone had a clear knowledge and understanding as to how to meet children's care and support needs appropriately. Personal plans were routinely reviewed in partnership with parents to ensure that they reflected children's current needs and the strategies required to meet these needs. Improvements had also been made to the system to audit and monitor the quality of personal plans. We looked at a sample of personal plans across each of the playrooms and found that the majority contained a good level of information and were routinely updated. They also identified children's progression and whether next steps had been met. The management and staff should continue to embed their system of personal planning.

Staff understood the importance of sleep to support children's wellbeing. Sleep routines were reflective of individual children's needs, promoting good sleep habits. Children slept safely in either sleep coracles or on designated sleep mats and were closely supervised by staff to ensure their safety.

Snack and mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and sociable events which took place within the playrooms. Children's health was promoted through a selection of nutritionally balanced home cooked meals. Staff took opportunities at these times to sit and talk with the children, promoting their language and communication skills and maintain relationships. Children were supported to develop important independence skills when pouring drinks and self serving lunch and snack.

Children's health was promoted through the processes in place to manage the storage and administration of any medication. Medication was stored appropriately within the playrooms and was readily accessible.

Although some improvements had been made to the systems that were previously in place, we found some inconsistencies. The management team should ensure that all written consents and records for the administration of medication are reviewed and updated to ensure that they are accurate and fully completed. We also discussed how the systems to audit could be streamlined and be less onerous.

Children's safety and wellbeing was protected through the staff understanding of their role in identifying, recording and referring any concerns they may have. Staff had attended relevant child protection training and demonstrated a good understanding of the service's policy and procedures.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy and had fun as they experienced good quality play experiences. Play and learning opportunities impacted positively on children's development, health, wellbeing and happiness. For the majority of the time, children benefited from uninterrupted play, allowing them to become absorbed in what they were doing.

The children were engaged and having fun as they experimented and explored with a good balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences which were in response to their interests. Children were offered good opportunities to be imaginative and creative in their explorative play and investigative learning. Play spaces were well resourced and promoted learning through real life experiences. Good use was being made of loose parts and open ended resources to enrich children's play and learning.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests. Carefully considered wall displays, at children's height, allowed the children to see what their current interests were and good use of the children's own art work, mark making and photographs brought the learning to life for the children. We could see how children were consulted and their voices captured in floor books within the playrooms. The floor books illustrated how children's interests were extended and developed.

Staff understood their role in supporting children's development and were adding further value to children's play and learning through their carefully considered interactions. They naturally engaged with children and showed interest. Staff offered individualised support to children during their play, being aware of when to engage and when to step back. They engaged younger children in a warm and kind manner. They were down at their level and offered support at a pace that was right for them. Older children were well supported by staff who were skilled in effective questioning. Staff were able to support, extend and challenge children's thinking. Staff interactions encouraged children to think independently and to reflect. As a result, children were respected, valued and achieving.

We recognised good quality play, learning and development was taking place. Children had the opportunity to develop their numeracy and literacy skills and mathematical language while taking part in activities across the setting. Numeracy and literacy were promoted throughout the various areas within the playroom. Resources, displays and conversations with staff encouraged children to be curious and naturally explore literacy, numeracy and mathematical concepts during their play. Staff interactions gently encouraged children to extend their play and learning. For example, staff made good use of songs and rhymes to encourage vocabulary and language skills. Children had the opportunity to develop their numeracy and literacy skills and mathematical language while playing with real life resources in the home corner and while taking part in investigative play outdoors. We discussed with the manager and staff how they could further embed opportunities for the development of numeracy and literacy skills across the setting. The management and staff had already identified the need to extend numeracy and literacy in the outdoor setting.

Families were meaningfully engaged in their child's play, learning and development. Staff ensured that parents were well informed of children's learning, progression and next steps, and were encouraged to give their feedback. Parents were also welcome to visit the nursery and attend stay and play sessions.

How good is our setting?

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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a clean, bright and welcoming nursery. Each of the playrooms were well ventilated and furnished with natural furniture which created calm and relaxing environments. Good use of soft furnishings, fairy lights and natural resources created a cosy and homely space. Playrooms were welcoming and inviting spaces that provided children with good space to play and explore. Children made good use of the space available and played happily independently or cooperatively in groups.

Ensuring a healthy and safe environment for the children was a priority for the manager and staff. There was a system to report any repairs and damaged items were promptly replaced. There were appropriate risk assessments in place which promoted the safety of the children as well as daily checks of the premises. Children were actively involved in completing the morning check and risk assessment of the outdoor space before it was opened. There were risk assessments and clear procedures in relation to outings and walks in the local community.

The setting was clean and well maintained. Appropriate infection prevention and control practices were in place and minimised the spread of infection. Food safety practices were appropriate and provided good levels of safety for children. We observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times.

Each of the five playrooms contained a range of developmentally appropriate resources that provided opportunities to stimulate children's interests and learning. Resources were accessible, in a good state of repair and well organised, which encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. There were open-ended, real life and natural objects which offered some challenge and promoted children's curiosity and imagination. Children were able to independently select resources of their choice and lead their own play. We saw children who comfortably moved around the playrooms and were engaged in their play.

Children had access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school children were able to independently access this area throughout the day while the younger children were taken outside in groups. We observed children from each of the rooms enjoying being outdoors together taking part in various activities. The manager and staff had identified the need to extend the opportunities for outdoor learning.

Effective arrangements were in place to ensure children and families' personal information was safe and secure. Paperwork was stored securely within locked cupboards. This ensured confidentiality was maintained and complied with best practice guidance.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The manager and staff fully engaged with the inspection process, demonstrating a positive attitude towards change and improvement. They were motivated and responsive to suggestions made during the inspection to continue to improve outcomes for children and families. There was a positive working environment, where staff felt confident to share ideas to initiate change and were encouraged to share the responsibilities. This was highlighted by the improvements which had been put in place since the previous inspection.

The vision, values and aims of the service were being reviewed and updated to ensure that they reflected the welcoming and community ethos. The manager recognised the importance of including children, families and staff in the process. This will support everyone to know what is important for the service to meet the needs of children and their families.

Following a previous inspection, a requirement had been made in relation to quality assurance. This had now been fully actioned. The manager and staff have continued to develop systems of quality assurance to ensure that the quality of the service was monitored and assessed in a focussed and meaningful way. These systems were now embedded and leading to sustained improvements across the service. There was an improvement plan in place which was focussed on meeting the requirement and areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection. There was a quality assurance calendar in place that ensured purposeful audits of various aspects of the nursery were routinely carried out.

The management team continued to monitor the setting and observe staff practice to ensure children receive high quality play and learning experiences. The management also met with staff to discuss the continuous improvement of the service to secure progression and positive outcomes for children. Team meetings supported staff to develop self-evaluation skills and help to plan for improvement. These meetings were an opportunity for the staff team to reflect on current practice and identify how they could improve the service provided to children and their families.

The community ethos of the nursery was reflected in the manager's and staff's positive relationships with families. Involving children and their families meaningfully in the continuous improvement of the service contributed to building strong, trusting relationships and them feeling included. Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods, including daily face to face discussion, questionnaires and online platforms. We observed parents being welcomed into the playrooms and staff spending time talking to them. Parents were also welcome to spend time in the nursery. Parents appreciated the opportunity to spend time in their child's playroom during stay and play sessions. One parent commented 'I always feel we are welcomed and the staff are happy to see us'.

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

The service was effectively staffed to meet the needs of children. The management team took account of busier times of the day, for example lunchtime, and allocated extra staff to ensure children received consistent levels of care whilst still allowing for staff to take appropriate breaks.

This was supported by comments from parents. These included 'they always have staff ready to support', 'at drop off and pick up there is always plenty of staff willing to help', and 'What I really like is they (staff) all know all the children from every room'.

Children benefited from a compassionate and nurturing staff team who were enthusiastic and committed to providing a positive experience for the children in their care. They were warm, caring and responsive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working, which promoted a happy and secure environment for children. They modelled positive social interactions, both verbal and nonverbal, supporting children to develop an understanding of relationships.

Staff within each of the rooms worked well together as a team and their differing skills, knowledge and experience complimented one another and resulted in quality interactions with children. Staff had taken part in core training and had taken part in some additional training. For example, all staff had received Makaton training and were using it within each of the rooms to support communication with children. Children experienced continuity of care as staff deployed themselves effectively to ensure quality experiences. Deployment of staff across the setting and throughout the day supported children to lead their play and engage in free flow opportunities whilst remaining safe.

Staff communicated respectfully with each other and worked as a team to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. We observed staff communicating well with each other as children moved around the service or required support from an adult. This created a flexible and supportive ethos where staff supported each other, working as a team to benefit the children.

Parents knew who was caring for their children and had built trusting relationships with staff. Families were kept informed about the nursery through daily conversations at drop off and collection times, and there were regular opportunities for parents to spend time in the nursery for example stay and play sessions and regular parents evenings. Having good communication with families contributed to parents feeling included in their child's experiences at nursery and assisted staff when identifying how best to meet children's needs.

Parental comments included: 'The staff all know my child so well and are so accommodating to ensure he is settled and happy e.g. knowing he needs extra support at drop offs. The staff are also fantastic at communicating regularly how his day has been and flagging anything we might want to be aware of, good or bad, which makes us feel really reassured that they are always transparent'.

'The staff have a friendly and professional approach and we always feel comfortable to discuss our child's needs, learning and progress. Staff and management are approachable at all times and always willing to help'.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 08 January 2024, the provider must ensure improved outcomes for children and practice by implementing effective systems of quality assurance. To do this the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) regular and effective support and supervision for all staff is implemented
- b) staff are supported to develop their knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation processes and are involved in the systematic evaluation of their work and the work of the service
- c) clear and effective plans are in place for maintaining and improving the service
- d) the management team effectively monitors the work of each member of staff and the service as a whole
- e) clear systems are in place for children and their families to provide feedback and to be actively involved in the evaluation of the service provided.

This is to comply with the - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210). (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/210.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS).

This requirement was made on 10 October 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

The management and staff had actioned this requirement.

For more detailed information, please refer to the recording under QI 3:1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

This requirement has been met.

Met - outwith timescales

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 each child receives appropriate care and support and their needs are met, the provider, manager and staff should ensure:

- a) personal plans, including protocols, set out children's current needs and how they will be met
- b) all staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively meet each child's needs
- c) when medication needs to be administered, all necessary paperwork, including written consents, are fully completed
- d) personal plans and protocols are routinely reviewed with parents and carers and, where necessary, updated.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 10 October 2023.

Action taken since then

The management and staff had actioned this area for improvement.

For more detailed information, please refer to the recording under QI 1:1 - Nurturing care and support.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children to achieve, the service should improve the approach and skills of staff in relation to planning for children's learning and tracking and monitoring their progress. Staff should be supported to develop their understanding of how to effectively observe and assess children's learning in order to plan quality learning experiences and meaningful next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

This area for improvement was made on 10 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Following previous inspections, staff had received training and support to develop their understanding of how to effectively observe and assess children's learning in order to plan quality experiences and meaningful next steps.

As part of the inspection, we sampled observations completed in each of the playrooms. We found that they were generally well written, the learning established and next steps identified. Some observations included the child's voice. There was evaluation of children's progression and achievements. This information was being used by staff to plan appropriately to meet children's needs

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The provider should ensure that children have access to appropriate toilet and nappy changing facilities and, where necessary, receive personal care in an environment that supports high levels of infection, prevention and control.

This is to comply with the Regulation 4 (1)(b) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland(Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011(SSI 2011/10)

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected' (HSCS 1.4).

This area for improvement was made on 10 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Since previous inspections, alternative nappy changing facilities had been provided for the older children.

Work had also being planned to ensure all the nappy changing and toilet facilities within the setting met current best practice.

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.

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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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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