

Blossom Day Nursery Day Care of Children

15 b/c Bath Street
Edinburgh
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Telephone: 01316 572 233

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 March 2025

Service provided by:
Joan Finlayson trading as Blossom
Day Nursery

Service provider number:
SP2003002966

Service no:
CS2003012071

About the service

Blossom Day Nursery provides a day care of children service. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 22 children at any one time, age from 0 to 8 years, of whom no more than 9 children may be less than 2 years of age. During the inspection there was a maximum of 16 children attending the service each day.

The service is situated in the residential area of Portobello in the city of Edinburgh. The service is close to local amenities including parks, shops, the library and the beach.

The accommodation comprises of one large playroom for older children with direct access to the enclosed garden. The main area of the garden is located above street level and is accessed via a ramp. The youngest children and babies have their own playroom, which includes a small outdoor area. There are also toilet and nappy changing facilities, a cloakroom and an office space within the building.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced follow up inspection which took place on Monday 10 March 2025 between 09:40 and 16:55. The inspection was carried out by an inspector and a team manager from the Care Inspectorate. The inspector returned to the service to conclude the inspection on Wednesday 12 March 2025 between 10:40 and 12:55. The inspection focused on the requirements and areas for improvement made during the previous inspections. We evaluated how the service had addressed these. We provided feedback to the manager and provider on Thursday 20 March 2025.

Our inspection raised significant concerns in relation to the quality of the environment and the impact this had on children's health, safety and wellbeing. As a result, we issued the service with an Improvement Notice on 21 March 2025. For further details of this enforcement see the service's page on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

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 eight staff, the manager and the provider
- assessed the quality of the environment
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

We took enforcement action to require the provider to improve the environment experienced by children. Please see the service's page on our website for more information.

All three requirements made during the previous inspections were unmet. As a result, children's health, safety and wellbeing was not effectively supported.

All four areas for improvement made during previous inspections were unmet. As a result, children's play and learning experiences were not being effectively supported and staff practice had not improved.

The provider had failed to effectively support the service to make and sustain improvements.

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 setting?	1 - Unsatisfactory
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our setting?

1 - Unsatisfactory

Due to continued concerns related to the quality of the environment and the risks this presented to children's health, safety and wellbeing, we have re-evaluated this key question to unsatisfactory.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The service was in need of significant maintenance and refurbishment. Children did not experience a consistently safe environment and their health and wellbeing was not effectively promoted.

We issued the service with an Improvement Notice. For further details of this enforcement see the service's page on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 03 June 2024, the provider must take action to address maintenance to ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing.

To do this the provider must, at a minimum :

- a) develop and implement systems that identify and action the maintenance and refurbishment needs of the service in an appropriately timely manner,
- b) ensure all those working in the service take steps to ensure the environment is safe and well-maintained.

This is to comply with Regulation 10 (2) (b), (c), (d) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (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: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS, 5.19) and 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS, 5.24).

This requirement had not been met and we have agreed an extension until 15 November 2024.

This requirement was made on 19 April 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

Significant concerns remained about the maintenance needs of the service. As a result, children's safety was not supported, and their health and wellbeing needs were compromised.

Internal and external environments were not well maintained. Some areas needed significant repair and refurbishment. There continued to be issues with worn flooring and tired, damaged paintwork as well as peeling wallpaper. As a result, these areas were more difficult to clean, increasing the risk of infection spreading. Areas such as door frames and gates were tired and rusting in parts. There was a lack of storage for larger items such as buggies and the service remained cluttered. As a result, children did not experience an environment that supported and promoted their health and wellbeing. Externally, the walls and fencing in the garden areas were worn with flaking paint. Broken, tired and unsafe items such as uneven climbing logs and wooden debris were present in the garden area. The garden spaces looked unsightly and did not support children to experience a safe and positive environment. Children have a right to experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.

Children's health, safety and wellbeing was compromised as there was not a system in place to identify maintenance needs and address ongoing issues. The maintenance log was not effectively used. We found some issues were not recorded and where issues were recorded action was not always prompt. This meant the quality of the environment did not improve at an acceptable pace. The steps taken by the provider to monitor and manage the safety and wellbeing of the environment remained ineffective. The manager had begun to review the systems in place to aid safety and maintenance, but these were not yet having a significant impact. As a result, children's safety and wellbeing was not yet fully protected. For example, during the inspection we found debris within the garden areas that presented a risk to children's safety.

Despite making this requirement and giving the provider more time to meet it, improvements had not been made. We remained significantly concerned that the lack of action for maintenance and refurbishment would continue to have an impact on children's safety, health and wellbeing.

This requirement was not met and is now subject to an Improvement notice.

For further details of this enforcement see the service's page on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

Not met

Requirement 2

By 29 July 2024, to promote the wellbeing of children, the provider must ensure that staff receive targeted learning and development opportunities that enable them to develop the skills, knowledge and competencies needed.

To do this the provider must at a minimum:

- a) identify what learning and development is required for individual staff and plan for learning to be undertaken,
- b) ensure any staff with current conditions placed on any professional registrations are supported and monitored in order to enable them to meet these conditions,
- c) implement quality assurance systems to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and development opportunities and ongoing competency of staff.

This is to comply with section 8(1)(a) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This requirement had not been met and we have agreed an extension until 10 January 2025.

This requirement was made on 19 April 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

Limited work had taken place to address this requirement. As a result, staff did not receive targeted learning and development opportunities that enabled them to develop their skills, knowledge and competencies.

Following a recent change of manager, the current manager had begun to develop a system to audit staff training and identify future learning and development needs. This was at an early stage and the impact was not yet evident. For some staff there had been skills, knowledge and competencies gaps identified by previous managers. However, limited work had taken place to enable these staff to enhance their practice and develop the knowledge and competencies needed. For example, gaps in a staff member's knowledge of child protection procedures had not been addressed through effective training and guidance. As a result of limited progress being made, staff practice, skills and knowledge remained inconsistent. This impacted on the staff team's ability to meet the wellbeing needs of all children.

While some interactions were warm and supportive, at other times some staff engaged in neutral interactions that did not promote high quality care and support. There were occasions where some staff did not effectively support children's needs, which had the potential to impact on their safety and wellbeing. For example, babies positionings were not always changed to aid their development and support play positive opportunities. The provider must ensure staff are supported to develop the skills to meet the needs of all children in their care.

The manager was developing a system to monitor staff conditions of registrations and had started to work on a format to aid this process. However, processes were not yet in place to monitor how staff were meeting their professional registration conditions. For example, the provider did not take appropriate action to ensure staff were encouraged to meet their conditions of registration. This had the potential to impact on the quality of staff working in the service had conditions not been met. Quality assurance processes to monitor staff practice overall were not well established. As a result, staff were not developing their skills and knowledge in line with the needs of the service. This impacted on children's overall care and experiences.

Overall, staff had very few learning and development opportunities. Some online training had taken place. However, it was not yet having an impact on practice. For example, although some staff had undertaken training related to environments for babies and young children, the quality of the environment was not in line with good practice guidance for this age group. Where staff had taken part in development opportunities, such as practice visits to other nurseries, these opportunities had not been evaluated to consider how any learning and improvements could be implemented into practice. To ensure children's wellbeing, staff must have opportunities to take part in a range of relevant and meaningful learning and development experiences that promote the skills, knowledge and competencies needed. Learning and development opportunities should align to current good practice in early learning and childcare. To ensure positive outcomes and experiences for children, systems must be put in place to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and to monitor and support the competencies of staff.

This requirement had not been met and we have agreed an extension until 11 July 2025.

Not met

Requirement 3

By 03 February 2023, the provider must implement robust quality assurance processes covering key areas of practice.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) implement safety and wellbeing checks for environment,
- b) carry out monitoring of staff practice and deployment,
- c) carry out monitoring of children's care, play and learning experiences,
- d) ensure effective and realistic planning to address any issues found.

This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (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, 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This requirement had not been met and we have agreed an extension until 20 December 2024.

This requirement was made on 19 December 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

Safety and wellbeing checks remained inconsistent and did not provide sufficient quality assurance for the environment. This compromised children's health, safety and wellbeing. Previously, staff had developed some monitoring and auditing tools such as risk assessments and checklists. However, these tools were not embedded into practice. As a result, aspects of the environment continued to cause concern. The staff and manager conducted daily visual checks, but these did not always address immediate or ongoing issues. For example, action had not been taken to remove debris and the checklists did not cover tired and worn furnishing. Quality assurance processes were not in place and action was needed to address the quality of the environment.

Monitoring of staff practice and deployment was not taking place. As a result, there had not been an improvement in quality assurance resulting in no significant development of staff practice and deployment. The manager was beginning to develop some systems for this, for example, they spent time with staff observing their practice and had support meetings planned. This work was at an early stage and not yet having any effect on practice. Previous practice observations had not been followed up on. Therefore, any identified strengths and areas for improvement in staff practice had not been developed or addressed. We found that staff needed support to develop their practice and skills in a variety of areas. For example, to improve their engagement with children in play, and to enhance their understanding of child development theory. Monitoring and supporting these areas of practice could enhance the quality of staff interactions and

decision making. Action must be taken to ensure staff are enabled to develop their skills and practice to meet the needs of all children through effective and supportive quality assurance processes.

Play and learning experiences were not sufficiently interesting, stimulating or challenging. As a result, children were not being supported to achieve to their potential and learn through play. A lack of quality assurance resulted in a poor core provision of experiences and resources.

The approach to improvement planning was not effective. We remained concerned that a lack of action around effective quality assurance and improvement planning was impacting on the quality of the service. The provider must take appropriate action to ensure the manager and staff are enabled to make the improvements needed. This must include providing the support and resources required for the identified and ongoing improvement needs of the service.

This requirement had not been met and we have agreed an extension until 11 July 2025.

Not met

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 improve outcomes for children in line with current good practice and to support the service to address required improvements, the provider should develop a clear and robust improvement plan.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 19 April 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had developed an improvement plan based on areas of improvement and requirements made at previous inspections. However, limited progress had been made to ensure action was taken. As a result, outcomes for children had not significantly improved. The provider had not ensured the improvement plan was fully implemented. Also, good practice guidance was not used to inform improvement planning. The Care Inspectorate has continued to signpost the provider to good practice guidance and relevant documents at all inspections.

The manager had recently started to review the current improvement plan based on the needs of the service. Further work was needed to ensure the service's improvement plan aided positive changes and supported children to experience consistently positive outcomes.

This area for improvement had not been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support the quality of children's play and learning experiences, improved approaches to planning for play and learning should be developed and implemented.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials (HSCS, 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 19 December 2022.

Action taken since then

Children continued to experience poor quality play and learning experiences. Planning approaches for play and learning were not well developed. This resulted in staff missing opportunities to provide children with sufficiently interesting and stimulating experiences and resources. Planned experiences were not stimulating. As a result, children were not being effectively supported to learn and develop.

This area for improvement had not been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children's play and learning experiences, the provider should improve the environments and the resources available to children. This would include but not be limited to; ensuring areas are appropriately resourced, developing cosy and comfortable spaces for children to relax and play, adding open-ended materials and ensuring resources reflect children's interests.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials, (HSCS, 1.31) and 'If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use a comfortable area with soft furnishings to relax' (HSCS, 5.6).

This area for improvement was made on 19 December 2022.

Action taken since then

We remained significantly concerned about the quality of the environment experienced by children. In relation to children's safety and wellbeing we have issued an improvement notice. For further details of this enforcement see the service's page on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

In relation to the environment supporting children's play and learning very limited progress had been made. The provider had supplied a few items of soft furnishings and had purchased a new couch, which was due to be in place shortly after the inspection. Within the baby room, some rugs and soft matting were in place. However, overall children did not have good opportunities to experience cosy and comfortable spaces. Further work was needed to ensure the environment improved to be more homely and welcoming.

The core provision for play and learning was poor. For example, resources and toys were often worn, or were plastic, one-purpose items. A lack of open-ended natural materials meant there were missed opportunities to promote children's natural curiosity and inquiry skills. Over time a lack of stimulating resources and experiences could have a significant impact on children's learning.

Resources were not set out in ways to motivate and inspire children into play. Many areas remained under resourced. For example, within the water tray there were limited opportunities for children to explore and problem solve through pouring and filling. Most children did not experience appropriate levels of depth and challenge through their play. The provider should ensure the quality of resources, and the environment improves so that children are supported to reach their full potential.

This area for improvement had not been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children to experience positive care and support, improvements should be made to the support and guidance provided to staff. This would include but not be limited to developing the approach to staff inductions to ensure they include opportunities to provide guidance, enhance staff knowledge and monitor practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 19 December 2022.

Action taken since then

The induction process did not effectively guide and support staff. As a result, improvements in staff practice were not evident.

An induction checklist had been introduced and staff said they felt supported to ask questions during their inductions. However, the induction process was basic and did not fully support or guide staff. For example, staff had not been supported to revisit information provided at the induction. Gaps in staff knowledge and skills were not followed up on. As a result, staff knowledge and skills were not being enhanced.

The manager had begun to review the induction process. They were beginning to gather information to help them to implement a system of support. This work was at a very early stage and not yet having a significant impact on the induction process. As outlined in requirements 2 and 3, to ensure outcomes for children improve, further work was needed to ensure staff practice was monitored and supported (see section: What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection).

This area for improvement had not 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 setting?	1 - Unsatisfactory
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	1 - Unsatisfactory

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