

# Summers Nursery @ St Swithin Street Day Care of Children

50 St Swithin Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 6XJ

Telephone: 01224 209 966

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 April 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Summers Nursery Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003231

**Service no:**  
CS2010248224

## About the service

Summers Nursery @ St. Swithin Street is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 51 children at any one time, aged from birth to those not yet attending primary school. Of those 51 children no more than 12 are aged under 2 years.

The service is provided from a four storey building in the centre of Aberdeen, close to local amenities. Metered on street parking is available and there is a small car park to the rear of the property. The baby room has direct access to a small balcony leading down to the garden. The other two rooms do not have direct access to the enclosed play area, which is accessed at basement level.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 April 2025 from 09:50 – 18:05 and 16 April 2025 from 09:55 – 17:30. 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
- Reviewed feedback received from 21 families
- Reviewed feedback received from 8 staff
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily routines
- Reviewed documents.

As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- Staff deployment
- Safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- The quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- Children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting .

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

## Key messages

- Children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs.
- Good quality child led play, learning and development opportunities were available to children throughout the day.
- Introducing more natural, open ended and real life materials into the environment and developing environmental print throughout would provide increased opportunities for children's play and learning.
- Children and families were supported by a leadership team that had a strong vision for the nursery and a positive approach to making improvements. There was a clear commitment across the team to continual improvement. This had impacted positively on the outcomes for the children.
- Children were supported by a motivated and skilled staff team who worked together to provide high quality experiences for all children.

## 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?	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 different parts of this key question as very good and good, with an overall grade of good. Several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were cared for by nurturing and caring staff. Staff responded very quickly to children's changing needs, for example, if they became upset and needed a hug and some reassurance. This helped children to feel safe and secure. Parents and carers told us that they were very happy with how their children were supported. One parent told us that staff were, "very attentive, go over and above for everything, make my children's care their absolute priority." Another told us that, "staff are all friendly and caring and seem genuinely invested in our child." Staff supported children in a positive and respectful way in relation to managing peer relationships when they needed it.

A number of languages were spoken by nursery children and their families and this was recognised by staff. Some key words had been learned by staff to support children to settle and/or feel included. One parent told us that, "the team often make a special effort in helping my child with her dual language/culture. The team often discuss this with me and my husband and check with us to see whether what they are teaching is correct - which it always is. We really appreciate the extra effort."

Clear and comprehensive information was in place for each child, giving an overview of their individual needs and about them as a person. These personal plans were regularly reviewed by parents/carers with staff to ensure that key information was kept up to date. Termly parents interviews and annual parents evenings provided opportunities for quality discussion and information sharing to take place. These were very much welcomed by parents and carers. Nursery staff were making links with other professionals in education and healthcare, working together to assess and plan for supporting children's needs.

Children's health needs were fully supported. Staff knew what support children needed, clear written information was in place and medication was appropriately stored. Clear information about allergies, intolerances and dietary preferences were displayed for staff to ensure children's needs were known and followed.

Mealtimes were positive, sociable and relaxed experiences with really good opportunities to develop independence skills, even for younger children. Staff supported children well. Tables were attractively presented with table cloths, flowers. Food was appetising and the menu had been reviewed and updated to reflect recently updated best practice guidance. Staff could further develop how they support meaningful and stimulating conversations with children during mealtimes to enhance the experience further. Snack and play events were encouraging parents and carers to join their children for snack. These were ongoing during our inspection visit. We observed this to be a really positive experience which was well received by families.

Children were supported to stay hydrated. Water stations and cups were in place for older children. Many were confident in accessing these independently and others were well supported where needed. Younger children had picture cards they could use to let staff know they wanted a drink and this was working well.

Younger children were supported well in relation to having a sleep with their individual preferences respected. Children were familiar with the routine and settled well. Staff sat with them, providing back rubs comfort and reassurance where needed.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were happy and engaged in various play and learning opportunities. They enjoyed a range of resources and consistent positive interactions with staff.

In the 0 - 2 room younger children enjoyed some sensory activities including sand, water and paint. There were steps up to the large windows so that the children could look out of the window and see the world outside. Children were engaged in staff storytelling and singing which helped to support children's language development.

In the 2 - 3 room again children were really enjoying a good range of sensory experiences such as water, sand, play doh, painting. Staff were using repetition and simple descriptive words to support children's language development.

In the 3 - 5 room children enjoyed a good range of experiences which were well planned for. Planning for play and learning took into account children's individual needs very well. There were positive interactions to support children's learning, however these could have been extended further for a deeper level of challenge.

Parents and carers told us about a range of fun play and learning experiences their children had engaged in. One parent told us their child had been engaged in, "drawing, painting, using the computer, learning about letters and numbers, messy play with water and sand, playing in the garden, outings on other gardens, trips to soft play, museum, panto." Another parent told us that, "staff are passionate about creating new and exciting development opportunities through play and utilising these resources. There are also frequent trips for the children."

The staff team had been working hard on planning for children's learning. This had been a key area for improvement highlighted in the services improvement plan. They had introduced a new planning format which was being used in all rooms. Staff told us that this was working much better than previously. It was easier to identify children's progress, achievements and consider appropriate next steps and helped also to strengthen relationships with families.

Focus week, where there would be a specific focus on individual children and their learning was well received by parents and carers. The staff team worked together throughout the term to collect mini observations to feed into the focus week observation. This meant that there was a very rounded picture of the child and what they had been working on, what they were interested in. Progress they had made was recognised and their achievements celebrated.

Termly parent interviews and annual parents evenings provided opportunities for learning to be discussed face to face with parents and carers and supported a collaborative approach.

There was limited environmental print across the rooms and outdoors to support children's literacy and numeracy. This could be developed further to include, for example, recipes, cookery books, magazines, weighing scales in the home corner. Maps, measuring tapes and road signs in the construction area would also provide extended learning opportunities.

Loose parts to encourage open ended play could be developed further to support children's imagination, curiosity and problem solving skills. The home corners, for example, would benefit from more items that can

be sorted, carried, enveloped, mixed, measured and poured. These could include pine cones, pom poms, dried pasta, herbs. More real life items to reflect children home lives would provide increased opportunities for children's role play.

## How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from an environment which was well furnished, homely and inviting. There was plenty natural light and windows were open to provide some ventilation. All areas were clean and odour free.

The indoor environments provided a range of quality resources and furniture. Thought had gone into supporting children to have more independence in their play and learning. For example, in the 3 - 5 room children were able to make their own playdoh, without support and were able to select and mix their own paint colours at the paint station. Sensory play was well supported with activities including water and sand play, painting, playdoh being accessible and enjoyed throughout the nursery rooms.

Some areas of the nursery would benefit from being more homely, for example story corners could have adult size soft seating for cuddling up on to share stories together. Real plants, floor cushions, bean bags would help to soften these spaces.

There were some lovely and meaningful displays of the children's work displayed on some of the nursery walls. However we found that the quantity of them may be overwhelming for some children. The use of more neutral colours, less busy wall displays and softer lighting would create a more positive, calming environment for the children.

The team recognised the importance of children having regular access to outdoor play to support both their physical and mental positive wellbeing. The children enjoyed outdoor play on a daily basis. They also had opportunities to visit green spaces nearby, walks, parks and visits to the central library on the bus. Free flow indoor/outdoor play was not possible as none of the playrooms opened out into the outdoor space. A rota system was in place to ensure all children spent time outdoors.

The outdoor space could be developed further to be a more inviting, stimulating and inspiring space. For example, developing a more natural environment by adding in items such as plants, herbs and bird feeders. More resources could be introduced to help support children's literacy and numeracy such as recipes in the mud kitchen and more varied opportunities for mark making.

Infection prevention and control was well managed and helped to keep children healthy. Handwashing was well supported and cleaning routines were effective. Staff ensured that they protected children's privacy and dignity when supporting them with toileting and nappy changing. We discussed how this could be supported more effectively in the toilet/nappy changing room in the 2 - 3 room, which the team had already been discussing and exploring.

**How good is our leadership?****5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good where there were significant strengths which supported positive outcomes for children.

**3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

Children and families were supported by a leadership team that had a strong vision for the nursery and a positive approach to making improvements. They really welcomed feedback from stakeholders about how to improve the nursery further.

There were a number of different opportunities for parents and carers to provide feedback including questionnaires, stay and snack or stay and lunch, termly reviews and parents evenings and sports day. A parent told us, "parents are often encouraged to share their thoughts on a variety of topics. The nursery manager is always keen to listen to suggestions and action them if they can." Another parent told us that, "we were asked to partake in lots of meetings and feedback surveys this year."

We saw that the team listened carefully to feedback and made changes where this was possible. Some changes as a result of feedback obtained were displayed on a 'You Said, We Did' board, including activities and events. This let parents and carers see that the nursery valued their feedback and took action. Feedback had also been sought regarding menu planning as part of a review and changes had been made recently taking account of feedback obtained. Parents and carers had appreciated the service moving the times of termly parent termly reviews to allow parents and carers to attend during their children's sessions, rather than after nursery hours.

Feedback was also requested regularly from the children through discussion, using questionnaires, and sticky hearts in the environment to highlight favourite spaces and resources and for meals to say if they liked it. Where possible changes were made in response to children's feedback. This included the addition of new resources such as tennis equipment to support one child's interest.

The service's improvement plan was captured in a wall display at the front nursery entrance. It was very effective, highlighting clearly what was being worked on (planning, staff training and staff induction) and how improvements had been progressing. The display was outcome focused, making it clear what positive outcomes for children the changes were hoped to achieve. These improvements were consistent with what we saw and what staff told us. The manager told us that, although they already involved staff in informing the improvement plan they hoped to develop this further.

Positive experiences for children were promoted through quality assurance practices. Peer observations, where staff were observing each other and providing feedback had been introduced. Staff have been supported to be more confident in giving suggestions for improvement as well as recognising positive practice. Regular audits were taking place in relation to a range of areas including the environment, floor books, personal plans and medication. We could see that areas that could be further improved were being identified and progressed. Regular support and supervision were taking place and used to check in about staff wellbeing, focus on areas of practice individual staff could develop and look at required levels of support.

Team meetings were found to be comprehensive and they were valued by staff who welcomed opportunities to discuss best practice and receive key training. The management team also used team meetings to ensure that any requests made of staff has been actioned. The management team were very passionate about

improvement and this helped to ensure that the staff team were motivated and committed to it too. They were able to make the link between making changes and it leading to a positive outcomes.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good where there were significant strengths which supported positive outcomes for children.

### 4.3 Staff deployment

The nursery was appropriately staffed by a committed, motivated and experienced staff team. This helped to ensure that children received quality care and learning experiences and that they were kept safe. Consistently high levels of positive interaction with the children took place and staff were skilled at ensuring that all the children were included. All parents and carers who provided feedback to us agreed that there was always enough staff in this service to meet their children's needs.

Staff were consistently positioned well within the nursery and outdoor space so that children were always visible. This meant that staff were able to address potential hazards and resolve any disagreements very quickly and positively which kept the children safe. The team had spent time looking at the Care Inspectorate SIMOA campaign. This was developed to support services to raise awareness of how, and why, children could leave a childcare setting without a responsible adult and to keep them safe. The team had explored this in relation to their own individual nursery.

Busier times of the day, including lunchtimes and arriving/leaving the nursery, were well managed. Good communication at these times ensured that all staff knew where each other was and how many children they had. Children were consistently well supported. Verbal handovers with parents and carers at the end of the day were positive with meaningful information shared.

A low staff turnover and a number of established staff helped to support continuity of care for the children. This helped children to feel well supported and promoted positive, trusting relationships to be developed. A parent told us, "staff tend to stay which is ideal for growing relationships and understanding of individual needs."

A high number of staff had a relevant qualification and those not qualified were working towards this. The management team had developed the staff induction further to support new staff including regular reviews to ensure that staff were developing their knowledge and their experience. This all helped to ensure children received high quality care.

All three rooms had rotas for staff tasks that needed to be completed and this helped support the smooth running of the day. These were flexible, with staff working well together, helping each other and demonstrating effective team work.

Staff were motivated and committed and were supported to learn and develop. This helped to keep their knowledge up to date and a focus on continual improvement. Staff felt very well supported by the management team and welcomed the open door policy.



## 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	5 - Very 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?	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

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

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

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.