

The Bees Knees Nursery Day Care of Children

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Currie
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 April 2025

Service provided by:
The Bees Knees Playgroup Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2015012460

Service no:
CS2015336137

About the service

The Bees Knees Nursery is an early learning and childcare setting situated within a community building in a residential area of Currie, close to transport links, shops and community services. The setting provides day care for up to 19 children aged from birth to entry to primary school age. The setting comprises of two playrooms, one for children under the age of two years and another for children aged over two years. Children over the age of two have direct access to the outdoor play space. The provider of the service is the registered manager and responsible for the day to day running of the service. At the time of inspection the service was in the process of being taken over by a new owner who will also be the registered manager of the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 29 April 2025 from 09:00 to 16:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 and families using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- 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 experienced nurturing, warm and kind interactions from staff.
- Children had fun as they engaged in their play with friends.
- Some improvements had been made since the last inspection to children's play, personal planning and the quality of interactions.
- The service was in the process of changing ownership and management, and supporting children, families and staff was central to this transition.
- Children's experiences were impacted by ongoing staffing issues and the pace of 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 care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 had positive relationships with staff who knew them well. Children received close affection in the form of cuddles. The manager introduced new staff to children, as a result, children were supported and reassured by those caring for them.

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried, with staff and children sitting together. This enabled children to be safe and supervised without compromising their independence. Children were offered choices and there were some opportunities to self-serve including pouring soup and water. A parent commented "My child has a varied diet at nursery and is always willing to try new things. It's very helpful that there's options for them to choose from". Children in the baby room sat in highchairs for mealtimes. We discussed with the manager ways to support children as they grow and develop, for example sitting on a chair at the table. This would increase their independence and social interactions with peers. The service should consider how to further promote self-serving options for children.

Sleep arrangements were in place, with each child having their own blankets and comforters. This meant that children could sleep with their familiar comforter that made them feel safe and secure. Cots were available in the baby room and additional travel cots could be used if more children required to sleep.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal plans. Information from home and gathered by the service enabled staff to care and meet the needs of children. Personal plans were reviewed in line with current guidance and shared with parents.

Staff were aware of child protection procedures and child protection officers within the service contact details were displayed as reference for staff.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun as they played with staff and friends. They benefitted from having access to the outdoors for most of the day, and with a full complement of staff children could be accessing outdoors freely throughout the day. This would enable children to make choices about playing indoors and outdoors. Most children were aware of the changes in nature that surrounded them. A child spotted a bee in the blossom tree and a butterfly, and was able to explain that they had not been seen before in the garden. Staff supported the conversation through open questions that allowed the child to explain about the warmer weather and new flowers in the garden. The service should consider how to capture children's learning in the moment to extend their knowledge and interests. For example, having opportunities for children to record the changes in nature through mark making.

Children were engaged in their play and this was sustained through staff interactions. A group of children were taking turns to fill up watering cans to water plants and flowers in the garden. They asked a member of staff to move some soil. Through skilled questioning the children were supported to think about what they would need to move the soil. As a result, they were able to problem solve and find utensils that allowed them to transport the soil on their own. The service should continue to develop staff skills in supporting children's learning through these types of interactions.

Children benefitted from core provision being available both indoors or outdoors, including sand, water, paint and dough. To support children's curiosity and creatively play provocations could be further enhanced. For example, treasures baskets in the baby room, loose parts, books and interactive displays to enhance core provision.

Planning systems had improved since the last inspection and were continuing to be developed to prioritise children's interests. Further improvements were needed to ensure children's play and learning received a consistent approach across both playrooms **(area for improvement 1)**.

Practice documents were used to track and support children's learning over time. This was shared with parents and next steps for children were adjusted in response to children's needs. Development trackers were used to identify children's next steps in learning. This meant that staff were able to create opportunities that supported and challenged their learning. We suggested that children's achievements should be dated to give an accurate overview of their progress.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's play and learning and enable them to achieve their full potential, management and staff should:

Review and further develop their planning approaches to create a more balance child centred, intentional and responsive plan to learning experiences.

Ensure appropriate levels of challenge and depth in play and learning that supports children's curiosity and creativity and enables them to lead on their play and learning.

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 to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity". (HSCS 2.27) and "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me." (HSCS 1.19)

How good is our setting?

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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were kept safe with the effective use of registers at arrival and collection times. Staff made regular head counts throughout the session and ensured children were signed out when they left early. The outdoor gates had locks to ensure security for children, and staff had knowledge of the Care Inspectorate's campaign on keeping children safe in settings.

Children benefitted from the area available beside the coat pegs that allowed them to have space to put on their own coats and shoes. This meant that they could develop independence through everyday tasks.

The outdoors was accessible to children and provided additional ventilation without minimising the warmth. Children in the baby room did not have direct access to the garden however on the day of inspection the baby room was closed due to staffing issues. As a result children from the baby room were cared for in the main nursery room that meant they did have access to the garden. As suggested at the last inspection when the baby room is open to children attending the service should consider how children in the baby room can be supported to express their preferences and choices about where they play. For example, the service could consider moving younger children's coat pegs to a low height, to support children to collect these when they wish to go outside. This would support children to communicate in the space, have their voices heard and further influence their own play and learning. To support the service to develop in this area, we directed them to the Scottish Government good practice guidance 'The Voice of Infant: best practice guidelines and infant pledge' (2023).

A child provided a tour of the garden and explained the purpose of each area. They explained that the baby garden had a small fence to keep them safe and smaller climbing equipment because "they are just little babies". As a result children were aware of safety within the service.

Children were familiar with infection, prevention and control measures including hand washing as they washed their hands throughout the day and at key points including before and after lunch.

How good is our leadership?**3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There have been some improvements since the last inspection to quality assurance. There were monitoring systems in place for health and safety and risk assessments were reviewed and updated. This meant that children were in an environment that kept them safe.

An online system was in place to support staff practice and training. The manager signposted staff to mandatory training and they had the opportunity to choose training that was relevant to them. Evaluation sheets had been introduced, this enabled staff to reflect on training and the impact on their practice. A member of staff explained that they found recent autism spectrum disorder training informative and that they had increased their understanding and felt more able to support children in the future. Staff appraisals provided an opportunity for staff and manager to reflect and plan professional learning together. The catering manager had taken a lead role in developing the menus to reflect current guidance and spoke about regularly reviewing menus to reflect any changes.

The developments that have been implemented since the last inspection were positive, however the pace of change was limited due to the level of staff turnover and staffing arrangements overall. This has meant that the manager has been required to be responsive to the day to day demands of the service and limited the opportunities to develop the service at a pace they wanted (**see area for improvement 1**).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children benefit from a high quality service, the manager and staff team should continue to further develop an effective quality assurance system. This should include ongoing self-evaluation and opportunities for staff to reflect together, this should be supported by best practice guidance and current research. This information should be used to influence positive change to outcomes for children and families.

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 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff were kind, caring and children had positive relationships with staff. As there were several new staff to the service they were mindful of how children may feel and gently became involved in their play. We saw children responded to new adults by initially keeping close to staff they knew well. As the day progressed children began to be more comfortable with the new staff and initiated play and interactions. This meant that although staff were sensitive and responsive to children's wellbeing the staffing issues did impact on children's experiences.

The manager had worked hard to ensure staffing levels were enough to ensure minimum disruption to the delivery of the service. However this did mean that children from both rooms were brought together. As a result, children routines and expected care was altered frequently.

As part of the transition to the new ownership, the new manager and staff have spent some time getting to know the children and parents and existing staff. This has meant that children and their families were being supported throughout the transition. The new manager shared the new staffing structure that will be in place moving forward. This will include additional permanent staff and an increase in leadership roles.

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 support children to experience consistent, nurturing interactions, the manager should support the staff team to revisit the importance of quality interactions. Staff should be supported to enhance their skills and knowledge in how young children play, learn and develop. Children should be empowered to be fully involved in their play and learning through the skilled interactions and actions of staff

This area for improvement was made on 3 May 2024.

Action taken since then

The manager had 1:1 sessions with staff with a focus on developing knowledge of children's play and stages of learning. Having supportive discussions about practice. The manager was supporting practice through role modelling nurturing interactions supporting staff in the moment. The manager was supporting new staff through the Care Inspectorate induction guidance.

This has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's play and learning, the provider should ensure that they have consistent access to a range of well presented and well maintained play spaces and resources. This would support children to experience an environment that is welcoming, inspiring and engaging whilst delivering the message that they matter.

This area for improvement was made on 3 May 2024.

Action taken since then

The team were using prompts to help maintain the environment. This included a photograph of how the area should be presented for children arriving and that areas would be reset throughout the day. Children were encouraged to tidy up and this was observed with children asking to sweep up. Outdoors areas including sand pit were covered over when not in use to keep it clean.

This has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children benefit from a high quality service, the manager and staff team should continue to further develop an effective quality assurance system. This should include ongoing self-evaluation and opportunities for staff to reflect together, this should be supported by best practice guidance and current

research. This information should be used to influence positive change to outcomes for children and families.

This area for improvement was made on 3 May 2024.

Action taken since then

Systems had been set up but yet to be established. Some quality assurance was in place including risk assessments and health and safety. Staff are provided with health and safety handbooks. Practice observations have been received positively by staff and enabled some professional dialogue. As a result of staff absences and retention the pace of progress has been limited.

This was not met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children's health and wellbeing, they should be cared for by staff that have the correct skills, knowledge and experience to meet their individual needs. The manager should ensure that professional learning is well planned, reviewed and matched to identified needs and possible gaps in staff practice. An effective evaluation system should ensure that training and development opportunities lead to improved outcomes for children.

This area for improvement was made on 3 May 2024.

Action taken since then

A new system has been introduced for staff training, that allows the manager to see the progress of staff. One to One meetings and supervision provide an opportunity to discuss training, knowledge and skills development. Questionnaires have been used to gather staffs views. The same agency staff are being requested to provide some consistency for the children and families.

This has been met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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