

The Meadows Private Day Nursery Ltd

Day Care of Children

74 Mauchline Road
Mosblown
Ayr
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Telephone: 01292 521 182

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 July 2025

Service provided by:
The Meadows Private Day Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2016012781

Service no:
CS2016350287

About the service

The Meadows Private Day Nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate on 14 March 2017.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 37 children, of whom no more than six will be under 2 years of age, and of whom no more than five are attending primary school only. Two adults will be in attendance at all times.

The enclosed outdoor area had been developed and we saw children having fun outdoors.

The service is located in the village of Mossblown in South Ayrshire. The building is laid out on one level. The Meadows Private Day Nursery is a privately run business.

The stated aim of the service is "to grow happy, confident children that make a positive impact on the world."

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 July 2025 between 09:15 and 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from nine families
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- 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 warm, caring and nurturing care from a staff team that knew them well.
- Children's health and wellbeing was enhanced through daily access to outdoor play.
- The environment offered a range of play experiences, that supported child led play.
- Quality assurance processes were supporting the continuous improvement of the service.
- Staff were flexible and supportive of each other. They worked well as a team to support and care for children as individuals.
- The manager and staff team were committed and happy in their roles helping create a positive environment for 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?	4 - 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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Warm and nurturing interaction supported children to feel settled, happy and relaxed. Staff communicated with children at their level, offering comfort and reassurance when needed. Staff were skilled in picking up on children's verbal and non verbal cues. Respectful relationships supported staff and children to form positive attachments. As a result, children felt valued.

The needs of the individual children were identified and support provided, where required. We sampled personal plans and found they reflected the holistic needs of each child. Children's care and learning routines were recorded, and staff cared for children with kindness and compassion. All children received a personal plan drawn together using wellbeing Indicators; Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI). We could see developments had been made to personal plans to include celebrating children's achievements. One parent told us: "I met with staff several times prior to starting the service, have completed a personal plan and discussed next steps for transition to school." This supported a collaborative approach to learning.

Communication was a strength of the service. Regular updates on learning journals, newsletters and informal discussions at handover times meant parents had key information about the service and their child's wellbeing. As a result, parents felt informed and involved in their child's time at the service. The service promoted an inclusive ethos and families were welcomed into the nursery to participate in the life of the service. Parents were welcomed warmly into the service one parent told us "Staff are friendly and very knowledgeable. Definitely made to feel like part of the family. I feel it's a safe environment for my child."

Mealtimes were a sociable experience and children were able to choose from a variety of nutritious meals. There were some opportunities for children to develop independence and life skills, for example, pouring their own water and clearing away their dishes. Children enjoyed chatting to staff and each other. Staff supported children with cutting of their food if needed. Staff used this experiences to have fun with the children along with discussing what they might like to do in the afternoon.

Children's safety and emotional security and wellbeing were supported through sensitive arrangements for sleep routines. Staff understood the importance of sleep for children's overall development. Routines were reflective of individual children's needs and family wishes and promote good habits around sleep. Staff in under 2's recognised daily routines as a rich opportunity to promote close attachment. We saw sensitive arrangements around children's sleep routines. Staff worked in partnership with families to establish routines which responded to children's individual needs and family wishes. This resulted in families feeling that their wishes were respected at this time of the day.

Systems for recording medication were in place, including parental permissions, storage information and records of administration. Parents told us that they were very happy how medication was handled in the nursery and was very effective.

Children's wellbeing was supported through staff knowledge and understanding of their role in identifying, recording and referring any concerns. This was supported by policy and attendance at child protection training. One staff member told us "Child protection training has influenced my practice by giving me the knowledge of what to look out for/how to report any issues that may arise."

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

Quality indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun while at nursery. Staff positioned themselves at children's level and engaged with them throughout play experiences. Children told us:

"I like the building bricks, painting and going outside."

"I like growing vegetables."

"I enjoy playing in the garden and playing with the water."

"I like exploring all the toys and taking part in different activities."

"I get certificates and stickers for doing good tidying."

Across the service, children were settled and engaged in play. The service supported children's movement between indoor and outdoor spaces. This ensured children could lead their play and benefitted from extended periods outdoors. Overall, there was a good range of varied play experiences to support children's play and learning. Most resources were displayed in a way that promoted choice and independence. Children were confident in making independent choices and were engaged in their learning. For example, children, had fun playing with blocks and enjoyed water play. Children were engaged for prolonged periods of time with this. We discussed where this could be further developed within the baby room, to create an enabling environment where children could lead their learning.

Play experiences provided opportunities for children to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. For example, staff read stories to children, who joined in to repeat words and they sang with children. Children's numeracy skills were supported through staff interactions. Staff used mathematical language to support children when counting, measuring, sorting and matching. Staff should continue to develop their approaches and reflect numeracy and literacy in all areas. One parent told us "It is clear from drop off, pick up and learning journals the variety of experiences my child can participate in. From 9 months to 2 years old, he has been part of such wonderful and creative experiences. Sensory play is very much his favourite and I love to see that it is always on offer! Particularly messy play!! He also loves outdoor play which he can access daily."

Planning had recently been reviewed and this was beginning to support play opportunities for children. One staff member told us "Our short term planning is based on what the children's current interests are and their next steps. We set up experiences for the children to explore based on what they like to play with and by asking the children what they would like to do and I can be responsive by observing a child doing something and then setting up an experience for them." We discussed where plans could be further developed to ensure staff were giving consideration to spaces, opportunities and their interactions, whilst also responding to children's current needs and interests. The service had plans to develop their planning process further and provided an overview of their approach going forward. We agreed this would support staff in delivering planning approaches that were responsive to the developmental needs and interest of children.

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

Playrooms were bright, well-ventilated and providing a warm and nurturing environment for children. Children had individual spaces to store their bags and jackets helping provide a sense of belonging. Careful consideration had been given to the layout of most rooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interest and develop their ideas. The play opportunities allowed older children to lead and direct their own learning, both indoors and outdoors. Most spaces were interesting and well resourced, promoting curiosity, imagination and a sense of wonder. This included using a range of real life and open-ended resources, within the role play area, to create a homely feel and enable children to participate in role play opportunities. Children made good use of the space available and played happily independently or cooperatively in groups. This helped them to build positive relationships with their peers and develop their social skills. Resources were well maintained, safe and accessible to children. One parent told us "there are lots for children to play with to develop all senses and motor skill as well as other experiences."

We discussed where further consideration could be given to support children's play and development within younger playrooms. This included reviewing the room layout to create more opportunities to extend curiosity and creativity, for the younger children. The provider should also provide further toys and materials in this playroom to support sensory and schematic play. She agreed that this was an area that the staff in that room, wished to improve.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through daily outdoor play experiences, which could be accessed in all weather. Older children were confident moving freely and independently between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

The outdoor area, for older children, offered a range of natural, loose parts and open-ended material that supported curiosity and imagination. Resources were easily accessible for children to independently access and direct their learning outdoors. Children spent prolonged periods of time exploring natural materials, such as water, sand and mud at the mud kitchen. We also discussed where some areas could be further enhanced. We discussed where further consideration should be given to outdoor play spaces for younger children, to help ensure they are offered a range of challenging and stimulating play experiences to support their play and learning. The service shared that there were missed opportunities in the outdoor area for planting and growing. The staff team have identified this as an area of improvement as outlined in this years improvement plan.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to ensure children did not come to harm. This included clear boundary fencing, secure gates as well as regular headcounts and communication between staff. Handwashing took place regularly and nappy changing areas were clean with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) being stored appropriately.

Accidents and incidents were managed well to support children's health and wellbeing. Accident forms were completed and appropriate first aid administered when needed. Regular audits of accidents were taking place.

How good is our leadership?

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: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Management and staff all worked together to ensure a positive ethos within the setting. Quality assurance across the service had identified strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders were committed to developing staff confidence and skills, empowering them to reflect on practice leading to improved outcomes for children and families.

Quality assurance approaches were in place to support the continuous improvement of the service. A detailed improvement plan was in place to support the development of outdoor spaces. Staff were involved in self-evaluation approaches and were contributing towards changes within the setting. The setting had identified that more parental engagement would be a focus for their upcoming improvement plan and we agreed this would be beneficial in further supporting positive connections with families.

Whilst self evaluation was supporting continuous development of the service there were some areas of practice that needed to be further developed. Regular auditing and monitoring took place across a range of areas, which was beginning to support and develop staff practice. We discussed where some audits could be further enhanced to ensure they were meaningful to the service, for example an overview of how the under 2's playroom could be enhanced to ensure more heuristic experiences to support children to explore.

The service had a wealth of policies to inform their practice. Opportunities to include families in the service and welcome their feedback, was provided through questionnaires and informal chats and online platforms. Information was shared with families through a range of communication methods, such as online newsletters and daily conversations, which helped families feel included. Parents told us, "The manager is very approachable and accommodating to myself as a working parent. Communication is always clear, efficient and in a professional manner." The service should continue to develop partnership working with parents in all aspects of nursery life. Whilst also developing approaches to involve children in the design of service delivery. One parent told us "we get regular updates on the app and questionnaires to fill out about my experience using the nursery."

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator: 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff recognised the importance of offering kind, sensitive and respectful interactions. There were sufficient staff to meet the needs of individual children, which meant staff had time to listen, care and respond to children, helping them feel valued and loved. Parents told us "All staff are so welcoming, nurturing and approachable and I feel I have a good relationship with staff. I wouldn't hesitate to ask for advice or approach if I ever had an issue."

Staff were happy, motivated and focused on children's needs. They worked well together, creating a positive and caring environment for children, which helped children feel safe and nurtured. There was a good mix of skills, knowledge and strengths among the staff team across the whole day. As a result, children explored play and learning at a pace that was right for them, while being supported and encouraged.

Parents told us they really valued the level of communication staff had established. This helped to ensure positive transitions for children and effective information sharing with their families. Staff understood that continuity of care was important for children making transitions within playrooms. All parents commented positively on the support their children received. Parents told us "they are always positive, and keen to help and will always go above and beyond if they can", "excellent communication on how [my child] is getting on" and "I'm always kept updated on [my child's] day, [my child] is always happy and has come on loads and learns loads at nursery."

Staff worked well to ensure children were supervised throughout the day and there was minimal disruption to their play. The wellbeing of staff was well planned to ensure they had time to rest and refresh. During these times children continued to have full access to the provision indoors and outdoors. As a result, there was no disruption to care, play and learning. One parent told us "This is a brilliant nursery run by caring, professional staff. We all love it and recommend it to everyone.."

Staff had been safely recruited and were suitably registered with the Scottish Social Services Council, the professional body overseeing registration of childcare staff. An induction programme supported new staff at a pace that was right for them. This included being mentored by a designated member of staff and the wider team who shared their skills and knowledge.

Staff told us they felt supported by the leadership team. Management was providing additional support to help staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities with all staff describing a supportive atmosphere helping them to work well as a team.

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	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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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