

# Peerie Foxes Ltd

## Day Care of Children

The Salvation Army Mission Hall  
45 North Road  
Lerwick  
SHETLAND  
ZE1 ONT

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
22 July 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Peerie Foxes Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019013296

**Service no:**  
CS2019374246

## About the service

Peerie Foxes Ltd is situated in the former Salvation Army Mission Hall in a residential area of Lerwick.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 30 children not yet attending primary school at any one time. No more than 10 are aged under two years; no more than 10 are aged two years to under three years.

The service has sole use of the building. Older children were cared for in a large playroom with younger children being cared for in two adjoining rooms. Children had access to toilet facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 July 2025 between 08:30 and 16:30. 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:

- spent time with children using the service and spoke with parents/carers
- received responses to our request for feedback from parents
- received responses to our request for feedback from staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how the service supports 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 happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing support.
- 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.
- The manager should take time to evaluate the effectiveness of the environment for play and learning.

## 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?	3 - Adequate
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 settled, happy and having fun as they played alongside or with friends. They 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 and caring staff. They were effectively supported through well timed and thoughtful interactions, which contributed to their sense of security and promoted their overall wellbeing. Children 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 their children. This ensured that children received appropriate levels of consistent care and support. Parents told us they had a good relationship with staff caring for their children. One parent said: "I have no complaints here; they are always kind, helpful, and make sure to provide the most accurate information regarding the child's day when asked." Another parent said, "Communication is great, information is passed along in a quick manner, nothing is missed, no detail too small. My child loves them, so do I." This promoted a supportive ethos of children's needs being well met.

Staff were able to confidently discuss the needs of the children they were caring for and how they were supporting them. Children's wellbeing was being supported through effective use of personal planning. Plans contained registration details and information which captured children's likes, dislikes, routines and interests. Support plans were in place for children who required one, detailing care and support needs. This ensured children had the right support, at the right time, to reach their full potential.

Snack and mealtimes had improved since the last inspection. These were generally relaxed, unhurried and sociable experiences for the children. Their 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 relationships, language and communication skills while supervising the children. There was scope for the children to be offered more choice. Food was served onto children's plates then given to them. We discussed the benefit of children self-serving. Children had some opportunities to develop independence skills such as helping chop the vegetables for the soup. However, more opportunities could be given such as pouring drinks and more self-serving. This would contribute to children further developing important life skills.

Staff understood the importance of sleep to support children's wellbeing. Sleep routines were reflective of individual children's needs while promoting good sleep habits. Sleep was well managed for younger children; however, an older child slept in a cot that had been converted into a sofa for the children to rest and relax. We asked that the setting review this practice to ensure older children slept safely in line with current best practice guidance. This would contribute to keeping children safe and well.

Children's health was promoted through processes in place to manage the storage and administration of medication. Medication was stored appropriately within the playrooms and was readily accessible. We found however the labelling of medication could have been clearer. We asked that the management team review medication forms to include information about action to be taken if medication was refused, spat out or was ineffective. We directed the service to the most recent best practice guidance to ensure records were in line with this. This would further support children's health and wellbeing.

### **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, wellbeing and happiness. For most of the time, children benefited from uninterrupted play, allowing them to become absorbed in what they were doing.

The children were engaged as they experimented and explored both planned and spontaneous play experiences which were responsive to their interests. Children were offered opportunities to be creative and problem solve. Some children enjoyed creating a structure with the large waffle blocks. They experimented trying to find the correct pieces and worked hard to push them together. Children enjoyed knocking them down and building them again. Outside, children enjoyed blowing bubbles made from sticks and pipe cleaners. Young children persevered blowing in different ways to create bubbles. We highlighted several ways in which more experiences could be offered to promote children's creativity and curiosities to enrich their play and learning.

Staff understood their role in supporting children's development. Those staff who were skilled were able to add further value to children's play and learning through their carefully considered interactions and modelling. They naturally engaged with children and showed interest. Less experienced staff should now use more open-ended questions to extend children's thinking and support their curiosities and problem-solving skills. This would ensure learning was meaningful and would provide appropriate challenge for children.

There were opportunities for children to explore literacy and numeracy within the environment and in their play. We saw adults sing with children and read stories spontaneously and in groups. Numeracy and language were being supported through play experiences. For example, counting when blowing bubbles outside. Children explored a variety of real resources such as old typewriters and keyboards. Children would benefit from an environment with more print at their level, mark making materials being readily available and a larger selection of accessible books. This would ensure there was a greater variety of opportunities available for literacy and numeracy within play spaces and experiences both indoors and outside.

Planning processes supported staff to promote a balance of intentional and responsive learning experiences for the children. A 'wow moment' board, which included achievements was currently being used to highlight learning experiences. Some experiences such as trips were being recorded in a floor book. We discussed extending this to allow children the opportunity to look back and reflect on their experiences. This would support them to develop their language skills, ask questions and possibly revisit and extend their learning.

Observations were being used to capture children's learning and development. These took place over a week, every three months and provided an opportunity for families to see their child's play and learning in more detail. The observations we sampled identified learning which helped staff to assess children's achievements and progress, allowing them to plan the next steps with children and their families. We discussed the importance of consistency following up next steps and being clear about how children would be supported to achieve these. This would further support children's progression. When asked what could be better about the service several parents said they would like to see more photos of their children. We asked management to consider how the 'wow moments' with photos could be effectively shared with families out with their observation week. This would support families to have a greater insight their child's experiences and learning.

Children benefited from good connections with the wider community. Children enjoyed regular walks within the community to the local beaches, parks and the museum. This contributed to children's sense of belonging and supported them to have different opportunities out with the setting.

## How good is our setting?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a clean, bright and welcoming nursery. All playrooms were well ventilated and furnished to create a calm and relaxing environment. Good use of soft furnishings and natural resources created a cosy and homely space. Playrooms were welcoming and provided space for children to play and explore. Children made good use of the space available and played happily.

Each of the playrooms contained developmentally appropriate resources that provided some opportunities to stimulate children's interests and learning. Some resources were accessible and well organised. However, this should be reviewed to ensure resources such as mark making materials, print and craft resources were always readily available and not stored in closed cupboards. Children should be able to independently select resources of their choice and lead their own play. **(See area for improvement 1)**

Children had access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The older children were able to independently access this area throughout the day while the younger children were taken outside. We observed children from each of the rooms enjoying being outdoors together taking part in various activities. Some areas outdoors were being used to store unwanted items and needed attention. The manager and staff had already identified the need to make the outdoor space more inviting and extend the opportunities for outdoor learning. Plans were already in place to action this. This would ensure children have access to a high-quality outdoor space. **(See area for improvement 1)**

Systems were in place to help keep children safe. Risk assessments helped staff to mitigate risk and enhanced children's safety. These however needed to be reviewed and updated to reflect the setting and activities. Risk assessments should include more detail to support staff with safety measures such as kitchen storage, cot beds and extension cables in the baby room. We discussed involving children in assessing risk and directed the setting to the Care Inspectorate's SIMOA campaign. This would support children's understanding of risk and keeping themselves safe.

Generally, infection control measures were understood and implemented effectively by staff. Hand washing routines were in place however, we highlighted the importance of children being supported to wash their hands with soap and running water after nappy changing and eating food. Staff protected children by providing a mostly clean and hygienic environment and PPE was used at appropriate times, such as during nappy changing and food preparation. However, we found that some areas were cluttered. These areas needed to be cleared to ensure this didn't have an impact on appropriate cleaning and children's play. This would ease cleaning of these areas which would promote children's health through the reduction of risk of infection. **(See area for improvement 1)**

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.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience quality facilities the manager and staff should ensure that the environment is clean, tidy and well resourced. This should include but not be exhaustive to:

- Reviewing the outdoor space to ensure it is inviting and extend opportunities for outdoor learning.
- Reviewing the indoor environment to ensure it is well resourced with easy access to materials such as a variety of mark making, books and craft resources to support children's play and learning.
- The environment should be tidy to ensure this doesn't impact appropriate cleaning and children's experiences.

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

'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices' (HSCS 5.21) and

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.22).

### 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 was on holiday at the time of our inspection. However, the practitioners and other 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 ethos within the working environment, where staff felt confident to share ideas to initiate change. 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 displayed and reflected the welcoming and community ethos. We asked that when these were next reviewed children, families and staff get involved in the process. This would support everyone to know what is important for the service to meet the needs of 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 with everyone feeling included. Regular communication with families took place through a variety of methods, including daily face to face discussion, questionnaires and online platforms. We saw that suggestions from parents were taken onboard and shared with families. This practice ensured parents felt listened to and created a collaborative approach to improvement.

Management monitored the setting and observed staff practice. This aimed to ensure children received high quality play and learning experiences. They met with staff to reflect on their practice and discuss improvements to the service to ensure 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.

Since the last inspection, the manager and staff had continued to develop systems of quality assurance to ensure that the quality of the service was monitored and assessed in a meaningful way. There was an improvement plan in place which was focussed on meeting the requirement and areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection. We discussed incorporating success criteria into their plan, to support them to evaluate their improvements. This would support the setting to consider whether there was a need for further development or if the outcome had influenced further improvements. Continuing to share this with families would support everyone to be clear on the setting's focus for improvement.

The setting had a quality assurance calendar in place to support procedures, audits and monitoring within the nursery. We suggested including regular medication, environment and practices, such as hand washing audits to ensure these are consistently in line with best practice guidance. These should be evaluated and the outcome shared with staff to ensure everyone was clear and aware of the impact.

## 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. Since the last inspection management had reviewed practice taking account of busier times of the day, for example lunchtime. They had allocated extra staff to ensure children received consistent levels of care whilst still allowing for staff to take appropriate breaks. This contributed to wellbeing of the children in the service.



Children benefited from a nurturing staff team who were enthusiastic and committed to providing a positive experience for the children. They were warm and caring in their approach and demonstrated positive team working and good relationships. This in turn promoted a happy and secure environment for children. When families were asked what they liked about the service, one parent said; "Peerie Foxes offers a very caring and nurturing environment with child centred approaches. My child feels safe and valued and I have seen a real difference in [their] confidence over the years." Another parent said, "The friendships and relationships my child has been able to make with peers and the staff. When they first started attending [they were] always unsettled and a struggle but once those bonds had been made there are now no issues with drop off and happy to go to all staff." This meant children were settled, happy and confident in the setting.

Staff within each of the rooms worked well together and their differing skills, experience and knowledge complimented one another. This resulted in some good interactions with children however, there was scope to develop this with less experienced staff members. Staff had taken part in core training and some additional training for example, the 'curiosity approach' training. Staff were able to reflect on this and discuss the impact this had on outcomes for children.

Since the last inspection, children experienced continuity of care as staff deployed themselves effectively to ensure a range of experiences. Deployment of staff across the setting and throughout the day supported children to mostly 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 engagement with children across the day. This created a flexible and supportive ethos where staff supported each other, working as a team to benefit the children.

Most parents knew who was caring for their children and had built relationships with staff. Families were kept informed about the nursery through daily conversations at drop off and collection times. There were regular opportunities for parents to spend time in the nursery for example stay and play sessions. We discussed the benefits of parents coming into the setting to drop off or collect their children. A few parents highlighted that they would like all staff to introduce themselves and get to know them better. The setting was supporting staff's confidence with this. We directed the setting to the Care Inspectorate's practice note, "Me, my family and my childcare setting" which highlights the importance of families being physically present in their child's setting as part of their daily experiences. This would further support parents to feel included in their child's experiences at nursery.

## 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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate

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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