

# Start Bright Nursery Bonnyrigg Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
8 August 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Start Bright Nursery Bonnyrigg Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2016012743

**Service no:**  
CS2016348363

## About the service

Start Bright Nursery Bonnyrigg is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 47 children aged from three months to those not yet attending primary school at any one time. Of those 47, no more than 12 are aged under two years.

The service is located in the town of Bonnyrigg, Midlothian, close to local parks, shops, and other local amenities. The accommodation consists of three playrooms, a kitchen, toilets and a large enclosed outdoor area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday, 5 August 2025 from 09:30 until 16:15 hours and Wednesday, 6 August 2025 from 09:30 until 14:15 hours. 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 using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- reviewed feedback from nine families.

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 interactions that created positive relationships with staff.
- Children had fun as they played outdoors throughout their day.
- Children were engaged in their play and interested in what was available to them.
- Staff were positive about their role and had good relationships with children and their families.

## 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 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 welcomed into the nursery by staff. Staff said hello to children using their first names, so children knew that they were being spoken to. This let children know that they were valued and important.

Children had positive relationships with staff who knew them well. They received cuddles and close affection that was sensitive or playful depending on what the child wanted and needed. This provided children with reassurance and comfort.

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 opportunities to self-serve, including serving themselves and pouring their drinks. Children in the older rooms set the table and tidied and washed their dishes. This enabled children to develop independence skills through daily tasks. A parent commented, "My child loves the food! There seems to be a variety to choose from. The nursery also encourages the children to serve themselves to encourage their independence." To further support children's social interactions, we suggested reviewing seating arrangements in the under two-year-old room to reflect the developing needs of children at mealtimes.

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. Children in the under two-year-old room had access to cots throughout the day. This meant that children could sleep when needed and sleep arrangements detailed in care plans were followed. There were quiet and cosy areas in the other playrooms and garden area so that children could rest and relax in comfort.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal plans. Information provided from home and gathered by the service enabled staff to care for and meet the needs of children. To support children's wellbeing and development further, we suggested creating more focussed and detailed strategies of support within personal plans. This would help staff to implement and evaluate approaches and progress over time. Personal plans were reviewed in line with current guidance and shared with parents.

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

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were engaged in their play and interested in the activities available to them. Children were confident to ask for additional resources and to transport resources around the play spaces. For example, a child was posting toys through the fence with staff asking where it had gone; this supported the child's understanding of cause and effect and developing their schematic play.

There was a range of planned and spontaneous experiences available based on children's interests, and adult led activities planned throughout the day. We asked the service to consider if the adult led activities

could be adjusted to be facilitated during the day as part of planned experiences. This would enable children to make choices about when and how often they participated in that activity and to lead their own learning and play.

Planning systems were in place and included intentional, responsive and individual plans that linked together. As part of the improvement plan, observations had been a priority for the service and this had enabled staff to capture children's voices in learning journals and floorbooks. We suggested that the service considers how to further capture children's existing and new learning as a result of the experiences provided.

Practice documents were used to track and support children's learning. This was shared with parents and next steps for children were identified. We suggested making next steps more specific and dated for children to give an accurate overview of their progress. This would enable staff to provide opportunities for children to achieve their next steps in learnings.

Children benefitted from intergenerational learning experiences. Children visited the local care home and spent time with residents playing and learning together. Children were proud to talk about this during inspection, sharing that they have an area within the care home to display their artwork and experiences. Their annual sports day was held in the care home and this allowed children to share their experience further with their parents attending. This has meant that children have a better understanding of their place within their local community.

## 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 benefitted from an environment that was comfortable, clean and tidy. The rooms were warm and well ventilated. This meant that children could play and rest in a comfortable space and that they were valued and respected.

The rooms were structured and laid out for core provision that was relevant to children's age and development. For example, in the under two-year-old room, furniture was positioned to support early walking with resources at an accessible height. For children aged two and three years, there were tables and chairs to sit on with activities and space to play on the floor. In the three to five-year-old room, core resources including sand, water, playdough and books were available, and additional resources were accessible to enable children to add to their play and interests. Overall, resources were cared for and in a good condition throughout the rooms.

Outdoors, there were opportunities to access core provision, children were mark making with water and brushes on the fence. There were slides of different heights to offer challenge and opportunities for climbing, balancing and to use bikes. The garden was a shared space with a fenced area for the youngest children. Although children did not have direct access to outdoors, they did access the garden on multiple occasions throughout the day as a whole nursery and as individual rooms. As part of self-evaluation, the service should consider how children might have greater independence in accessing the outdoors. This

would promote choice and opportunities for children to extend their play and learning in a natural environment.

There were spaces for children to participate in quieter activities including the story area, and sheltered areas including the large tree which provided shelter from the weather. Children had opportunities for den building. This enabled children to create their own quiet spaces. Vegetable planters were at children's level, which allowed children to take part in growing vegetables and learn where their food came from. We suggested the service considers how to provide more opportunities for children to play and learn in nature.

Risk assessments were in place; this ensured that children were kept safe. Gates were locked and checked to keep children secure in the garden and security entrance system was in place. The Care Inspectorate's Keeping children safe campaign, SIMOA was an established approach with children. They used the SIMOA elephant to go with them as they risk assessed their environment using a checklist. This meant that children were aware of potential risks and how to keep themselves safe.

A maintenance log book was actively used by staff who told us that issues were responded to promptly. Suggestions that we made during the inspection to property issues were actioned immediately. This meant that children were kept safe and high traffic areas including toilets were kept clean.

## How good is our leadership?

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

There were shared values across the service that were promoted by management. A priority over the last year was to introduce the Care Inspectorate's Keeping children safe campaign through SIMOA. The team had worked hard to establish the values and principles of the campaign with children and families. This included SIMOA the elephant being in the playrooms so that children can see and hold them, and making the values relevant to children in their day-to-day lives. We heard children speaking confidently about SIMOA and completing risk assessments. Parents supported this when their child took SIMOA the elephant home, and recorded and shared their experiences from home; for example, going to the park and making dinner. This demonstrated how SIMOA has been embedded in daily practice for children and staff, and parents are supporting the aims and objectives of this.

Effective systems were in place to support quality assurance. The quality assurance calendar enabled management to cover tasks throughout the year. This was allocated into a manageable approach that was shared across the management team.

Supervision and annual appraisals were in place and provided an opportunity to support practice. A learning experience folder had been introduced to record staff achievements through observations and peer feedback. This enabled achievements to be recognised and management to signpost to any further development actions. Staff spoke positively about undertaking additional training to enhance their practice. We discussed with management the benefits of staff being able to network with similar services within their local area, to share practice and to have the opportunity to attend external training. Internal training was planned for and designed to be interactive, enabling staff to participate in discussions and activities. Staff

told us that they felt valued and very well supported by the leadership team and benefitted from regular meetings to support both their personal professional and wellbeing needs.

Management recognised the value of parental involvement in informing service development. Questionnaires and conversations with parents helped to gather views and opinions, in addition to self-evaluation and observations that helped to shape the improvement plan.

## 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.

Children benefitted from a staff team who were kind, inclusive and nurturing. Strong relationships supported children to develop positive attachments with staff and their peers. One parent commented, "My child absolutely loves nursery! and has very strong relationships with the staff and other children."

Staff were deployed effectively across the service, ensuring that there was a balance of qualified staff and those undertaking training in each room. This provided opportunity for positive role modelling and guidance to newer staff. This ensured that children had positive experiences throughout the day. Staff absences were managed across the Start Bright services. For example, staff from the Gilmerton nursery covered at Bonnyrigg. This meant that children were familiar with the staff and staff knew children and the service well enough to care for them.

Staff spoke positively about their role and the setting. They felt supported by management and could ask for help or guidance. Management knew staff well and were respectful and friendly in their interactions. The staff achievement wall displayed comments from colleagues about their practice and successes. This fostered a positive ethos and environment for staff and children benefitted from experiencing the same approach towards them. Induction processes were in place for new staff and mentors provided additional guidance and support.

Staff told us that all staff are helpful to any new member of the team. Newer staff could talk us through their experience of induction. They confidently explained the stage of their induction, and mandatory training and reading that they had completed. As a result, children were being cared for by staff who had the correct knowledge, skills and guidance that was right for them.

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. For example, following child protection training, staff spoke about how they felt more confident in their knowledge and had created an environment that children feel safe in.

## 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?	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

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