

# University of St. Andrews Nursery Day Care of Children

4 Collins House  
East Sands  
St. Andrews  
KY16 8TU

Telephone: 01334 460 606

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 May 2023

**Service provided by:**  
University of St Andrews Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019013293

**Service no:**  
CS2019374119

## About the service

University of St. Andrews nursery is a day care of children service provided by the University of St. Andrews. They operate from a large open plan playroom, which is divided into three areas. All facilities are on one level. There is direct access to a large outdoor area. The service benefits from its close location to local amenities and the beach.

This service is in partnership with Fife Council to deliver funded places for children.

It is registered to;

To provide a care service to a maximum of 44 children at any one time who are not yet attending primary school; of whom no more than 30 may be under the age of 3 years and of whom no more than 12 may be under the age of 2 years.

Adult:child ratios will be a minimum of: Under 2 years

1:3

1:5

1:8 if the children

attend more than 4 hours per day or 1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 16 May 2023 between 08:45 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:

- spoke with 10 children using the service and two of their parents /carers. We also received five responses to our electronic questionnaire
- spoke with six staff and management
- observed practice and how children's play and routines were supported
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experience being cared for in an inclusive and supportive way as a culture of respect is implemented in practice.
- The environment has been developed and organised so children can access a range of activities indoors and outdoors.
- Quality assurance has been used to assess what the service does well and identify areas for improvement.
- Team building opportunities have helped the staff team develop positive working relationships
- The management team support staff well.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
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 on positive outcomes for children.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children had a sense of belonging as staff had created a positive ethos within the service. As a culture of respect and inclusiveness was in place, children experienced caring relationships with staff. They had also developed nice friendships with each other. Children therefore felt valued and were confident in the setting. Parents said "The staff are really friendly and approachable. They go out of their way to support our children and treat them in a very individualised way."

Effective communication with families meant partnership working with parents was established. As a result, staff understood the needs of children and could talk about how they were supported and met. Parents said "We have worked really closely with staff with regards to our daughter's care. We have formulated plans of care for her and staff are really knowledgeable."

Information was gathered, reviewed and used to meet the needs of children. Care plans had been developed and where needed, focus sheets outlined areas they needed help with. As the needs of children were shared with the staff team, they experienced a consistent approach to their care. We suggested further developing the systems in place by including the strategies and techniques used to support children. This will enable children's progress to be assessed as well as the effectiveness of strategies used. This will contribute to children's continued learning and development. Staff should ensure reviews take place every six months and that documents are dated.

There were routines in place if children needed to sleep. On busy days, the sleep room for the babies didn't offer staff space to comfortably settle children. We asked the manager to review this so children experience a calm and relaxed sleep time routine.

Children benefitted from home cooked meals and snacks. Lunch time was mostly a positive experience for children. Some were involved in organising the table and serving food which encouraged them to learn life skills. They enjoyed the social time chatting with friends. While staff supported children, we saw they did not sit with children for the whole time. To improve this aspect of the meal time experience, they should ensure they had all items needed to minimise the need to leave the table. Staff who supported younger children, should ensure they have space so they can sit comfortably beside them at the table. Staff had commented "We require more space at dinner times." This will help ensure they are fully focused on children as they promote good role modelling and provide learning experiences. In the 3 - 5 room, two sittings were in place. As a result, children were sitting for a long time over the lunch time period. To improve the experience, staff should review the procedure in their room. Using best practice guidance "Setting the table" should support this.

If children required medication, we confirmed it was safely stored. Appropriate information was recorded which ensured it was administered to children at the right time.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefited from a well organised environment where a range of activities supported their development and interests. This meant that they could lead their play both indoors and outdoors. Open ended resources helped children use their imagination, curiosity and investigation. Staff talked to children about their learning which supported their interests and contributed to their development in literacy and numeracy. As a result, we saw children were busy, engaged and spent long periods of time at activities. One parent said "I love that the staff incorporates the children's interest into their activities and education."

Direct access to the outdoor area and wider community meant children had opportunities to play in the natural environment. They developed their physical skills using bikes, large equipment and loose parts. We saw that children were confident in their abilities as they climbed, balanced and ably used wheeled toys. One child's sense of achievement was obvious, as they kept repeating an activity.

There was a range of planning records that detailed children learning and development as well as next steps. We could see how older children had been involved in planning and revisiting their learning. Parents said "My children get new experiences that are age appropriate". How it was captured in floor books varied between rooms. So there is a consistent approach throughout the service, all staff should consider how they use planning documents to show children's learning outcomes. This could include cross referencing documents and observations to show how children's learning was evaluated and 'next steps' were followed up.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, where where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.

Children were cared for in a safe and welcoming environment. A variety of play opportunities meant children benefited from physical games, arts and craft and toys that supported imaginative play. Cosy areas were available which ensured they could also have quiet time to rest if they wanted to. Photographs and artwork displayed contributed to the children's feeling of belonging and inclusion in the care setting. As a result, we saw that children had positive experiences as confidently used all areas of the service. Parents said "Staff is always rearranging the space to keep it exciting for the children."

We were satisfied that the environment was well ventilated and and regular cleaning took place. These measures were effective at minimising the spread of infection. Although children were encouraged to wash their hands during the day, staff should ensure they do this when coming in from outdoors.

Children's safety was promoted as the risk of leaving the nursery unsupervised was limited by the use of a secure entry system and security cameras. Staff were safety conscious as they used risk assessment and checklists to ensure any hazard was reduced. Children were encouraged to tidy up after using toys. They ensured children were well supervised throughout the day. Children were supported to be aware of and assess risk as staff talked to them about safety. As a result, children were able to participate in risky play safely.

We saw how the wider community was used to enhance children's experiences. Going to local parks, places of interest and beach supported their learning and development. For example, they learned about seasons as they explored the natural environment.

Safe and secure storage of children and family's personal information supported confidentiality and privacy.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

### Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Staff had created an inclusive environment which meant almost all parents, carers and children felt involved, valued and listened to. Opportunities were available for parents/carers to share their views about parts of the service. For example, a questionnaire enabled parents to give feedback that would be used to inform the aims of the service. At progress meetings, parents worked with staff to talk about their child's development and agree 'next steps'. As a result of the positive ethos, parents felt there was partnership working in place. Staff should continue to build on the opportunities to involve parents and children in developing the service. Staff would like "More parent involvement within personal learning journals."

National and local guidance had been used to support improvement. This had helped compile an improvement plan that will support the development of the service. Monthly reviews enabled changes to be monitored and updates made. Moving forward, staff and the manager should record the outcome of changes as this will enable them to assess that the desired aim is being achieved.

To support each other and promote positive outcomes for children, staff had started to use peer review. Moving forward, they should review suggested changes and record the outcome. To help with the improvement agenda, staff should continue to use best practice guidance and may find the bitesize sessions about self-evaluation in the Care Inspectorate Hub beneficial. This will support reflective practice and enable continuous improvement as staff develop confidence in evaluation.

We found that one staff member's registration with the Scottish Social Services Council had lapsed. This oversight was addressed quickly and quality assurance systems updated to ensure required registrations were checked.

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

### Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

There had been staff changes at all levels which had impacted on the development of the service. New staff had felt supported when they started work at the service, which meant they settled in well. Team building opportunities had been used to help establish positive working relationships. As a result, staff felt they were supported in their role and had a shared ethos which would support the development of the service. Parents said "I would appreciate being notified when a staff member leaves."

There was a mix of staff skills and experience within the team. They had started to identify what was going well and areas that needed to be developed. For example, induction and appraisal had started to be used to help identify staff skills, areas of interest and professional development opportunities they would benefit from. The continued development of these processes, would ensure children and families benefit

from a skilled, knowledgeable and confident staff team. Staff said "The support we give each other is a huge strength. Staff each have their own strengths and capabilities and we use that to enhance the children's experiences".

Staff were deployed throughout the service which helped support children to benefit from their nursery experience. However, at busier times, staff could review the timing of tasks they need to complete. For example, so children are fully supported at lunch time, staff should consider when they, for example, set up beds for children going to sleep. Staff said "The floor staff across all three rooms work well together, often resolving staffing issues themselves". And "I feel our team work well together and we always put the children's needs first." The manager advised they are still in the process of trying to recruit staff which will offer more flexibility and support children across the day.

Team and room meetings offered staff an opportunity to meet with colleagues and the manager to talk about the service. They had completed mandatory training which kept them up to date. In addition we suggested that staff identify best practice guidance that would help develop their skills and knowledge. Staff should evaluate their learning and demonstrate how they use it in practice. As a result, children would benefit from skilled and knowledgeable staff committed to providing positive experiences for them.

## 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

The manager should further develop the induction process to include information about staff practice competencies. There should be information about staff progress made during the induction process including;

- a schedule for the induction period and who the mentor is
- staff understanding of policies and procedures
- interaction with children
- training undertaken and how they have used it in practice
- meetings to review progress
- record outcomes and identify areas for continued professional development.

This is to ensure confidence in the people who support and care for me and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "that I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 8 September 2021.**

## Action taken since then

The service had started to use the national induction to support staff. This has enabled staff to feel supported in their role, reflect on their practice and identify training for continued professional development. **This area for improvement has been met.**

## 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	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

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

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