

QueensWellies Nursery Day Care of Children

Gatehouse Lodge West
Queens Road
Aberdeen
AB156YX

Telephone: 07595447596

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 February 2025

Service provided by:
KingsWellies Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2014012334

Service no:
CS2023000271

About the service

QueensWellies Nursery is a daycare of children service registered to provide care to a maximum of 57 children not yet attending primary school at any one time - no more than 14 are aged under 2 years.

The service is delivered from their premises in Aberdeen, where provision is spread over two floors. Care is delivered from two main playrooms on the ground floor depending on children's age. A further two smaller playrooms are available upstairs. An outdoor classroom area is situated near the entrance and children can access a paved outdoor play area from here. A further three enclosed, grassy garden areas are also available to children. There were up to 44 children present during the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 and 19 February 2025 between the times of 08:50 and 17:40. 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 and complaint 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 and three of their parents/carers
- received 21 completed questionnaires from parents and staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children's wellbeing benefitted from warm and nurturing interactions.
- Children's interests and preferences were recognised and used to inform planning.
- Staff supported children in their play, however, some staff should build their confidence in using interactions to promote and extend children's learning.
- Quality assurance and improvement processes were in place for the provider, to promote progression they should ensure that these refer to specific areas of this nursery.
- Staff felt well supported by colleagues and the management team and were beginning to work together as a team.

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 positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children benefitted from warm and nurturing interactions with staff. Staff offered lots of praise and encouragement as well as reassurance and comfort. Babies received lots of cuddles and physical reassurance, older children were affectionate towards staff members initiating cuddles. Most parents were happy with the care provided with some commenting on how well their child had settled and how welcoming staff were.

At most times, staff were confident in promoting children's privacy and dignity in their care routines. For example, asking a child if they wanted their nappy changed or face wiped. There were times, however, when staff would lift a young child or wipe their nose without consulting them. We discussed this with the manager on the first day of our visit and noted improvement on the second.

Children's healthy eating was promoted by the provision of meals which looked and smelt appetising. Dietary restrictions were well catered for and alternatives were available if children did not like the prepared meal. Once children were served their food, staff sat with them and took the opportunity to engage and interact with them. Supporting their communication and language as well as independence in eating or serving food. At times though staff were focused on tasks such as clearing away or setting up rather than on the children. This meant that these times were less engaging for children and opportunities were missed to support them. The leadership team agreed to support staff in promoting a more engaging time around meals.

Staff recognised the importance of rest and sleep to promote children's wellbeing. They knew which children needed comforters or help to fall asleep. For the youngest children a sleep room was available and older toddlers slept in the playroom on sleep mats. Children in the 2-5 room had a separate room where they settled on sleep mats to rest. Staff lowered lights and tried to keep noise levels low to promote opportunities to sleep.

Children's wellbeing was generally supported through the use of care plans. These plans were reviewed by parents. This practice fostered parental involvement and helped maintain the relevance of the care plans. However, there were areas that required attention. While specific needs, such as medication, were addressed with additional care plans, the documentation of strategies for supporting children was inconsistent. Staff demonstrated confidence in supporting individual children, such as settling new arrivals or encouraging participation, but these strategies were not always recorded. To enhance the consistency and continuity of care, plans for all children should include detailed strategies of support. This will ensure a uniform approach and better support the staff in their roles.

The process for the management of administration of medication followed guidance and promoted children's health. Children's safety was promoted through staff understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns. A policy was in place and training had been undertaken to support their understanding of this.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Most children were engaged and having fun in their activities. The accessibility of resources promoted children's choice and supported them to lead their own play. A current focus throughout the nursery was in developing the balance between planned and spontaneous play. This had started to impact on children's experiences which were generally reflective of their interests. Not all staff were yet confident in the process and work was ongoing to support their development. Parents who provided feedback felt that their children were learning through their experiences. Some parents commented that they would like more detailed information on children's experiences and learning.

Children's language and literacy skills were supported through conversations with staff as well as activities such as singing. Staff in the baby room were confident in supporting children to develop their vocabulary and did this naturally within children's play. Children had access to books at various spaces in the nursery, however, these were not well used. Staff should consider how best to engage children in spontaneous story telling. Resources to support children's skills in numeracy such as measuring tapes, rulers, jugs and scales were used by the children. However, staff missed some of these opportunities to support children to develop numeracy skills. For example, by using numerical language such as bigger, smaller, more or less.

Resources available were generally suited to children's age and stage of development. This promoted their engagement and kept them safe. There were some challenges around this in the 2-5 room which had been recognised by staff. For example, needing to provide writing utensils suitable for all ages but ensure access only to those suitable for individual children. Staff were vigilant to support children in this.

The resources and displays reflected children's current interests and topics being explored. This included animal masks for children who had shown an interest in jungle animals. At most times, staff were responsive to children's cues and able to offer support, praise and encouragement. There were a few times when these cues were missed, where children needed support accessing particular resources or in visiting the toilet for example.

The service was building links to the local community through the use of nearby amenities such as parks and shops. Staff were knowledgeable about the local area and shared this with the children during walks. They were also visiting a local care home and other nurseries in the area. This supported children to feel confident in their community.

Not all staff were confident in using skilled interactions to support children to learn through their play. This led to some missed opportunities to extend children's experiences or promote their learning. The leadership team are continuing to support staff in developing their skills in this area.

Observations of children's experiences were recorded and shared with parents via an online platform. The observations provided a good account of children's experiences and enjoyment. The identification of learning through that experience was not yet at a consistent level. Next steps had been identified with the intention of promoting children's progression. There was not always the level of detail necessary for these to be effective. Staff should ensure that strategies to be used to encourage or support children to achieve the next step are recorded. The system used had recently undergone some changes and staff were being supported to build their confidence in this.

How good is our setting?

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 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

The nursery building was welcoming and inviting to children and their families. Rooms were well decorated and maintained giving children the message that they matter. Parents told us they valued being able to drop off and collect their children from inside. Rooms were bright and airy with lots of natural light and ventilation to support children's wellbeing. Soft furnishings such as rugs and cushions were used to provide cosy corners and homely touches. Adult sized chairs were available to support comfort for staff and children when children needed bottle fed or cuddled. There was ample space for children's play.

The indoor and outdoor areas were zoned to support children's play and all spaces were seen to be well used. Indoors there was a 'home room' for role play, craft and writing areas and construction areas. Outdoors there was a courtyard which was used for more physical activities, a sensory garden, mud kitchen garden and another grassy area for children to access. The courtyard area was accessed directly from the 'outdoor classroom' (an enclosed space to give the feeling of being outdoors when still sheltered from the weather). Children were encouraged to go outdoors for play at various times of the day. Walks around the local area and visits to nearby parks extended children's outdoor experiences.

The building and outdoor areas were secure to support children's safety. The use of gates and a secure entry system as well as walkie talkies for communication supported this. Risk assessments were in place for areas within the nursery, in the community and for individual children. They considered the benefits of resources and activities as well as identifying any hazards. They included details of mitigation measures to reduce the risk of harm to children and staff. There were opportunities for children to be involved in the risk assessments. This kept children safe and promoted their awareness of how to manage their own safety.

Children's health was promoted through following infection prevention and control measures advised in guidance. This included keeping surfaces and areas clean and good hygiene such as hand washing at appropriate times. Children were supported to understand the importance of this through gentle reminders and the use of songs.

Children and their family's privacy was protected through the safe storage of information. This included password protection for electronically held information and lockable cabinets for paperwork.

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

There was a clear statement of the vision, values and aims of the service which reflected the provision

provided. This was displayed around the nursery supporting staff and parents to be aware of what was important for them to meet the needs of children.

Families had opportunities to be involved in the development of the service through questionnaires, evaluation of events such as stay and play and a comments and compliment slip. Most parents told us that they felt involved and some mentioned the methods they had used. One commented, "Often questionnaires or consultations are sent out asking our views on nursery or snack and lunch menu which is good to see as they are trying to develop and enhance their service to us", while another said, "There are often questions around the nursery where we can give our feedback/thoughts". Management agreed to continue to consider a wide range of methods of gathering feedback to encourage further parental engagement and support all parents to feel involved.

Established staff were confident when discussing their role in self-evaluation and the development of the service. The leadership team used team meetings as opportunities to discuss the development plan. Monthly focus areas from the improvement plan were displayed for parents and staff. However, some staff were still unsure of focus areas and their role in the changes. Time may be needed to allow newer staff to raise their awareness of changes and their role in these.

Regular audits were carried out to quality assure practice and processes in place to support children. Some of these were delegated across senior staff which helped make the procedures manageable. Recent audits had not identified any issues but our sampling of records had noted two discrepancies. Management were fully engaged in the inspection process and took action to remedy these immediately. For example, when we identified that some recording of medication did not meet guidance, immediate action was taken to rectify this. The manager agreed to ensure that all staff involved were consistent in their approach to carrying out audits.

Evaluation of the care offered was taking place using guidance and frameworks. This was beginning to help staff consider what could be better as well as identifying successes and achievements. The quality assurance and self-evaluation were used to inform a comprehensive improvement plan for the service. Focus areas were identified as well as actions and timescales. While these were aspirational, they were not yet focused on specific areas and actions which would support staff in progressing planned improvements. Identifying smaller actions within the focus areas would allow tighter timescales and promote the progression of change.

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 staff team was enthusiastic and passionate about their role in caring for the children. There were enough staff to meet the needs of children. There was a mix of experienced and new staff. Experienced staff were good at supporting those who were less confident or new to the service. All staff told us they felt supported by colleagues and management. This helped to build their confidence in their role.

Staff were available to talk to parents when they arrived to collect or leave their children at nursery. This promoted positive transitions for children and opportunities to share information. Further opportunities to share information included stay and play sessions, digital platforms and meetings between staff and

parents. Most parents said they were happy with communication, but some would prefer more detail about their child's experiences, learning and development. For example, one parent commented that there was an "Open feedback culture" but others said "We are always greeted well from the staff and always asked how our child is before they are handed over for the session. It is slightly rushed, don't get any feedback about their play and learning. A meeting every 6 months would be a lovely idea" and others asked for more frequent updates on their child's learning on the digital platforms.

Families knew the staff that were caring for their child with only one disagreeing that they had a bond with staff. However, some parents mentioned that changes to staff within rooms had impacted on their child's connection with staff. The manager agreed that these changes should be reduced now that there was a settled staff team in the service. Cover for staff absence was arranged with consistent relief staff, supporting them to provide a continuity of care for children.

Staff told us they felt they were gelling as a team and were working well together. Staff treated each other with respect and courtesy, providing a positive atmosphere for children. They communicated well with each other at most times and were flexible if tasks took them away from children. This promoted children's safety through adequate supervision. However, at busy times, communication was less effective in enabling staff to support children to follow smooth transitions throughout the day. For example, some children were seated at the table for lunch then asked to wash their hands. The manager agreed to support staff in defining clear roles at busy times to promote a smoother routine and consistently positive experience for children.

Staff were recruited safely and participated in an induction programme which promoted their confidence in their role. There were opportunities for new staff to receive mentoring from experienced staff to further promote confidence. Regular staff meetings provided opportunities for staff to share their skills and experience. These measures supported positive experiences and outcomes for children.

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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.