

West End Wellies Day Care of Children

27 Morningside Lane
Aberdeen
AB10 7NB

Telephone: 01224741175

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 May 2026

Service provided by:
KingsWellies Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2014012334

Service no:
CS2024000344

About the service

West End Wellies is situated in Mannofield, Aberdeen within the grounds of Aberdeenshire Cricket Club.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 80 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The lower room can accommodate no more than 35 children of which: no more than 16 are aged under 2 years; no more than 19 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

The upper room can accommodate no more than 45 children aged from 2.5 years to not yet attending primary school of which: no more than 10 are aged between 2.5 years to not yet attending primary school.

Children are cared for in two large playrooms with access to outdoor play areas and playing fields. The service is close to local schools, shops and amenities. 53 children were registered with the service at the time of the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 May 2026 between 09:30 and 17:40 and 21 May 2026 between 09:30 and 13:00. 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 complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received ten completed questionnaires from parents and nine from staff
- spoke with staff and the management team
- spoke with three parents/carers
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children were cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment.
- Furnishings and resources were of a high quality.
- Children had fun as they accessed a well-presented variety of resources.
- Children were supported to make choices and lead their own play.
- Staff were developing their skills in planning and assessment of children's learning.
- Families benefitted from positive relationships with staff and children experienced warm, supportive interactions.
- Effective quality assurance practices contributed to positive outcomes for children and 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

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children were cared for in a service with clear aims and objectives. These had been recently reviewed in consultation with families and staff, supporting a shared sense of ownership. These were clearly displayed throughout the setting, promoting transparency and a consistent understanding of expectations. We found that the service aims were reflected in practice, with an ethos of continuous improvement evident across the setting. Staff told us they felt confident to share their views and contribute ideas, which supported ongoing development and improvement.

Positive experiences for children were promoted by well embedded quality assurance practices. These were supported by an organisational approach, with clear expectations from senior management. A range of activities including audits, practice observations, staff reflection and self-evaluation supported the identification of strengths, and where practice needed to be developed to improve children's outcomes. While most audits were effective, some had not identified minor areas for improvement, and we encouraged management to continue to develop these processes to promote a consistently robust approach to quality assurance.

Families had opportunities to provide feedback. Some parents telling us they felt meaningfully involved, whilst other felt this could be improved. Children contributing meaningfully through approaches such as, daily evaluation of activities and mind maps. Parents comments were acknowledged and responded to using a newly developed 'You said, we did' board, which helped families feel involved and informed of developments they had contributed to.

Planned improvements to children's experiences were relevant, achievable and realistic. The pace of change was appropriate and manageable. Staff were supported to contribute and understand developments when the settings improvement plan was shared with them at regular staff meetings.

Despite recent changes, we observed a cohesive staff team, who worked well together. Some parents were concerned that a high staff turnover could be detrimental; however, staff were recruited safely and in line with guidance. A clear focus on selecting individuals who would complement and strengthen the existing team helped minimise disruption. A thorough induction programme, including a mentoring system was in place to support new staff. This provided ongoing guidance and support, and more experienced staff had opportunities to take on leadership roles. Staff, particularly those new to the service, told us they felt welcomed and well supported in their roles and that they were able to access support for both professional and personal matters. This contributed to a team who demonstrated a commitment to achieving positive outcomes for children.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Children experience high quality spaces

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children were cared for in welcoming surroundings which were well furnished with high-quality resources. The setting was clean and well maintained, with effective infection prevention and control procedures promoting children's health and wellbeing. Most parents were happy with the environment, with one commenting, "I feel very confident that my [child] is cared for in a safe, secure, and well-maintained environment". Staff supported children to play safely and helped them develop an understanding of risk. Robust risk assessments were in place, identifying potential hazards and how these could be minimised to ensure children's safety. Doors were secure, with high handles and were protected by entry systems to prevent unsupervised access to all areas. CCTV at the main entrance further supported security of the setting, contributing to a safe and secure environment.

Children's personal care and medical needs were generally well met. Staff supported children sensitively and respectfully during toileting and nappy changing. Handwashing was encouraged at key points throughout the day; however, this could have been strengthened through more consistent supervision, particularly following mealtimes, to ensure good hygiene practices were embedded. Where children needed medication, this was stored appropriately and administered sensitively to promote children's wellbeing.

Children benefitted from access to a range of resources that promoted choice and independence. Resources were accessible, allowing children to lead their own play within the space. While some materials reflected diversity, there was scope to further develop these to better represent the cultures and backgrounds of children attending the setting. Open-ended resources supported creativity and exploration, and children moved freely between areas, contributing to their motivation, confidence and engagement.

Outdoor play areas were secure, developmentally appropriate and accessible. Older children, in the upstairs room, were supported to access outdoor play through a system which enabled them to indicate their choice to play outside, with staff ensuring safe supervision on stairs. Younger children, on the ground floor, accessed outdoor play in smaller groups. We encouraged staff to consider a more flexible approach to promote more spontaneous access for this age group.

Children's personal information was managed appropriately. Digital information was password protected and paper records were stored securely. Access to records was limited to relevant staff, supporting confidentiality and respecting families' right to privacy.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children were engaged and motivated in their play, making good use of a range of varied and interesting resources. They were supported to make choices and lead their own experiences. Where some resources remained unused, we suggested staff review levels of engagement to maximise learning opportunities. Staff recognised the importance of following children's interests, which supported sustained and meaningful play where children explored their curiosities.

A balance of child and adult-led experiences supported learning, including activities such as, football and cooking sessions with external providers. Parents commented positively on the range of activities available to their children, with one telling us, "The activities and experiences they offer are second to none."

Children developed early language, literacy and numeracy skills through accessible books, environmental print and positive interactions. Staff sang, counted and engaged children in conversations, modelling language effectively. Older children enjoyed using measuring tapes to measure objects and each other, providing relevant opportunities to develop numeracy skills. Daily access to outdoor play enabled children to enjoy fresh air and physical activity. The outdoor classroom effectively complemented indoor learning, and children were active as they climbed, ran and participated in games within the garden area.

Planning for children's learning was flexible, and staff were being supported in using a new approach. While some staff extended learning effectively, others were less confident, resulting in some missed opportunities. However, despite planning approaches being at an early stage, positive outcomes for children were evident. Older children accessed a mix of planned and spontaneous experiences, reflecting current learning needs and interests. Younger children engaged in sensory and experiential activities such as, fruit printing, using play dough, sand and water, and exploring natural items such as, flowers.

Observations of children's learning informed next steps were shared with parents, although was not yet consistent across the team. Managers had identified this as an area for development and were supporting staff to improve their understanding of planning and assessment, to ensure more consistent experiences for all children.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children experienced warm, supportive interactions from staff, with most offering reassurance, cuddles and encouragement. Staff skills and knowledge varied, and on one occasion, daily routines did not fully support children's emotional needs. The management team were aware of where some support for staff development in this area was needed. This was helping to develop an environment where children's emotional needs are met to a consistently high standard.

Staff were enthusiastic and motivated in their roles. They had developed positive, caring relationships with children and demonstrated a good knowledge of their individual needs. Parents were generally happy with the support their children received. This was supported using personal plans, which were regularly reviewed in partnership with parents and contained important information relating to children's needs. Where individual risk assessments were in place, some did not clearly detail how children's current support needs were being met.

We encouraged the manager to review risk assessment practices, particularly for individual children with additional or medical needs, to ensure all information is clear, detailed and supports consistently positive outcomes for children.

Children enjoyed, appetising and nutritious meals, which met recommended nutritional guidelines. Meals were supplied by an external catering provider, and staff managed allergies and individual preferences effectively by offering suitable alternatives. During most mealtimes, staff sat alongside children, promoting a safe, sociable and nurturing experience. However, this was less effective for older children on the first day of the inspection, where staffing arrangements linked to a weekly afternoon activity impacted the quality of the mealtime experience. This improved on the second day, with children experiencing a more relaxed and positive environment. Management agreed to monitor arrangements to ensure consistent experiences across the week.

Families were supported to be involved in the life of the setting through a range of opportunities, including stay-and-play sessions, events for grandparents, and a planned family picnic. Feedback from most parents was positive, particularly in relation to communication and review meetings with keyworkers to discuss their child's progress. We observed positive communication during handovers, with staff taking time to share meaningful information about children's experiences. This practice could be further strengthened by encouraging parents to spend more time within the playrooms at drop-off and collection times, supporting greater engagement in children's daily experiences.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children experience high quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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