

# FossoPLAY Outdoor Nursery Day Care of Children

Fossoway Stables  
Fossoway  
Kinross  
KY13 0UP

Telephone: 07738 682 016

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
3 May 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Christopher McConnell

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019990890

**Service no:**  
CS2019377682

## About the service

FossoPLAY Outdoor nursery is based in Kinross. It provides a fully outdoor care service to a maximum of 24 children aged two years to under nine years. The service operates from a 70-acre wooded estate and provides nature-based play, learning and childcare.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 April 2022 between 09:45 and 17:30. One early year's inspector carried out the inspection. Feedback to the manager took place 03 May 2022.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- undertook observations to observe practice and children's experiences
- spoke with children who experienced care at the service and five of their parents/carers
- spoke with the staff and manager
- reviewed relevant documentation.

## What people told us

Children were confident to tell us about their experiences while attending the service. They showed us around the site, explaining how they played in each area. They told us, they had fun playing with their friends and demonstrated their physical skills of climbing and swinging on ropes. One child told us 'I have the best time here; it really is so much fun'.

As part of the inspection, we received views from five parents and carers of children who attend the service. All parents said that they were very happy with the quality of care their children received. One parent commented 'The approach of the staff has really helped us with transitions, they have a strong ethos of meeting children's individual needs.' Another parent told us, 'We love it, my child's physical capabilities has improved so much'.

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to submit a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their improvement plan which demonstrated their priorities for development, and how they are monitoring the quality of provision within their service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated the quality of care and support as very good.

FossoPLAY Outdoor Nursery provided children with a nurturing and exciting space to grow and develop through nature-based play and learning. Children played happily and purposefully together engaging in real life experiences which enhanced their confidence and resilience. They were having fun and very comfortable within their natural surroundings.

Staff were welcoming and friendly with an enabling attitude and knew children very well. They recognised children as individuals which provided them with sensitive and responsive care.

Children benefitted from staff's warm and nurturing interactions which effectively supported them to resolve minor disputes in a meaningful way. Staff consistently promoted responsibility and independence and offered lots of praise for successes and achievements. These sensitive interactions contributed to children feeling valued and respected and demonstrated the setting clearly placed children and at the centre of their work.

Children were achieving, we found they were experts in their own learning, which was motivated by the rich natural environment. Floor books documented the children's thoughts, ideas and discussions, highlighting staff's responsiveness to children's interests. We found there was some missed opportunities to extend learning and suggested staff minimise the number of books they used. This would support staff further with the flow, depth and progression of learning and contribute to children reaching their full potential.

Language development was very well supported. A focus on the wellbeing indicators ensured words such as kind, safe and respect were embedded in practice. We regularly heard children refer to them within their play experiences and through their interactions with peers, this told us children were considerate and respectful.

Families received instant updates to their child's care plans and daily routines through an online, interactive app which ensured they were kept up to date with their child's day and care, as it occurred. Observations of learning were of good quality, next steps identified achievable progression in development and learning. These were shared with parents which ensured they felt included in their child's progress.

Appropriate infection control procedures were in place to support a safe environment. For example, children washed their hands with warm running water and robust cleaning routines had been established with products that did not harm the natural environment.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated the quality of the environment as very good.

Children experienced a natural environment in which to explore and be physically active in peaceful and calm surroundings. The nursery site was well designed, with areas well thought out and the wooded area provided a stimulating space where children comfortably engaged with nature.

Children explored the site with ease, aware of their boundaries and how far they could go to keep safe. One child told us, 'This is the line, you can't go over this, you could get lost'. Robust risk assessments ensured hazards were minimised and staff used radios to communicate if they had eyes on children venturing further afield. We heard them explain 'If you can't see us, we can't see you'. Additionally, they used a whistle at times which attracted all the children's attention. As a result of these procedures safety around the site was very well managed. Children were provided with a safe and secure environment.

Children navigated positive risk in their play and asked staff for help when faced with challenges. Staff skilfully supported children to make good choices and judgements about their outdoor play experiences. This approach encouraged children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe while supporting their overall health and wellbeing.

Play and learning was of high quality, offered through a wealth of natural resources which the children collected from the forest floor. Additionally, extensive loose parts and objects of interest impacted positively on children's creativity, curiosity and imaginative play. We found children enthusiastically engaged in activities and they worked collaboratively together to cook on fires, climb, build, cross bridges, and swing on ropes. Their natural environment continuously challenged and developed their physical confidence.

Children were enabled to rest and have quiet time. A large yurt provided a warm and cosy environment for children to relax, draw and look at books. A log burner provided warmth in the colder months. One child told us, 'The yurt is our calm place; we have a hammock there to rest'.

Children were provided with snacks from home and were encouraged to snack when they were hungry. Mealtimes were a positive, sociable, and unhurried experience for children. Staff sat and ate with the children engaging them in meaningful conversation, they should now consider other opportunities they could make available to children to support choice and responsibility during mealtimes.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated the quality of staffing as very good.

Staff were committed, motivated, and passionate about knowing the children as individuals and the benefits of nature on children's health and development.

Staff morale was high, they worked well together and they identified strongly with the service which resulted in a happy enabling atmosphere with a right's based approach.

Staff had a very good understanding of current best practice documents and were well trained. They were keen to further their learning and told us 'We want to be the best we can be'. Staff spoke confidently about how they supported each other to best meet the needs of the children and how each other's skills and knowledge was used to support planning children's experiences.

Staff were skilled in effective questioning, they empowered children to make their own choices and decisions, problem solve and extended their thinking. They engaged children in conversations which effectively encouraged them to regulate their emotions and express their wishes which contributed positively to their emotional wellbeing.

We saw many examples of this throughout the inspection, which demonstrated the service's approach to play and learning being child led. Very strong relationships had been formed between staff and children which positively supported their overall emotional and physical development.

Communication processes between staff and the manager worked well within the team. Annual appraisals contributed to staff feeling valued and they regularly discussed their personal progress and development which contributed to a shared approach in providing very good outcomes for children. Regular staff meetings provided opportunities for reflection on improvements and developments of the nursery and provided opportunities for professional discussion.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of good for this theme, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children and young people's experiences.

The professional manager had laid effective foundations as to how the outdoor play-based nursery would operate. He was committed to providing positive outcomes for children with a clear vision of how they would continue to improve. Staff told us that they felt well supported by the manager and found him to be open, approachable, and very hands on. This resulted in a strong ethos across the team and service which clearly demonstrated the nursery aims and objectives for children to reach their full potential.

The manager knew staff skills and knowledge well. He told us of his plans to review leadership roles and had how he would delegate them amongst the skilled staff team. We agreed that this would contribute positively to their sense of self-esteem and confidence.

A realistic Improvement plan considered key planning priorities which was monitored by a tracker and reflected on with staff throughout the year. A sufficient start had been made to self-evaluation processes. Progress identified within key quality indicators was monitored termly. We discussed how more views could be gathered from children and their families to inform future improvement plans. This would inform the manager further in where the nursery was with key priority planning and help him plan future developments within the service. Additionally, it would support children and families to influence positive change and feel included in the service.

The manager used an online management system to monitor observations, next steps, care plans, accidents and incidents. We discussed improving quality assurance processes by taking more focused observations and giving clear feedback to staff with identified actions. This would enhance staff skills further, help drive forward improvements, and support children's experiences further.

Strong partnerships were in place with families. Parents received informative information and were provided with clear expectations of what they should bring on what days to ensure children were kept comfortable in the elements. This ensured children happily engaged in activities in all weathers. Parents spoke highly of the relationship's they had with staff and the expertise they had in the concept of outdoor play and learning. One parent told us, 'The staff are fantastic individuals, they all know my child very well, it's refreshing'. As a result, parents felt included in their child's experiences and positive and trusting relationships had been formed.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

### 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).

### Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

### Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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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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