

# Thrive Childcare and Education Happitots Cove Bay Day Care of Children

Cove Road  
Cove Bay  
Aberdeen  
AB12 3NX

Telephone: 01224 249 234

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
12 October 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Bertram Nurseries Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002955

**Service no:**  
CS2008180905

## About the service

Thrive Childcare and Education Happitots Cove Bay is based in the residential area of Cove Bay, Aberdeen. Children have access to a number of playrooms. There are garden spaces to the rear of the property. The service is close to a local park and other amenities. On street parking is available.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 63 children and is provided by Bertram Nurseries Limited. The service is in partnership with Aberdeen City Council to provide funded early learning and childcare.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11 October 2022 between 09:30 and 17:30 and 12 October 2022 between 09:45 to 16:45. 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, 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
- received four responses from parents and families via email and telephone
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children benefited from interactions with staff which were nurturing, caring and kind.
- Children experienced a warm atmosphere as staff had positive working relationships and had developed trusting relationships with children and families.
- Children benefitted from a safe and secure environment.
- Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were in the early stages, this should now be a priority for the management team to ensure improvements are sustained and processes embedded.
- Children experienced sociable mealtimes. However, there were limited opportunities provided to children for choice, independence, responsibility, and development of self-help skills.
- Children experienced continuity of care as the staff team were consistent.

## 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?	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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, 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's experiences.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children benefited from staff who knew them well. Staff interactions were nurturing, caring and kind which supported children to feel comfortable and at ease. Staff communicated with children at their level in a quiet and sensitive way. As a result of these supportive interactions, close bonds between staff and children had been developed. These helped children feel included and safe as they were cared for in a consistent way.

The quality of mealtimes could be improved throughout the nursery. Staff sat with children and most engaged well with them, encouraging conversations. This contributed to the sociable experience for children and allowed opportunity for emerging language skills to be developed. However, there were limited opportunities provided to children for choice, independence, responsibility, and development of self-help skills. We discussed with the management team how they could make mealtimes more homely and a positive learning experience for the children. There were improvements made by the second day of the inspection. The management and staff should now continue to review and develop this time. This will support opportunities to promote children's independence skills and provide an element of choice at mealtimes.

Staff were kind and caring and interactions were generally warm and responsive to children's individual needs. Staff knew most children within their rooms well and were able to discuss their needs and any specific strategies put in place to support them. Children who were unsettled were comforted and provided with reassurance throughout the day. This resulted in most children being confident and gave them a sense of belonging.

Younger children benefitted from care that was calm, nurturing and adapted to their needs. During personal care routines and when preparing children for sleep, staff spoke quietly and sensitively. Children waking from a peaceful sleep were cuddled and comforted until they were ready for play. Children's cues for support or reassurance were responded to appropriately on most occasions. There were few occasions where these cues were missed, meaning children did not immediately get the comfort they needed. Management agreed to work with staff to ensure they were consistently responsive to children verbal and non-verbal cues. Staff responded to children's invitation to join their play, contributing to the positive experiences for children.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were engaged in a range of play experiences throughout the inspection. There was a balance of spontaneous and planned opportunities that supported children to be creative and imaginative in their play. Staff observed children's play and at times made good interventions that supported and extended their play. This resulted in children being engaged and having fun with adults who showed enthusiasm in their interactions.

Children experienced good opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across all playrooms. For younger children, spontaneous singing promoted early language development and planned experiences had been offered that introduced early numeracy concepts. In the playroom for older children, staff were spontaneously using mathematical language within the play opportunities such as 'long', 'short' and 'how much further'. Children were given planned opportunities to develop early literacy skills, for example, identifying letters from their name and using twigs in sand to practice early writing.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests. In the younger rooms, schematic play experiences had been considered to support children to learn and develop. Staff had used observation to develop areas within the room and provide experiences for children. In the older room, staff captured children's interests. Floor books were used to reflect this and used to record children's participation and activities. We discussed with the service how these could be developed to support children's ongoing learning and provide opportunity for them to be involved in planning.

Children's ongoing learning and developmental progression was supported by sharing observations and next steps with parents via a digital platform. Observations detailed significant learning and next steps were relevant to individual children. As a result, children were effectively supported to learn and progress. Some parents commented that observations were not frequent. We discussed this with the service who agreed to evaluate the process of this information being shared in a way that suits families.

## How good is our setting?

## 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, 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's experiences.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced playrooms that were inviting, clean and well ventilated. Displays around the rooms were used to reflect children's interests and experiences. This provided opportunities for children to revisit their play and learning and share their achievements which contributed to children's sense of pride and demonstrated that they matter. Each playroom had age-appropriate resources that reflected children's interests and learning. We discussed with the management team increasing the amount of real, natural, and open-ended resources across all playrooms. The service had identified this and had agreed to continue to develop this area.

There were areas for children to access soft furnishings and cosy spaces which supported their wellbeing. These spaces helped children relax, self-regulate, and feel safe. However, the service should continue to develop playrooms to ensure spaces reflect a more comfortable and homely feel to support nurture and wellbeing.

Health and wellbeing was promoted through outdoor play experiences. Each playroom had direct access to an outdoor play space. The gardens provided a range of opportunities for the development of physical skills and exploration. Children had fun and enjoyment as they took part in imaginative play making pizzas in their mud kitchen. This contributed to children developing curiosity and playing cooperatively.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure environment. Staff worked together to identify and remove any risks to children indoors and outdoors. Risk assessments were in place to support this practice.

Children's health was promoted by effective infection, prevention, and control routines. These were supported by effective quality assurance practices.

## How good is our leadership?

## 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, 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's experiences.

## 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management team were dedicated and committed to improving the quality of the service for children and families. There was a warm atmosphere as staff had positive working relationships and had developed trusting relationships with children and families. Staff told us they found the management team to be approachable and supportive. This was contributing to a positive ethos and meant children were benefiting from role models that demonstrated respectful and caring relationships. Families said, "The management team are absolutely excellent" and "it is good that the managers are visible and approachable".

There had been significant changes to the staff and management team since the previous inspection. As a result, the manager had been focused on establishing relationships and identifying roles and responsibilities throughout the team. This was promoting a shared vision for the setting that helped staff know what was important for the setting to meet the needs of children and families.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were in the early stages and were beginning to have a positive impact on children's outcomes and experiences. The management team agreed to sustain and build on these processes until they become embedded in practice (**see area for improvement one**).

The staff were encouraged and supported to be involved in the self-evaluation process and improvement planning. These processes were not yet established enough to secure sustained improvement. To support continued reflective practice and drive forward improvements staff involvement in self-evaluation needs to be more firmly embedded.

The service worked to involve families in the life of the centre with the recent introduction of the parent partnership group. Most parents who provided feedback told us they felt involved in the service.

## Areas for improvement

1.

To support continuous improvement within the setting, management and staff should continue to embed quality assurance processes and self-evaluation to ensure improvements are identified and sustained.

This is in order to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, 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's experiences.

### 4.3 Staff deployment

Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff who were committed to their role. Staff shared a common vision and worked hard to achieve quality play and learning for children. They worked well together and had created a warm and welcoming environment for children. Parents told us, "Staff definitely develop great relationships with the children and it's very obvious to see" and "all the staff show genuine care and consideration for the children at the nursery". This contributed to positive relationships between staff and families.

There were sufficient staff across the day to support children and meet their needs. Staff communicated clearly with each other in a respectful manner, to create a positive ethos and to ensure children's needs were met. This meant that children benefited from a positive experience. The effective planning of staff breaks minimised disruption to children's routines and ensured there were enough staff to support children at busier times of the day. For example, staff took time when parents were picking up children to share information. During mealtimes the service should ensure that the deployment of staff skills and experience always supports positive outcomes for children. For example, staffing could be more effectively deployed over lunch provision to place the more skilled staff with children at the tables; this will enable skilled staff to role model best practice, conversations, nurture and supportive encouragement to children to best meet their needs.

Nursery staff felt valued and listened to as they worked together to reflect on their practice, recognise challenges and identify ways to move forward on their improvement journey. This had a positive impact on staff morale and helped to promote a happy, relaxed atmosphere for children to enjoy.

Children experienced continuity of care as the staff team were consistent. This included the supply practitioners who were employed for specific hours each day to support staff and cover any staff absences. This meant children were cared for by staff who were familiar to them and promoted the building of positive trusting relationships. The supply practitioners told us they felt included and valued as members of the staff team.



## 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

To improve the quality of children's play and learning the service should review how they plan for and provide experiences. The service should ensure children have access to a range of interesting, stimulating experiences to support their individual development.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (1.30) and 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials (1.31) and 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (2.27).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

#### Action taken since then

We noted improvement in relation to the quality of play, learning and development opportunities. Staff were responsive to individual needs. Children had access to interesting and stimulating experiences in playrooms. As a result children were engaged in their play and learning and were being supported to reach their full potential.

This area for improvement has been met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To maintain and promote children's care, wellbeing, development and learning, personal plans should be further developed. The should contain relevant and meaningful information that supports the service to record and implement strategies of support for children. This is to ensure children have the support that is right for them and their progress can be monitored.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (1.15:) and 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (1.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

#### Action taken since then

Children's care, wellbeing, development and learning was supported effectively as personal plan contained relevant information. Strategies of support were recorded. This resulted in children's receiving the right support at the right time.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

To promote high-quality interactions that support children's wellbeing staff should be supported to develop their understanding of child development and nurture.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure' (3.10) and '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' (3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

### Action taken since then

Staff interactions supported children's wellbeing. The management team had focussed on developing staffs understanding of nurture. As a result children were nurtured and supported to feel comfortable and at ease in the setting.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 4

To support staff practice, knowledge and confidence staff supervision procedures should be developed and implemented by the service. This would help to develop a culture of improvement and reflection across the service and allow staff to consider how their role could impact on outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state, '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' (3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

### Action taken since then

Support and supervision had been implemented to identify strengths and areas for improvement relevant to staff roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in improved outcomes for children.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 5

The management team should further develop systems and processes for improvement planning and self-evaluation so that the service can make and sustain improvements. Robust quality assurance systems should be further developed and embedded into practice in order to support the management team and staff to monitor the quality of the service so that children experience consistently positive outcomes.

This is to ensure that the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (4.11)' and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (4.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

**Action taken since then**

Systems and processes had been introduced to support improvement and self-evaluation within the service. These were beginning to have a positive impact on children's experiences. However, it was too early to assess the impact of these process in ensuring sustained improvements.

To give the service longer to embed new systems and processes, this area for improvement has been continued.

**Previous area for improvement 6**

To ensure parents and carers are fully included in the life of the service and their children's experiences and care, communication strategies should be improved.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state, 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed (4.23).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 October 2021.**

**Action taken since then**

The service had recently introduced a parent partnership group. Although in early stages this was having a positive impact on parental involvement. Parents told us they felt included an involved in the service.

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	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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