

# Johnston Nursery Day Care of Children

St Mary Street  
Kirkcudbright  
DG6 4EG

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
1 March 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Johnston Nursery Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019013430

**Service no:**  
CS2019378293

## About the service

The service is provided by Johnston Nursery Ltd and is in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council to provide funded childcare for children over the age of two years.

The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 40 children at any one time. Of those 40; no more than six are aged under two years; no more than 34 are aged two years to those attending primary school full time with no more than 10 aged two to under three and no more than 10 attending primary school.

The service is provided from a self contained building, with a open plan play room for children over two years and a smaller playroom for children under two years. There is a onsite kitchen where home cooked meals are prepared daily and children have access to a spacious secure outdoor space. Being located with the town of Kirkcudbright, the service makes good use of the local amenities including local woodland areas.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 February 2023 and 01 March 2023. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with a small group of children using the service and six of their family members
- spoke with majority of the staff and management team
- observed staffs practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were happy, confident, and having fun playing with their friends.
- Staff carefully planned how best to support children's care, play and learning.
- Children had strong links with the local community.
- Mealtimes were calm and unhurried, they were planned to meet the needs of the children, creating a social time for children and staff to share stories.
- Personal plans supported staff provide care and support to meet the children's needs.
- Staff reflected and made changes to the environment and resources to create a safe and enriched space for children to play and learn.
- Safer recruitment procedures need to be improved to ensure appropriate safety measures are taken, before staff are employed to care for children.
- Children's daily access to outdoors and fresh air, supported their wellbeing needs.
- The leaders had a shared vision on the service aims and a clear plan on how to achieve these.
- Medication procedures need to be improved to ensure children's medication is administered safely.
- Staff were caring, kind, and respected children's rights.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
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?

## 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, welcoming, and confident within the setting. They had positive relationships with staff and had formed friendships. Children were welcomed into the service during planned settling in visits and staff spent the time getting to know them. This supported children to become familiar with staff and their new surroundings. The service carefully considered how best to support each child and put a plan in place focusing on children's wellbeing needs.

Each child had a personal plan in place, these supported staff to ensure they planned the right care and support. Plans were reviewed regularly with families to ensure that all those involved were working together to meet children's needs. Parents told us that they were very happy with how the service worked with them and kept them informed of their child's progress. They told us they really liked the online journals and that staff were always approachable. One parent said 'We find the communication of my child's progress and experiences to be excellent.'

Interactions between staff and children were warm, caring, and kind. Staff were skilled at providing children with comfort and reassurance. Children were relaxed and comfortable around staff. Parents told us staff knew the children well and found them very supportive. One parent said 'We have always found all staff across the nursery to be helpful, cheerful and approachable.' Staff interactions and communications helped to enhance children's experiences within the service.

Children were provided with a morning and afternoon snack and a hot lunch. Mealtimes had been planned around the needs of the children, for example to meet any dietary or medical conditions. One parent shared with us that the service had gone above and beyond to support their child's needs. Children were provided with positive experiences to learn about foods, from planting and harvesting vegetables to participating in baking and cooking activities. The open plan kitchen allowed children to see their meals being prepared and to ask the cook about the daily choices. Mealtimes were a very positive experience for children, staff and children sat together and enjoyed relaxed and unhurried meals. When asked about the food the children gave the food a thumbs up, they said they really liked it.

Children were very involved in the local community, this included regular visits to a local care home. This provided children with the opportunity to interact with other generations, strengthen community links and bring the community together.

### 1.3 Play and learning

The daily routine and pace of the day was monitored to ensure it was responsive to children's needs. Staff worked together to ensure they provided consistency and continuity for children. This included providing children with the choice to participate in outings to the local woodlands, play in nursery garden or playing indoors.

Staff planned children's play and learning in response to their needs, wishes and choices. They used good practice guidance documents to support them plan experiences. Recent training and development opportunities had helped staff plan children's learning and development carefully and ensure they were right for them.

Staff responded to children needs and wishes throughout the day. This created learning environments where children could lead their own play and learning. Children were having fun learning, being inquisitive, creative, and using skills, for example to problem solve.

The majority of staff had a very good understanding of child development and were skilled at creating high quality play and learning experiences. Through use of effective questioning, staff encouraged children to challenge themselves and consolidate their learning. Through effective staff development and peer support, staff continue to reflect and gain consistency in providing high quality care, play and learning.

Careful observation and assessments helped staff recognise children's achievements and planned experiences to meet their needs. This helped the children to experience a well-balanced curriculum and learn lifelong skills.

## 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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was welcoming, well maintained, had plenty of natural light and was well ventilated. Staff regularly reflected on how the spaces available were used to ensure they met the needs of the children.

At the time of the inspection they were in the process of redesigning the main playroom to ensure it met the needs of all the children, with a focus on the those aged two to three years. In addition, they had been focusing on enhancing children's outdoor play experiences with the development of a woodland area and extension to the nursery outdoor space.

Children had a sense of ownership within the setting, inside they were able to select resources at ease, adapt spaces and make decisions on how resources could be used. The range of resources available to children allowed them to direct their own play and learning. Plans were in place to ensure this was mirrored for the children who chose to spend the majority of their day outside.

The play spaces provided children opportunities to play on their own, in small groups or in large groups. Space had been created to support children's wellbeing, a space for children to rest, relax and play in a calm, quiet area if needed. With recent changes to the environment we discussed further consideration was needed for the youngest children to freely choose to play outside. The service agreed.

Staff were responsive to children's requests and worked well to ensure all areas were staffed appropriately to meet their needs.

We found good infection control measures were in place. Children and staff followed good hand hygiene. We did identify that the door of one of the changing rooms did not fully close. The service agreed to address this.

The setting provided children with a friendly, welcoming space, that belonged to them where they could come, play and learn, with support of caring and kind staff.

## How good is our leadership?

## 3 - Adequate

We found there are some strengths, but these just outweighed the weaknesses therefore we evaluated this key question as adequate.

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led

The leaders within the service had a clear vision of the service aims and a plan for how these will be achieved. They were committed to including all those involved in the service in the self evaluation process.

Through the use of meaningful observation and monitoring, they had identified the service strengths and areas for improvement. The service was working hard to promote an ethos of continuous improvement to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and their families needs. Staff, parents and children were routinely involved in the service evaluations, through the use of surveys, forums and discussions.

An effective staff appraisal and supervision system supported staff to identify their strengths and areas for further development. Staff had access to training and development opportunities to enhance their skills and support the service in areas for improvement. Staff told us they felt valued, supported and they worked well together to provide the best care and support for children and families.

Leaders had good understanding of self-evaluation and in reflecting on practice to improve outcomes, however clear improvement is needed in the quality assurance procedures to ensure good practice guidance is followed. We found that not all good practice guidance had been followed therefore we have made two areas for improvements. This included procedures for safely administering medication and safer recruitment of staff (see area for improvement one and two).

### Areas for improvement

1. Children's medication should be administered following the instructions on the medication label. This should include, but not be limited to, accurate information recorded on the medication consent forms informing staff of how and when medication should be administered.

This is to ensure the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective. (HCSC 1.24)

2. Children should be cared for by people who have been appropriately and safely recruited. This requires a service to be well managed and to be implementing best practice guidance for safe recruitment. This should include, but not be limited to, safer recruitment checks being completed before new employees start date.

This is to ensure the quality of the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that as a child, I use a service that is well led and managed and care for by people who have been appropriately and safely recruited. (HCSC 4.23 & 4.24)

### 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.

#### 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were happy and had grown in confidence understanding their roles, skills, and knowledge to provide high quality childcare. This had been achieved by staff having access to meaningful development opportunities, with some staff undertaking further qualifications. They told us they were working as a team and how sharing the new learning and understanding had made a positive impact on their practice. For example, having gained increased understanding of providing an enriched learning environment, the importance of starting with the children when planning play experiences, and increasing child's voice in directing their own play and learning.

Staffing levels met the recommended minimum adult to child ratio. The ratio had been adapted to meet the needs of the children, for example, for children with higher dependency levels and to support the shape and size of play spaces. Staff were positioned well throughout the service and were able to appropriately respond to children's needs and provide quality care and support. The staff communicated to ensure their daily tasks were undertaken without interrupting the children's play.

Staff were caring, kind, and respected children's rights, they encouraged children to feel valued and recognised that their views and opinions were important.

### 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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very 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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good



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