

The Orchard Nature Nursery Limited

Day Care of Children

Eskdale House
The Crichton
Bankend Road
Dumfries
DG1 4ZZ

Telephone: 01387 253 003

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 August 2023

Service provided by:
The Orchard Nature Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2017012960

Service no:
CS2017358940

About the service

The Orchard Nature Nursery may provide a care service to a maximum of 35 children at any one time aged between 6 weeks and primary school entry.

The nursery is located in a residential area in the town of Dumfries, within Dumfries and Galloway. The service is close to local parks and other amenities. Children are accommodated in two indoor playrooms, two lunchrooms, one sleep room and two enclosed outdoor gardens.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 & 8 August 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspectors 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 people using the service and four members of their family
- Gathered feedback from 22 families through online questionnaires
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were supported by a warm and nurturing team
- Children could access a variety of play and learning opportunities indoors and outdoors
- Quality assurance process and procedures supported high quality care in the nursery
- Staff could access a range of training and development opportunities, supported by the senior management 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very 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 evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

Children attending the nursery on the days of inspections experienced warm, nurturing care from staff. They were welcomed into the nursery by a member of senior management, which showed children and families that they mattered to the service. Children we spoke to told us they enjoyed attending the nursery with their friends and playing outdoors. One parent told us the nursery is a "Friendly and safe environment which has the perfect blend of indoor and outdoor play".

Children enjoyed a relaxed and sociable lunchtime experience with their friends and staff. Children's confidence and self-esteem were developed by independently undertaking tasks such as helping set the table, self-serving snack and meals or clearing away their own plates. Food choices were nutritious, reflected current guidance and supported healthy choices for children. Parents and children commented very positively on the quality and variety of food available to children attending. The service discussed plans for the children to become further involved in meal preparation alongside the nursery cook. Fresh water was available throughout the day for children to remain hydrated. One parent told us "The food the nursery supply is always amazing and I know both our children really enjoy their meals".

Care plans were in place for every child which were shared and discussed regularly with families in person and through the Family app. Information gathered within care plans and one-page profiles supported meeting children's needs. Children's learning, development and play opportunities were also recorded and shared with parents through the same app. The manager monitored observations and content posted to ensure consistency and quality of information. One parent told us "Staff are incredible and the care they provide is attentive, gentle and takes into account individual needs and interests".

Children's health needs were met by a robust administration of medication procedure. We reviewed the policy, consent forms and health plans in place and found these to be in line with current good practice guidance.

Children's sleeping arrangements within the nursery were sensitively planned for. Staff knew children well and were responsive to their needs for comfort, cuddles, and reassurance. A separate sleep room ensured children could rest without interruption.

Children were supported to feel safe and nurtured by the management team and staff who recognised the benefits of partnership working with parents and other agencies. Regular communication with other key agencies ensured the team had up to date information to support children's current needs and respond to any changes in the child's life.

Children were actively leading their play on the days of inspection. This ensured the pace of the day was led by them. It was supported by staff who skilfully interacted with children to promote their creativity and curiosity. They used some effective questioning to extend children's thinking, learning and play opportunities. We suggested staff in the willow room would benefit from refreshed training in Schematic play.

On both days of inspection, we observed children actively leading their play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous play opportunities. The team organise morning provocations to engage children's imagination and enrich their play and learning. We observed children explore water, sand, and playdough indoors and outdoors. Children engaged in musical play with instruments and singing. Babies engaged in story time and playing with blocks and balls. One parent told us "There are plenty of activities going on in both the rooms and the staff go out of their way to set up activities that capture the interest of both our children".

Children benefited from a variety of play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. The team had recently introduced new planning and recording approaches which were child centred and responsive to children's interests and experiences. The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to embed, sustain, and evaluate the planning and recording process to ensure high quality experiences for children in their care are achieved. One parent told us "The staff show care and affection, the activities are all about the children learning new skills and having fun".

Children with additional support needs received a nurturing, stimulating and creative environment where staff utilised children's personal interests to engage in responsive play and learning at a level suitable to their current needs. One parent told us the care their child had received was exceptional and tailored to their individual support needs.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

Children experienced a setting that was homely, comfortable, and furnished to a high standard. The rooms benefited from plenty of natural light and ventilation through large windows. Children had space to play together or on their own should they choose too. One parent told us "Lovely home environment for the children".

Playrooms and the outdoor gardens were sensitively structured to provide a variety of play opportunities for children to engage in. Spaces reflected children's current interests and curiosities. We suggested quiet, cosy spaces within the cedar room should continue to be developed. One parent told us "The outdoor space is amazing."

Children's safety was supported with the use of a secure entry system at the front door which was monitored by staff. The team were aware of the recent Care Inspectorate SIMOA guidance and had monitoring systems in place to ensure children were accounted for when playing outdoors.

Children were supported to engage in risk taking, problem-solving, working together and physical play in both the indoor and outdoor spaces. Free flow access between the indoors and enclosed outdoor gardens enhanced children's play and learning while supporting their health and wellbeing. One parent told us "I LOVE that they partake in positive risk taking, they nurture my child's interests and help him develop".

Children's play and learning was enriched with the use of real objects in the playrooms. Natural, open ended materials and loose parts play were available to stimulate children's curiosity and extend their play in the environment.

Children within the baby room had access to a good range of toys and equipment which supported their learning and development. We observed children exploring and immersing themselves in play with the equipment which was suitable for their stage of development.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place in line with current guidelines and best practice. Toilets and changing facilities were clean and accessible for children. The setting had an adequate supply of personal protective equipment which was stored appropriately.

Risk assessments were in place for areas accessed by the children. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

Children were cared for in a nursery that had a clear vision, values and aims that were child centred and embedded into practice. Children were at the heart of any changes and improvements in the nursery. We discussed ensuring the children's voices were recorded as part of the improvement process, the manager and assistant manager agreed to look at opportunities to do this.

Children received high quality care as the team were committed to embedding a culture of self-reflection and evaluation into their practice. Team members were confident voicing their ideas and sharing responsibility for initiating and leading changes in the nursery. All members of the team inputted into the improvement plan through regular room and whole team meetings. Staff were motivated to continue improving the nursery for each individual child and had realistic targets. One parent told us "The manager and deputy manager are both approachable and will do what they can to meet the needs of parents and children".

The manager, in partnership with the assistant manager, had introduced a range of quality assurance and audit processes which supported the monitoring and development of the service. These included monitoring of online observations, medication, care plans, self-evaluations tools and calendars, tracking systems, team meetings and supervision sessions.

The service understood the importance of gathering views of families to continue to develop the nursery. Successes and achievements of children were shared through the online Family app. Some parents who completed our questionnaires, commented they would like to see more posts about their children's time at nursery. The manager and assistant manager agreed to look at this and link with families. However, one parent told us the leadership team "always communicates effectively. If any significant changes are to be implemented which involves the children or parents we are always consulted".

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

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

Staff engaged well in the inspection process. They were open and honest during discussions. Many parents who completed our questionnaires highlighted the staffing team as a major strength for the service. One parent told us "Wonderful staff each one a credit to the nursery and the service provided."

The service was appropriately staffed to meet the individual needs of children, including over meal times, which ensured continuity and consistency of care. One parent told us "All staff are friendly and approachable and answer any questions within their scope. My child speaks about them when home so reinforces their positive impact."

Children experienced a fun, welcoming and nurturing setting as strong working relationships and effective communication had been established between the team, senior management and families. We found staff worked well together within the playrooms. They were respectful in their interactions with each other, creating a positive ethos and role models for the children. One parent told us the team are "always so welcoming and friendly and have created a lovely relationship with my child."

Regular supervision allowed staff time for reflection on practice, skills and training needs. Staff received feedback from the manager at regular periods with mentoring and training being made available if required. Staff also took responsibility for their own professional development and embraced any new opportunities to learn. New training and learning was regularly shared with all staff members at team meetings. Staff members advised they felt comfortable approaching the manager and assistant manager for support or to raise concerns.

We sampled the safeguarding policy and found these to be in line with current guidance. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had recently attended child protection training and knew how to address any concerns.

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

The provider should ensure sufficient numbers of staff are deployed over the course of the lunch period to meet the health, wellbeing and safety needs of individual children. Consideration should be given to ensure routines and individual needs of young children and babies are met and older children have opportunities to develop independence skills and social skills within a safe and nurturing environment.

Health and Social Care Standards, My Support, My Life.

1.19 My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.

1.35 I can enjoy an unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible.

1.36 If I wish, I can share snacks and meals alongside other people using and working in the service, as appropriate.

This area for improvement was made on 21 November 2018.

Action taken since then

On the days of inspection there were sufficient numbers of staff deployed during snack, lunch and tea time meals to ensure a safe and positive mealtime experience for children attending.

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?	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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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