

Thrive Childcare and Education Musselburgh Nature Kindergarten Day Care of Children

1 New Street
Musselburgh
EH21 6HY

Telephone: 01312 851 602

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 October 2025

Service provided by:
Thrive Childcare and Education
Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003002955

Service no:
CS2015338420

About the service

Thrive Childcare and Education Musselburgh Nature Kindergarten provides a daycare of children service to a maximum of 100 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is close to local transport links, community services and outdoor spaces.

The service has a number of playrooms located on the ground and first floor. The large back garden is separated into two play spaces for children aged two to five and children aged one to two. Babies from birth to one year old have their own garden, which is accessed directly from their playroom. Throughout the service, there are toilets and changing facilities. Other areas include offices, the kitchen and staff facilities across two levels.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 30 September and 1 October 2025 between 09:15 and 18:15. 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

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 the service is operating legally. Any improvements identified during the inspection relating to the core assurances are reported under the headings below.

As part of this inspection we also undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

During the inspection we:

- spoke with people using the service and gathered feedback from their families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- reviewed documents
- reviewed progress on all previous areas for improvement.

Key messages

- Children were having fun, enjoying themselves as they engaged in age-appropriate activities.
- Children had regular opportunities to play outside helping them to be physically active and develop new skills.
- Children had positive relationships with the staff caring for them. Interactions were positive supporting children to build self-confidence.
- The service should further develop the mealtime to ensure that children have consistently safe and positive experiences, which support them to learn new skills.
- Personal planning approaches should be further developed to ensure that plans give clear strategies of support to meet children's needs and provide consistent quality of care.
- Quality assurance and improvement planning was well organised to support the service to action their priorities for development. The service should continue to develop these to ensure they provide consistently high quality experiences for the children.
- Staff had regular opportunities to reflect on and develop their practice. Staff would benefit from further opportunities to consider child development for the specific ages they care for.

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	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Leadership 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The vision, values and aims for the service were shared with families and reflected the services aim to provide high quality care for the children. The service could further develop how they collaborate with staff, children and their families to develop their vision and values and ensure that it is meaningful for them and reflects their views. The service planned to continue to improve how they involved children and their families in developing the service. For example, the pre-school room had recently introduced a comments box for families to share their views.

Quality assurance and improvement planning folders were well organised to support the service to action their priorities and monitor progress. Staff spoke positively about being involved in evaluating and improving their own play spaces. Some quality assurance processes were in place which supported children's wellbeing and safety. For example, staff carried out daily environmental checklists which helped them to identify and manage risks.

Staff had opportunities to reflect on practice as a group. This supported them to build on positive practice and learn from leaders and each other. The service should continue to develop how they use current best practice guidance documents to benchmark and identify how to improve their service. This is to ensure children's experiences align with good practice to support consistently positive outcomes.

Recruitment processes were well organised and followed national best practice guidance to support the safe recruitment of staff. Staff were supported by mentors when they started in the service helping them to build confidence in their roles. Some staff induction were robust and guided staff well as they settled into the service. To further support induction processes, the service should ensure any agreed actions or induction tasks are followed up on. This is to ensure all staff are effectively supported.

Quality indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

Staff felt supported by leaders in the service. They had regular team meetings which supported them to reflect on their practice and develop their rooms to ensure that children had positive experiences in the service. One to one meetings helped staff to reflect on their practice and plan to develop their skills and knowledge.

Some staff had a good understanding of how children learn and develop and used this to help them plan the care and experiences they provided. All staff during the inspection treated children warmly and with respect. Staff shared some training opportunities, which had supported them to provide more positive experiences for children. To further enhance outcomes for children, staff would benefit from continued opportunities to consider child development for the specific ages they care for. Across the nursery staff would benefit from support to assess and plan for children who need additional support. For example, giving consideration to how they can consistently support children's varying communication needs. This will support children to get the right support at the right time and help them to achieve their potential.

Staff were familiar with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) codes of practice and their employers policies and procedures. This meant that they were confident in raising concerns about poor practice.

Development plans to address any practice development needs should be further developed to ensure that these are consistently monitored to ensure that they are successful in developing skills to keep children safe.

The service had systems in place to ensure that they had enough staff to support the children, and this was looked at on a regular basis to take account of any changes. This ensured that ratios were met and that there was a mix of staff skills to support children. The consistent bank staff team helped to ensure that children felt safe as they knew the staff caring for them.

At busier times of the day and in the younger children's rooms there were times when deployment was not as supportive of positive experiences for children. For example, during one mealtime staff deployment was task focused and missed opportunities to engage with children. At times staff communicated well with one another in the rooms to ensure that children's care needs were met effectively. Some staff were proactive in asking for support from the leadership team, however this was not consistent. Some decisions, for example settling in timings and staff deployment, could be planned better for example, consulting with the teams in rooms to ensure that these will consistently have a positive impact on the children. This will support children's need for attachment and support positive transitions into nursery.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Staff explained how they would provide experiences which supported children to explore their own interests and lead their own learning. Children were enjoying themselves engaged in age-appropriate activities. Children were overall having fun, playing with resources and their peers.

Staff considered the range of resources for babies to avoid overwhelming them. However, this should be revisited to ensure that they always have core provision and that the limitations do not restrict children opportunities to explore different play types and be creative. Across the nursery some creative opportunities were provided, however, staff should be mindful of being prescriptive about outcomes with resources. This is to ensure children can lead their own ideas and develop creative thinking.

Children enjoyed trips to the on-site forest area and walks around the local area. These experiences supported their learning as they explored nature and learned new skills. The service had identified that further opportunities for children to explore their local community would be beneficial and were beginning to build on the experiences children had. For example, during the inspection various age groups enjoyed local walks where they explored the signs of autumn in the world around them.

For older children the focus of play experience was in the garden area and downstairs indoors. The service should continue to review how the upstairs pre-school room is used to ensure that children have a rich variety of experiences to choose from in and outdoors.

Overall children in toddler room children had experiences which motivated them. They could explore and be curious with a range of sensory materials and experiences. To build on the play opportunities the service should consistently review opportunities throughout the day to ensure they continue to spark children interests.

Staff were responsive to children which helped to promote communication, language and social development as they conversed and played together. Staff were kind warm and friendly with children fostering their sense of fun. This helped the children to be engaged in play and supported them to resolve conflict well with their peers.

Some staff were skilled at asking developmentally appropriate questions which extended children's thinking and supported problem solving. Most staff were keen to create a sense of wonder for children and gave them praise and encouragement for trying new things. This helped children to recognise their own achievements and feel a sense of pride. Other staff asked more closed questions and would benefit from support to develop their skills in this area. At times, there were some missed opportunities to build on children's experiences and develop life skills at busier times of the day.

Planning in the younger rooms was based on children's interests or current events like seasonal changes. The service was not yet tracking how the youngest children were developing. Planning and assessment approaches for older children had recently been reviewed and changed. Staff were aware that children's experiences should be based around their interests, skills development and needs. Staff made observations of children's interests, learning and play and planned experiences in relation to these. This was supporting children to be motivated and engaged in their play and learning. As staff were still developing their understanding of the new planning systems there were missed opportunities to ensure all children were sufficiently challenged and learning was effectively progressed. Overall, tracking, assessing and planning for children's learning was developing. However, staff needed further support to consider how they made meaningful and accurate assessments of children's needs, learning, progress and achievements.

The service shared daily updates face to face with families collecting their children about what they had been doing that day. Not all families felt this was consistent. One family commented: "Very often I am told my child has been out in the garden playing for most of the day and I'm not really told what (they've) learned in pre-school or if (they've) attempted or learnt a new skill for their age group".

Observations in learning journals were mostly descriptive and gave parents information about the activities their children have been enjoying at the nursery. Regular parents' nights were planned with families for keyworkers to share information about their child's development. More should be done to share how children are developing and how they plan to support individual development in learning journals and through discussions with parents.

Children are supported to achieve

3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warmth and kindness from the staff team who showed genuine affection and respect for them. Staff responded to children's distress quickly and offered cuddles and comfort items helping children to feel safe. Personal care was provided in a way which was respectful of children's privacy and dignity. At times it could have been provided more responsively as this was not happening as consistently at busier times of the day.

While staff showed genuine care for children, there were missed opportunities to plan for children's need for attachment to support the youngest children to feel safe throughout their time in nursery. Planning for the day within rooms should be developed to support children's need for attachment. Consideration for example,

for how tasks will be managed, to reduce the impact on children. Also, how planning for settling children is managed to ensure that this is manageable for staff, with consideration to attachment and children's individual needs.

Sleep was supported responsively by staff in calm quiet areas in the nurseries. Staff mostly knew children's preferences for comfort and provided these. This addressed an area for improvement made at a previous inspection.

Children were encouraged to stay hydrated throughout their day. Mealtimes were planned to ensure that dietary needs were met, for example staff knew which foods children were allergic to. Most children ate well, in groups which were sociable and supported by staff. However, further work was needed to ensure mealtimes are consistently safe and positive experiences which promote children's independence. For example, ensuring that the foods served are appropriate for the age and stage of the children and do not provide additional choking risks. Quality assurance for mealtimes should consider this and the infection control measures to help to keep children safe.

The service had not fully addressed the area for improvement made at a previous inspection and this is continued in this report (see area for improvement 1 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

All children had personal plans in place which were completed by families. For some children there were gaps in the information collected and not all families felt that these were used consistently to provide care. The service should consider ways to ensure that fuller information is gathered at the earliest stage to support them to meet children's individual needs at the service. For some children, personal plans missed opportunities to plan for specific needs for example, settling, attachment, English as a second language and children's additional support needs. The service should continue to develop these to share the strategies of support they will use and how they will evaluate if they are effective in providing support to children, especially for children with additional needs.

The area for improvement made at a previous inspection has not been fully addressed and is continued in this report (see area for improvement 4 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Permission to administer medication forms were well completed. Most staff were knowledgeable about individual children's allergies and medication taken. However, this was not consistent across the nursery. More information should also be detailed about stepped approaches to emergency situations, for example, what to do when emergency medications are not working. The area for improvement made at a previous inspection has been addressed however, further quality assurance around staff knowledge would support the nursery to ensure children are safe.

All families told us they have a positive relationship with the staff team and most always felt welcomed into the service. One commented: "Most of the staff we speak with are welcoming, friendly and always take the time to speak." Updates were shared with families through newsletters and emails. There were also displays of the staff in the nursery helping families to know who is caring for their child. Staff shared information about children's days at collection times and in the service online platform. Many families told us they would like fuller information about their child's day as this is not always updated promptly online and staff don't always have time to share at busy collection times. One parent commented: "Staff are always welcoming and friendly and clearly adore our child. However, we don't feel we get a good sense of what their day has looked like." The service have parental engagement as a priority for development to ensure that families always feel meaningfully involved in the service. They are the early stages of developing this further.

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 ensure children have a positive eating experience, the provider should review and improve the mealtime experiences. This should include but not be limited to safe opportunities for children to be more independent during mealtimes, access to high quality nutritious meals and improved staff interactions that promote a calm and social experience.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I take part in daily routines, such as setting up activities and mealtimes, if this is what I want (HSCS, 2.21) and 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS, 1.35).

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had developed the children's mealtimes since the last inspection. However, further work was needed to ensure that all mealtimes are consistently safe and positive experiences which promote children's independence. Quality assurance for mealtimes should consider the food provided, children's opportunities for independence and infection control measures to help improve the overall experiences.

This area for improvement is not met and is continued in this report under the heading 'Children are supported to achieve'.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing the provider should provide opportunities for older children to rest and sleep throughout the day. This should include, but is not limited to, providing safe sleep spaces where children can lie flat and sleep without disruption at times which suit them.

This is to ensure I experience high quality care and support that is right for me, and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (HSCS 4.11) and 'I am recognised as an expert in my own experiences, needs and wishes (HSCS 1.9)

This area for improvement was made on 24 May 2024.

Action taken since then

Older children were provided with cosy spaces to sleep for example, in the garden area with mats and bedding. Sleeps in the toddler room were also managed well for the children sleeping. However, further consideration could be given to the experiences of children who are not sleeping at that time in the toddler room to ensure that their experiences remain positive.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children to have consistently high quality experiences across the day, the provider should review the staffing levels and deployment. This should include but is not limited to, implementing staffing levels which ensure safety and wellbeing, staff skills and knowledge, room routines and individual children's needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me (HSCS 3.16) and 'I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity (HSCS 4.16).

This area for improvement was made on 24 May 2024.

Action taken since then

There were enough staff available to meet children's needs for the majority of the day. However, the service should continue to review their plans to ensure that deployment actions consistently provide positive experiences for all children. Consideration should be given to the areas identified during this inspection around mealtimes, attachment and supporting children to have access to a range of experiences to further enrich their experiences.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children's wellbeing, development and progress, personal planning approaches should be further developed to ensure detailed support strategies and next steps are in place and used by staff to sensitively and effectively support children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: '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' (HSCS 1.15) and 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2023.

Action taken since then

All children had personal plans which were completed with families. Some children had gaps in the information gathered which limited how staff could plan for those individuals. Some children had basic support needs planned for. However, these strategies could be further developed and more detailed to support staff to meet individual children's needs and provide consistency of care. Staff should be supported to identify appropriate strategies of support for example where children have additional support needs. Consideration should be given to evaluating how effective strategies of support have been in supporting children. This is to ensure children are nurtured and supported to achieve.

This area for improvement is not met and is continued in this report under 'Children are supported to achieve'.

Previous area for improvement 5

To support children's medical needs and overall health and wellbeing, the provider should review the recording systems in place for the management of medication. Systems including quality assurance processes must be robust, consistent and effective.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had developed their practice around the administration of medication. Permission to administer medication forms were well completed. Most staff were knowledgeable about individual children's allergies and medication taken. However, this was not consistent across the nursery. More information should also be detailed about stepped approaches to emergency situations, for example, what to do when emergency medications are not working. The area for improvement made at a previous inspection has been addressed however, further quality assurance around staff knowledge would support the nursery to ensure children are safe.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 6

To further develop the quality of the service and enhance outcomes for children, the provider should ensure that quality assurance processes, improvement planning and self-evaluation are further developed and embedded. The processes should identify strengths and areas for improvements, with the development of clear improvement plans and monitoring to support positive outcomes for children and families.

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

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Leadership team had developed a new system to support the quality assurance processes in the service. The staff team shared how this was supporting them to audit and improve their practice. For example environmental audits had supported the development of outdoor spaces. The leadership team were clear about how they would measure the success of audits and changes planned to improve children's experiences. The service should continue to develop how this is embedded to ensure that they are measuring progress to ensure that it supports continued improvements in the service.

This area for improvement is met.

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

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	4 - Good

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Nurturing care and support	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.