

# Cardenden Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
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**Service provided by:**  
Fife Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004005267

**Service no:**  
CS2003017080

## About the service

Cardenden Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 74 children at any one time, aged from two years to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 10 may be age two to three years. It is located in the village of Cardenden, Fife, within a residential area.

Children are cared for across three playrooms that all have direct access to the outdoor play space. Each room has its own toilets and there is a nappy change close to the playroom for children under the age of three.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced follow-up inspection which took place on Monday 6 October 2025 between 09:00 and 17:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. The inspection focused on the requirements made during the previous inspection which took place between 28 and 30 May 2025.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with 51 children
- spoke with eight staff
- spoke with the manager and local authority representatives
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

This service was subject to an Improvement Notice that was issued on 9 June 2025. We carried out four monitoring and improvement support visits on 2 July, 15 July, 18 August and 27 August 2025. During these visits, we found that all required improvements have been met. For further details of this enforcement, see the service's page on our website.

During this follow-up inspection and our four monitoring and improvement support visits, we assessed that children's outcomes and experiences had improved under the following headings and quality indicators:

- Leadership: Leadership and management of staff and resources
- Leadership: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment
- Children are supported to achieve: Nurturing care and support
- Children are supported to achieve: Safeguarding and child protection

In recognition of this improvement, we have changed the evaluations for these quality indicators. More information can be found under each heading in this report. We will continue to provide improvement support and monitor standards of care to ensure children's health, welfare and safety needs are met.

## Key messages

- Five required improvements from an Improvement Notice we issued on 9 June 2025 had been met. As a result, risks to children's health, safety, welfare and wellbeing had been reduced.
- Four out of eight requirements we made during our inspection in May 2025 had been met and children's care, play and learning experiences had improved.
- Two requirements about risk assessing the safety and security of the premises had not been met. Further improvements must be made to the premises so children remain safe and healthy in their care, play and learning.
- Staff must respond appropriately and consistently to all accidents and incidents, so that children are kept safe and healthy. This includes ensuring families are kept fully informed through timely sharing of accurate recording and reporting.
- The provider must review how they respond to serious complaints and concerns to meet the needs, rights and wishes of children and families. This response must ensure that children are consistently kept safe and protected from harm.
- Leaders and staff must develop and implement effective quality assurance and self-evaluation that support staff to improve and consistently promote positive outcomes for children.

## 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	2 - Weak
Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children are supported to achieve	2 - Weak

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

## Leadership 2 - Weak

### Leadership and management of staff and resources

We previously evaluated practice for this quality indicator under Key Question 3, 'How good is our leadership? Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.' We evaluated practice as unsatisfactory.

Four requirements made at the last inspection had been met which had reduced some of the risks we identified. There was more effective leadership across the setting and staff were being supported to provide better quality experiences for children. There were plans in place to continue making positive changes that promote positive outcomes for children and families. As a result of the actions staff and leaders had taken to improve, we assessed that children's health, safety and welfare was better protected.

We remained concerned about the response taken to serious incidents, complaints and concerns and this requirement has been continued in this follow-up inspection. More information can be found later in this report. We also found that quality assurance and self-evaluation systems did not yet fully identify and improve key aspects of staff practice to ensure children remain safe and healthy. **See requirement one.**

Based on our findings, we have re-evaluated this quality indicator as **weak**, where we identified some strengths and important weaknesses diminished children's experiences.

### Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

We previously evaluated practice for this quality indicator under Key Question 4, 'How good is our staff team? Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.' We evaluated practice as unsatisfactory.

Practice had improved to ensure children were supervised and kept safe through effective staff deployment. We assessed that immediate risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing had been minimised and the service had met a required improvement that we made in an Improvement Notice issued on 9 June 2025. We found that staff were working better as a team to communicate about children's needs. They had completed relevant learning and development activities to improve their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe, healthy and thriving. Staff should now continue developing their skills, knowledge and values to fully meet children's needs, rights and wishes. **See area for improvement one.**

To reflect the progress that staff have made to reduce risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing, we have re-evaluated this quality indicator as **weak**. There were some strengths in promoting positive outcomes for children and we have asked staff and leaders to make important improvements as a matter of priority, in line with the findings from this inspection.

### Requirements

1. By 31 March 2026, the provider must ensure children experience safe and good quality care by implementing robust quality assurance and self-evaluation systems that identify inconsistencies in practice and highlight areas for improvement.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) use feedback from children, families and partners to bring about positive change
- b) carry out regular monitoring of children's experiences and staff practice
- c) implement positive changes quickly using suitable approaches to improvement
- d) include staff in reflecting on children's outcomes and implementing key improvements.

This is to comply with Regulation 3 (Principles) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the 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) and "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

### Areas for improvement

1. To promote positive outcomes in children's health, safety and wellbeing, the provider should support all staff to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and values required to fully meet children's needs, rights and wishes. This should include, but is not limited to, improving staff understanding of good practice guidance and providing regular opportunities for professional dialogue that improve individual and team effectiveness.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "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" (HSCS 3.14).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Scottish Government document, 'Early learning and childcare: National Induction Resource.'

## Children play and learn 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

### Playing, learning and developing

We previously evaluated practice for this quality indicator under Key Question 1, 'How good is our care, play and learning? Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.' We evaluated practice as weak.

Children were happy and enjoying their play with staff who were warm and kind throughout. Most children remained focussed on meaningful and interesting learning experiences for longer periods of time. Most staff were developing a better understanding of how to provide quality interactions, experiences and spaces that promote positive outcomes in children's progress and development. There were positive role models working with children who sensitively shared their knowledge and experience with other staff. This promoted a more consistent approach to children's learning. Children were being encouraged to be independent and develop some skills for life in their daily routines. As a result, a requirement we made at the last inspection to improve play and learning has been met.

Children's experiences should be improved further so that they have frequent and appropriate opportunities to extend their thinking, practise new skills and consolidate their learning in ways that are meaningful to them. Staff should continue to improve their approaches to offering high-quality interactions, experiences and spaces that support children to make the most of their interactions and experiences, at their own pace. **See area for improvement one.**

To reflect the improvements to children's play and learning experiences, we have re-evaluated this quality indicator as **satisfactory/adequate**. We identified some strengths that had a positive impact, however, more improvements are needed to consistently create positive experiences and outcomes for all children.

## Areas for improvement

1. To promote positive progress in children's learning and development, the provider should improve staff understanding of how to offer and support high-quality play and learning experiences. This should include, but is not limited to, promoting an appropriate balance between child-led, adult-led and playful experiences and providing a creative, challenging and enabling environment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I get the most out of life because the people and organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential" (HSCS 1.6) 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" (HSCS 2.27).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge are consistent with the Education Scotland document, 'Realising the Ambition: Being me.'

## Children are supported to achieve 2 - Weak

### Nurturing care and support

We previously evaluated practice for this quality indicator under Key Question 1, 'How good is our care, play and learning? Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.' We evaluated practice as unsatisfactory.

Two required improvements we made about personal planning and medication procedures in an Improvement Notice issued on 9 June 2025 had been met. The actions staff had taken to meet these required improvements had reduced risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing. Each child had a personal plan in place which recorded most of their needs, rights and wishes. This included relevant procedures to administer medication to meet children's health needs.

Staff had identified appropriate strategies to support children in some plans, including for children with additional support needs. Families had been consulted and we were more confident that children would receive the right support at the right time to remain safe and healthy. Children's personal plans should be improved further so that all children's individual strengths, needs and interests are reflected in their plans. Staff should update plans to fully consider any new and emerging risks and needs so children experience suitable support that keeps them safe, healthy and thriving. **See area for improvement one.**

Children experienced mostly warm, kind and caring support from staff who had a better understanding of rights-based, trauma-informed care. They had completed focussed and relevant learning and development opportunities while also being supported by newly implemented, experienced staff who role-modelled positive practice in children's daily experiences. We were more confident that their rights were being respected and that they were not experiencing inappropriate use of restrictive practice in the service. As a result of these positive changes, a required improvement from an Improvement Notice issued on 9 June 2025 had been met. The service had also met a requirement we made at the last inspection to deliver rights-based, trauma-informed care. Staff knowledge, skills and values were still developing and further opportunities for professional discussion and reflection should be planned and implemented. This will help them to sustain trauma-informed approaches that consistently promote positive outcomes for children. **See area for improvement two.**

One requirement we made at the last inspection has not been met and we have considered the progress towards this requirement when evaluating this quality indicator. We found that information about accidents and incidents was not being shared consistently with families and there were missed opportunities to use this information to keep children safe.

As a result of these findings, we have re-evaluated this quality indicator as **weak**. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by important weaknesses that diminished children's experiences.

### Safeguarding and child protection

We previously evaluated practice for this quality indicator under Key Question 1, 'How good is our care, play and learning? Quality indicator 1.2: Children are safe and protected.' We evaluated practice as unsatisfactory.

Staff knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and child protection had improved. They had completed and implemented relevant training in child protection to protect children from harm. The manager and staff had improved processes to help staff recognise, respond to, record and report concerns about children's health, safety, welfare and wellbeing. As a result, a required improvement made in an Improvement Notice issued on 9 June 2025 had been met.

A previously reported serious incident involving harm to a child highlighted areas where internal learning could have been strengthened. While an internal review was undertaken, it did not constitute a multi-agency learning review and therefore did not benefit from the full range of external perspectives. We made a requirement at the last inspection for the provider to ensure serious incidents, complaints and concerns were responded to appropriately. This had not been met. Further information about this requirement is detailed under 'What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection: Requirement 6.'

We also found that policies about reporting poor staff practice, including where children may be at risk of harm, were unclear. We have made a new area for improvement to ensure that children are kept safe and protected from harm through effective staff practice, policies and procedures. **See area for improvement three.**

Based on these findings, we have re-evaluated this quality indicator as **weak**. We found some strengths but there were important weaknesses that compromised the welfare, safety, learning and development of children. Improvements must be made as a matter of priority to protect children from harm and keep them safe.

## Areas for improvement

1. To positively support children's health, safety and wellbeing, the provider should improve children's personal plans so they are tailored to individual strengths, needs and interests. This should include, but is not limited to, staff identifying and consistently recording appropriate strategies in children's plans and ensuring all plans are achievable, adaptable and informed by meaningful discussion, observation and assessment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I am fully involved in assessing my emotional, psychological, social and physical needs at an early stage, regularly and when my needs change" (HSCS 1.12) and "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).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Care Inspectorate document, 'Guide for providers on personal planning: Early learning and childcare.'

2. To ensure children experience warm, consistent and responsive care that fosters positive wellbeing, the provider should ensure staff continually reflect on rights-based practice and adapt to children's evolving needs and development in a trauma-informed way. This should include, but is not limited to, regularly assessing children's individual needs during transitions and helping children to express their needs through their actions, emotions and words.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination" (HSCS 1.2) and "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3. To keep children safe and protected from harm, the provider should self-evaluate, review and implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection. This should include, but is not limited to, providing specific guidance to staff, families, managers and partners on how to escalate concerns about staff practice and take account of relevant quality improvement frameworks and staff codes of practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20) and "I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made" (HSCS 3.22).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Scottish Government document, 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021: updated 2023.'



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

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 22 August 2025, the provider must ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing is protected by staff understanding their role and responsibilities in delivering rights based, trauma-informed care for all children.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) improve staff understanding of rights-based, trauma informed care, and implement this in practice
- b) improve staff understanding of the use of physical intervention, and implement this in practice
- c) ensure all staff consistently offer children warm, kind and caring interactions.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b)(c) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

"My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination" (HSCS 1.2)

"I experience warmth, kindness and compassion in how I am supported and cared for, including physical comfort when appropriate for me and the person supporting and caring for me" (HSCS 3.9) and

"As a child or young person, I feel valued, loved and secure" (HSCS 3.10).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Almost all children experienced kind, warm and caring support from staff. Staff had improved their understanding of rights-based, trauma-informed care. They also had a better understanding of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and in the use of restrictive practice. Staff understood that children's actions, emotions and words were an important part of their communication and responded with compassion. The service had reviewed and amended several policies and procedures to provide consistent messages to staff, children and families about how they planned to realise children's rights.

Each child's personal plan had been developed to reflect a trauma-informed approach, recognising most children's needs, rights and wishes. Staff also used this language in professional discussions which helped everyone to understand what support children needed to feel safe and learn. We asked staff to continue developing children's personal plans so they consistently support children's progress and promote positive outcomes. **We have made a new area for improvement under 'Children are supported to achieve: Nurturing care and support' to address this aspect of practice.**

**This requirement has been met. We have made a new area for improvement under 'Children are supported to achieve: Nurturing care and support' for staff to continue developing and embedding rights-based, trauma-informed approaches to children's experiences.**

## Met - outwith timescales

### Requirement 2

By 22 August 2025, the provider must keep children safe and healthy by ensuring staff respond appropriately to all accidents and incidents.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure children are well supported following accidents and incidents
- b) ensure staff record all accidents and incidents accurately and in a timely manner
- c) ensure staff inform families of any accidents and incidents involving their child in a timely manner, and sign to confirm they have been informed
- d) ensure leaders are informed of accidents and incidents in a timely manner so risk can be assessed and managed appropriately.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b)(c) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to comply with Section 8(1)(a) (Training of staff) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I am confident that people respond promptly, including when I ask for help" (HSCS 3.17) and "My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including of there is an emergency or unexpected event" (HSCS 4.14).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Care Inspectorate document, 'Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make (early learning and childcare services, including childminders).'

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Most children were being appropriately supported by staff if they were involved in an accident or incident. Almost all parents had been informed of these incidents and they had signed records to confirm they had spoken with someone about their child's experience. Staff were beginning to create accurate records of these accidents and incidents and understood this was important in keeping children safe.

There were a few records that needed more information for staff to fully understand how to keep children safe and improve their practice. We found that one incident of biting had not been fully recorded and we were concerned that the family had not been informed. In addition, an accident where a child needed medical attention had not been recorded accurately. There was limited evidence of how staff had responded and reviewed their practice to reduce the risk of a similar incident happening in the future.

Staff must ensure that all accidents and incidents are recorded accurately, with sufficient detail, to inform families and reduce risk to children's health and safety. Leaders must review and evaluate how staff respond to accidents and incidents to identify where improvements are needed to reduce risk and proactively identify potential hazards.

This requirement has not been met. We have agreed an extension to 26 January 2026 to make further improvements. The wording of the requirement has been amended slightly in line with current Care Inspectorate guidance.

## Not met

### Requirement 3

By 1 October 2025, the provider must ensure children are safe and accounted for at all times by providing developmentally appropriate play and learning experiences that keep them engaged.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure staff interact with children regularly in ways that support them to learn and develop
- b) ensure staff offer children appropriate support to develop emotional resilience in play
- c) ensure staff encourage children to be independent and develop skills for life.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that “I am supported to be emotionally resilient, have a strong sense of my own identity and wellbeing, and address any experiences of trauma or neglect” (HSCS 1.29) 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” (HSCS 2.27).

This is to ensure staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Care Inspectorate practice notes, ‘Keeping children safe.’

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Children were giggling, smiling and having fun in their play. Staff spent quality time with children, in small groups and in one-to-one experiences. Additional play resources had been provided which increased children’s choice across their play and learning. Children focussed and concentrated on their play experiences for longer periods of time because they found their play meaningful and interesting. Staff had improved the balance between planned and spontaneous play which helped children to explore their own interests.

Staff were calm and supportive when children experienced conflict in their play. They responded appropriately to children’s actions, emotions and words and helped children develop social skills. Staff spoke more confidently about their role in providing developmentally appropriate play and learning, including in promoting children’s independence and respecting their capabilities and resilience.

Staff were still improving their skills and knowledge in supporting high quality play and learning experiences. Whilst we were confident that children were being offered safe and developmentally appropriate play, staff should continue to develop their skills to support, extend and consolidate children’s learning in a meaningful way.

Sufficient progress has been made to meet this requirement and reduce risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing. We have made a new area for improvement under 'Children play and learn: Playing, learning and developing' to continue improving children's play and learning experiences so they are fully supported to achieve their potential.

## Met - within timescales

### Requirement 4

By 22 August 2025, the provider must ensure that children's safety and wellbeing is protected by ensuring the premises is safe and well-maintained.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure maintenance issues are fixed in a timely manner
- b) improve security around the perimeter of the premises
- c) provide appropriate storage for storing resources, especially in high risk areas such as toilets and for cleaning materials.

This is to comply with Regulation 2(a)(b) (Fitness of premises) and 4(1)(d) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "My environment is secure and safe" (HSCS 5.17) and "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment" (HSCS 5.22).

This is to ensure that staff skills and knowledge is consistent with the Public Health Scotland document, 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education' and the Care Inspectorate document, 'Space to Grow and Thrive: Design guidance for early learning and school age childcare settings'.

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Some improvements had been made to the premises to keep children safe, healthy and accounted for. For example, cleaning materials were stored out of reach of children and maintenance issues were being fixed more quickly. Staff had made changes to children's playrooms to ensure this provided a fun and safe space for play. The provider had invested in new resources, such as a new climbing frame in the garden, which offered lots of new and fun opportunities for children's play. Staff told us that children had particularly enjoyed watching the construction team building the climbing frame and that this had generated lots of discussion and learning.

Whilst these improvements were beginning to improve children's experiences, key risks to children's safety remained. A small storage unit next to the perimeter fencing offered children an opportunity to climb easily and leave the premises unsupervised. We discussed different ways that risk could be reduced with the provider, including increasing the height of the fencing. We also found examples of poor infection prevention and control measures including a dirty nappy changing unit and intrusive smells in the nappy changing spaces.

We asked the service to carry out a full and robust review of the safety and cleanliness of the premises, using relevant best practice guidance to support improvements to staff practice.

**This requirement has not been met and we have agreed an extension until 26 January 2026. This has been considered under the quality indicator, 'Children thrive and develop in quality spaces: Children experience high quality spaces.'**

## Not met

### Requirement 5

By 22 August 2025, the provider must keep children safe and protected from harm by ensuring all staff can assess risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing to a satisfactory standard, and consistently implement appropriate measures to reduce risk.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure staff identify potential hazards, assess risk and implement measures to keep children safe
- b) ensure staff put effective systems in place to ensure children are safe and accounted for at all times.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to comply with Section 8 (Training of staff) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20) and "If I go missing, people take urgent action, including looking for me and liaising with the police, other agencies and people who are important to me" (HSCS 3.23).

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Staff were able to recognise some risks and hazards to children's health, safety and wellbeing. Leaders were taking a systematic approach to updating and reviewing relevant risk assessments that support staff to take a positive approach to risk in play. Staff communication was better during busy times of the day, for example, drop off and pick up routines were calmer and more organised to ensure children were safe and accounted for. There were also some positive changes to the lunchtime routine which made this a safer and calmer experience for children.

There were still times when staff did not recognise or respond to risk to children's health and safety. For example, staff did not notice that a child with additional support needs had entered a different playroom and they were unsupervised in the toilets for around two minutes. In addition, staff were not vigilant when supervising children washing their hands before lunchtime. We discussed how creating a smoother routine during lunchtime could improve this practice. Staff must develop the skills and knowledge to identify potential hazards and implement appropriate measures to reduce risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing as a matter of priority.

This requirement has not been met and we have agreed an extension until 26 January 2026. This has been considered under the quality indicator, 'Children thrive and develop in quality spaces: Children experience high quality spaces.' The wording has been amended slightly in line with current Care Inspectorate guidance.

## Not met

### Requirement 6

By 22 August 2025, the provider must ensure that children's health, safety and welfare is protected by effectively investigating serious incidents, complaints and concerns and responding appropriately.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure staff report and record incidents, complaints and concerns accurately and in a timely manner
- b) provide accurate information to relevant professionals and other agencies that helps them to assess risk
- c) communicate effectively with families about serious incidents and complaints and respond promptly to their concerns
- d) identify relevant areas for improvement resulting from incidents and complaints and act to address these
- e) ensure families feel confident to make complaints without negative consequences for them or their child
- f) ensure families know how to make a complaint and understand the complaints procedure.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) and 18(2)(3) (Complaints) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I know how, and can be helped, to make a complaint or raise a concern about my care and support" (HSCS 4.20) and "If I have a concern or complaint, this will be discussed with me and acted on without negative consequences for me" (HSCS 4.21).

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Some action had been taken to investigate and respond to serious incidents, complaints and concerns in the service. Families were more confident in coming forward with concerns and staff were also more reflective about their own practice.

We remained concerned about how well children's health, safety and welfare was being protected by effective responses to complaints and concerns. None of the complaints and concerns we reviewed had been resolved within 20 days. Two families had not been kept well informed during investigations into their complaints, including when the timescales had been extended. The provider recognised that communication could have been improved and stated they are committed to improving complaint handling processes. Where the outcome of a complaint found poor staff practice had contributed to unsatisfactory experiences for children, the family had not received a satisfactory apology. The investigation outcome did not detail appropriate actions that have been, or will be, taken to improve children's experiences. As a result, we were not confident that change and improvement was being well managed.

A review of practice following a serious incident where a child came to harm had not identified detailed and appropriate actions to improve practice. There was limited evidence that relevant professional registration bodies and appropriate staff codes of practice had been considered when investigating potential misconduct. The information included in the investigation was not accurate and did not consider how potential failures in multi-agency working may have contributed to poor outcomes for children. It was not clear how and why relevant procedures were not implemented to protect children from harm, including where staff may not have fulfilled their roles and responsibilities as registered professionals in education, health and social care. This meant that opportunities to improve staff practice and create positive changes for children and families had been missed.

We shared our findings with the provider promptly and will continue to work with them to address this unmet requirement.

**This requirement has not been met and we have agreed an extension until 26 January 2026.**

## Not met

### Requirement 7

By 22 August 2025, the provider must protect children's health, safety and welfare by ensuring staff working with children have the right skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) ensure staff have a satisfactory understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their responsibility to report any concerns about staff practice
- b) closely monitor staff practice to ensure children are safe and protected from harm
- c) implement procedures that ensure poor practice is recognised and reported, that ways for staff to improve are proactively identified and that staff are supported to improve
- d) measure and evaluate the impact of any support offered to improve children's experiences
- e) take swift action when improvements are not being made in a timely manner.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to comply with Regulation 8(1)(a) (Training of staff) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20) and "My human rights are central to the organisations that support and care for me" (HSCS 4.1).

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Staff described when they would raise concerns about staff practice with their manager. New leaders had been put in place to support staff to improve and they spent extended time with staff and children to role model best practice.



Actions had been taken by staff, leaders and the provider to improve children's experiences by frequently offering feedback to staff in a variety of ways. There was a clear plan in place for professional learning to continue developing key aspects of staff skills, knowledge and values. Some systems had been implemented to begin measuring and evaluating the impact of the support offered to improve children's experiences. We asked the service to develop and implement effective quality assurance and self-evaluation activities to closely monitor progress and ensure actions being taken consistently promote positive outcomes for children.

**Sufficient progress has been made to meet this requirement. We have made a new area for improvement under 'Leadership: Leadership and management of staff and resources' to promote a culture of continuous improvement that consistently improves children's experiences.**

## Met - within timescales

### Requirement 8

By 22 August 2025, the provider must keep children safe and protected from harm by providing effective leadership in the nursery on a daily basis.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) implement leadership that provides adequate oversight of staff and children's routines
- b) implement leadership that ensures key tasks are completed
- c) implement leadership that promotes effective teamwork between staff
- d) implement leadership that ensures all staff are respectful and courteous in their interactions with each other, children and families
- e) implement leadership that ensures children and families consistently experience a calm and positive atmosphere.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a)(b) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to comply with Regulation 7(1) (Duty on care service providers to ensure appropriate staffing) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I experience people speaking and listening to me in a way that is courteous and respectful, with my care and support being the main focus of people's attention" (HSCS 3.1) and "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

**This requirement was made on 30 May 2025.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Children's experiences had improved because staff were being well led by the headteacher, depute headteacher and experienced senior early years officers. The provider had also deployed additional effective and competent staff into the service to promote positive change. We saw consistent role-modelling of positive practice by leaders with children and families that was supporting everyone to improve. The senior early years officers offered effective oversight across the playrooms to improve children's health, safety and wellbeing.



There had been a successful recruitment process to implement permanent leadership over daily practice so that staff were supported and led well. Most key tasks were being completed to promote positive outcomes for children and staff were working together in a much more harmonious and purposeful way to meet children's needs. There was a calmer and more positive atmosphere for children and families and staff were beginning to have professional discussions that focussed on meeting children's needs. Further changes to staffing were planned for the future and there were plans in place to ensure this transition was well managed so that children's experiences continued to improve.

**Sufficient progress has been made to meet this requirement and we were confident that effective daily leadership had reduced risks to children's health, safety and wellbeing.**

**Met - within timescales**

## 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

Leadership	2 - Weak
Leadership and management of staff and resources	2 - Weak
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	2 - Weak

Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Playing, learning and developing	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Children are supported to achieve	2 - Weak
Nurturing care and support	2 - Weak
Safeguarding and child protection	2 - Weak

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