

Busy Bees Nursery Day Care of Children

James Moffat Centre
187 Glasgow Street
Ardrossan
KA22 8JY

Telephone: 01294 470 892

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 October 2025

Service provided by:
Busy Bees

Service provider number:
SP2003000861

Service no:
CS2003004232

About the service

Busy Bees Nursery is based within the James Moffat Centre in the coastal town of Ardrossan, North Ayrshire. The service operates from a three-storey shared building where they have exclusive use of the ground and first floors. The children access three main playrooms on the ground floor, with an additional playroom and dining room on the first floor. There is a secure garden which all three ground floor playrooms have direct access too. The service is close to shops and other amenities. A nearby allotment is accessed regularly.

The service works in partnership with the local authority providing funded early learning and childcare sessions. It provides a care service to a maximum of 46 children aged from 0 years to those not attending primary school.

At the time of the inspection, there were 54 children in attendance.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 - 24 October 2025. This 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 throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received 41 completed questionnaires from parent/carers and five from staff
- spoke with staff and the management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

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 a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary under the Leadership heading.

During this inspection we 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.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children experienced very kind, nurturing and respectful interactions from staff who knew them well.
- Children benefitted from the service's well established, strong partnerships with a local care home and use of an allotment.
- Family learning was highly valued by the service; there were frequent opportunities for families to be activity involved and stay informed.
- The service should continue to develop and embed planning and evaluation systems.
- The management team should continue to develop quality assurance processes.

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	4 - Good

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

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The service had clear values and aims that guided staff practice well. These included, to be personal, nurturing and outdoors. Staff understood and used these values in their daily practice, and we could see these were embedded in the ethos of the nursery. The manager recognised that the current vision and values needed to be updated. They planned to do this by involving staff, children, and families in the process. This approach will help ensure the values continue to reflect the current needs and aspirations of current children and families.

There were opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles, which enhanced their confidence and professional skills. These included leading on gardening, family learning and an intergenerational project. These were beginning to impact positively on outcomes for children and families. For example, there had been an increase in the engagement of families in the service. This supported a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement within the setting.

We found that self-evaluation processes were effective and contributed to continuous improvement. Environmental audits had led to enhancements in indoor and outdoor spaces, supporting children's engagement and wellbeing. An improvement plan was in place and reflected the current needs of the service. Staff told us they had been consulted and their views informed planned developments. This inclusive approach helped staff feel valued and involved in the improvement journey.

The management team were at an early stage of implementing quality assurance activities. Prior to our visit, they had identified the need for robust and systematic processes to monitor practice. We suggested developing a clear cycle of monitoring and evaluation to strengthen the service's capacity for continuous improvement. While we found some inconsistencies in planning, observations and interactions with children, these could be reduced through regular monitoring and review. This would contribute to more consistent practice and improved experiences for children. Quality assurance activities, such as audits of personal plans and medication, were not yet embedded. Introducing these would help ensure processes are carried out effectively, supporting children's safety and promoting their health and wellbeing.

Children and families' views were valued and had influenced change. Parents had asked for 'walk and talk' and this had been introduced and was very well attended. This supported families to feel empowered and involved.

The manager was open and honest, and keen to seek advice for the benefit of the service. A recent local authority review had identified a need to review the size of the space available to children. We found that the service did need to reconsider the set up with immediate effect. By the conclusion of our visit the service had begun to address this. This will ensure the service meets the conditions of their registration and will provide children with a more spacious environment.

Recruitment procedures had been informed by aspects of safer staffing practices.

New staff were given a handbook to familiarise them with policies and procedures, which helped them feel part of the team and confident. However, we found some staff members registration with 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups' (PVG) scheme were not up to date. In line with legislation, we asked the manager to ensure this was updated with immediate effect. (See area for improvement 1). This will ensure children continued to be cared for safely.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's safety and wellbeing, the provider should ensure all staff have a current and up to date registration with the Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG). This should include, but not be limited to ensuring a new PVG record or scheme record update is in place for all staff prior to the commencement of their employment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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

Children were having fun and were engaged in their play. Play was child-led. We observed children choosing where they wanted to play and who they wanted to play with. For example, some children were playing together at the dressing table and other children were painting skeletons independently. We observed confident children who demonstrated their independence by making their own play dough. They then went into their garden to cut herbs to use as hair for their playdough monsters. Children in the 3-5 playroom had open access to the garden where they could climb, swing and play in the mud kitchen which supported their physical development and imaginative skills. A parent told us they, "really appreciate that this area is not weather dependant and accessed all year round no matter the weather."

In all playrooms there was a variety of loose parts, open-ended and sensory resources, such as junk modelling and a sensory pumpkin tray. These enriched children's experiences and developed their creativity and curiosity. There were planned experiences which provided a balance to the child-led play, and provided choice and challenge. For example, practitioners had placed a pumpkin, golf tees and small hammer in a tray. Children were hammering tees into the pumpkin which developed their hand-eye coordination.

The service supported the development of children's early literacy and numeracy skills in a variety of ways. For example, in each playroom there were books of the week which children voted on. There were number activities such as wooden numbers and matching. Practitioners used transition times to enhance children's counting skills by encouraging them to count each other. The older children counted forwards and backwards within 20. This helped children learn and develop.

The service had good connections within the local community. They maintained a long established, successful relationship with a local care home. They also had a nearby allotment which they visited weekly to grow plants.

One parent told us they liked these trips as they, "open more opportunities to widen [the children's] experiences and try new things." These experiences allowed children to learn important life skills such as looking after others, and caring for the environment. The gardening skills were embedded as we saw children carefully watering the plants in their own garden during as our visit, telling us "we need to water the plants, there's been no rain."

Practitioners were observed reading stories to children in all playrooms. Children clearly enjoyed this as many moved towards the staff members and became engrossed in the story. Staff used storytelling to extend and deepen learning, for example, by asking children questions about the story and to make predictions on what will happen next. This developed children's talking, listening and language skills.

Staff observed children in order to assess learning and plan next steps. We suggested the management team look at ways to ensure there is a more consistent approach to observations, particularly when evaluating children's learning and planning for next steps. This will help ensure all children are supported to achieve developmental milestones.

Planning and evaluation approaches varied across playrooms, and we suggested the management team consider how to strengthen and streamline these processes. There was scope to ensure planning had a clear starting point, progression, and conclusion, enabling staff to build on children's current interests and experiences. Documentation did not always reflect how staff scaffolded learning or introduced new concepts, although we observed this happening in practice. Some staff used skilled questioning to extend children's thinking, but this was not consistent across the team. Strengthening monitoring and recording would help ensure continuity and support children's learning effectively.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: nurturing care and support

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.

The service had a very warm and nurturing ethos that was evident to us throughout our visit. Staff were very responsive to children's individual needs, treating children with respect and sensitivity. For example, we saw staff talking to children down at their level, and offering hugs and reassurance when required. One parent told us, "[staff] are reassuring and have a calm and caring manner. They are very attuned to my child's needs". When children required personal care, this was done discreetly and gently. This ensured children's privacy and dignity was respected.

Mealtimes for older children were a sociable and enjoyable experience. Children chatted to each other and with staff. Children's independence was encouraged; children self-served their food and cleared away their dishes. These routines supported children's social skills, and built their confidence. We discussed ways in which mealtime experiences could be enhanced for some of the younger children to ensure children are not sitting for too long. This will further support a quality mealtime experience.

We identified some inconsistencies in the management of some medication. To keep children safe, we have asked that the service review their processes in line with the current best practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Day Care and Childminding Services'. This will support children's health and wellbeing.

Personal plans were in place and contained some relevant information to support staff in meeting children's emotional, health and wellbeing needs. As a result, all children had their own individual targets. In some plans, it was not always clear what strategies were required to support progression and development of their targets. We discussed with the management team how monitoring children's personal plans should now be implemented to ensure consistency when planning 'how' children's needs will be met. This would enable staff to support and track children's development, which would lead to better outcomes for all children.

Communication and engagement of parents was a strength of the service. A range of methods including learning journals, emails, newsletters and a Facebook page ensured families were well informed. Parental involvement in children's learning was actively encouraged. For example, home link bags, home challenges and 'walk and talk' events supported staff in engaging families, contributing to a collaborative approach to learning. Parental questionnaires told us that families felt involved in their child's care and felt welcomed into the nursery. These strong partnerships helped support children's learning and wellbeing.

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
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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