

Leaps & Bounds Day Care Nursery Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 November 2025

Service provided by:
Leaps and Bounds Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2005007922

Service no:
CS2005111736

About the service

Leaps & Bounds Day Care Nursery in Drum Brae, Edinburgh has provided a service to the local community since 2006. It is situated within a residential area of Edinburgh, close to local schools and with good transport links. It is registered to care for up to 68 children who are not yet attending primary school. This service is one of four day care services offered by the provider. The service is provided from a renovated property and operates from four rooms, each providing care for children of similar ages and stages. There is a large, well-resourced secure outdoor area accessible to the children, with an outdoor cabin providing shelter and an additional play space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday, 24 November 2025 from 09:30 until 15:30 hours and Wednesday, 25 November 2025 from 09:00 until 18:00 hours. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with people using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- reviewed online feedback from 15 parents.

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, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

As part of this inspection, we 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.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from staff who knew them well.
- Staff were positive about their role and had good relationships with children and families.
- Children benefitted from a good outdoor space to play in and access to outdoor spaces within the local community.
- Leaders had a good knowledge of the service and their improvement plan was reflective of this.

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 work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Established vision, values and aims were in place and were reflective of the wider Leaps and Bounds services. Staff role modelled these in their practice and interactions with children and families. This further contributed to the ethos of the service.

Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation systems were in place with tasks shared across the leadership team. For example a calendar plan was used to ensure that tasks were evenly planned across the year. Leaders were responsive to changes in the team with new staff and adjusted the focus of quality assurance to reflect this. For example, leaders had increased their time role modelling and mentoring new staff. This included sharing the ethos of the service, practical approaches to support children's daily care and learning. Leaders were reflective of the stage the service was currently at and that the pace of change had to be adjusted to support this.

Interactive team meetings provided an opportunity for all staff to participate in discussions. The focus of the meetings were balanced between information sharing and team building. Staff told us that team meetings were a good balance of bringing the whole team together and having the opportunity to be with the playroom teams to discuss and reflect together. An effective improvement plan was in place and regularly discussed as a team and in rooms. This meant that aspects of self-evaluation were taking place in a meaningful way with each playroom evaluating the impact approaches had on children's experiences. To strengthen improvement plans further, the service could consider how to include parents and children in developing the improvement plan.

Leaders supported staff practice through regular feedback, both informally in the moment and through formal supervision sessions. Staff fed back that they felt supported by leaders who were approachable and that their suggestions would be listened to.

Training approaches were developed to be accessible to staff through online sessions and interactive staff meeting sessions. Staff felt that they could share their knowledge and experience across the team as part of peer development. For example, staff who had accessed outdoor training shared approaches and real experiences that other staff could use to develop their practice. Time was allocated for staff to reflect on training and record their reflections and how it could be implemented in their practice to benefit children.

Approaches to recruitment were reflective of current guidance and checks were completed prior to new staff starting. Systems were in place to ensure that staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. Mentoring approaches were in place for new staff. This meant that new staff were supported in their daily practice and guided to ensure children experienced consistent approaches to their care and play.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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

Children had fun as they played and were mostly engaged in their play with either friends or staff. For example, a child was busy role playing restaurants with a member of staff. They were writing down orders and serving food. Children had the freedom to move resources across the play spaces. This enabled them to lead and expand their own play in the moment. Children felt confident to ask for additional resources when they needed them. Interactions from staff were sensitive, encouraging children to think creatively and consider what they were doing. For example, a group of children were den building using resources in the room, and had to think creatively to know what additional resources they would need to make their den stable using blankets and chairs.

Some staff were skilled at mirroring and acknowledging children's feelings and emotions; for example, "I know that you don't like that and I can see that you're upset." This gave children the language to express emotions and to name how they are feeling as part of emotional literacy.

Planning systems were in place and staff were familiar with the systems used in their playroom. Further work was needed to ensure that approaches were consistent across the service to reflect a child-centred approach. For example, providing play provocations with resources and books that inspire children's curiosity would enable children to lead their own learning more authentically. In some playrooms, there were child led play experiences, including a child painting on paper and then painting their feet. Staff supported this experience by facilitating feet painting and planning for sensory experiences children could explore with their feet. Evaluations of play experiences could be strengthened further to capture children's learning.

Floorbooks were used to record children's experiences and were accessible to children throughout their session. Children were able to speak about and recall experiences, and enjoyed sharing and reminding friends of their shared experiences. This meant that children had the opportunity to revisit previous experiences developing their recall skills and literacy. Capturing children's existing knowledge, what they would like to learn and what new learning has taken place, will strengthen the floorbooks and help track children's learning over time.

Staff skills varied when providing children with challenge and support during play. Leaders had recognised this and had delivered training about interactions and interfering in children's play. These sessions were being delivered over several weeks, providing staff with time to process and consolidate learning and activities to put into practice. Staff had explained that they had found the sessions interesting and were reflecting on when to interact to support play. Staff ensured that they were at children's level during play to be accessible for children and for observations to be made from a child's perspective.

Children benefitted from having different opportunities to play outdoors. This included weekly forest group sessions, daily walks around the local community, visiting greenspaces and parks and the garden outdoor space. Children had the opportunity to play with bikes and had space to run. Quiet areas had been created

to enjoy a story and there were opportunities to care for the flowers and plants. Some children experienced caring for the apple tree, picking apples and then making apple crumble. Children had a good understanding of how nature to plate happened and observing nature to know when it was the right time to pick apples. As a result, children were learning in nature through first hand experiences. The service should continue to monitor children's access to the outdoors to ensure equity of experiences as none of the playrooms have direct access to outdoors.

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 work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children experienced warm and nurturing interactions from staff. Their names were used when staff spoke to them and children received cuddles and affection. This let children know that they were valued and respected.

Personal plans were in place for all children and were reflective of guidance. Staff knew children well and could speak about children's needs and strategies of support. For example, using objects of significance rather than visual prompts to be more age and stage appropriate. Additional support plans were in place for children who needed them and where appropriate strategies identified in support plans were referenced in next steps in development. Some children had signing as a strategy to support communication. The service was considering a service wide approach to using a bank of key everyday words to support all children's communication and fostering an inclusive approach.

The storage and administration of medication was reflective of current guidance and children's personal plans. Staff were knowledgeable about children's medical and dietary needs. This meant that children were cared for safely.

Children who required a sleep in the baby room benefitted from a separate sleep room within the room. This meant that the space was free from disruptions and closely monitored by staff. For older children requiring a sleep a coordinated approach between rooms meant that children had a quiet space with their own bed, bedding and comforters. Children who did not require a sleep could play in another playroom. This meant that children's needs were being met with minimal disruption. Staff recorded sleep times and regular checks were made on sleeping children.

Children experienced similar approaches to mealtimes across all playrooms. There were opportunities for children to be independent by serving themselves in the older rooms and feeding themselves in the younger rooms. Children were familiar with mealtime routines including hand washing and setting the table. Staff sat with children and engaged in social conversations about their day. This meant that mealtimes were a sociable experience and children were safe as staff supervised them.

Connections with families were well established. A parent told us, "Staff really go extra miles here to help us as families." A parents' and carers' group supported the service through organising fundraising events. Parents have helped to enhance play experiences by attending and sharing their hobbies, knowledge and jobs with the children. Floorbooks captured feedback from parents questionnaires, stay and play sessions and feedback from parents' night. This information was used to inform the development of the service and

responses were shared through email and 'what you said what we did' boards for all to see. Responses from parents to the online statement "I have a good relationship with staff caring for my child" was strongly agreed and agreed to. One parent described staff as being "Very friendly and knowledgeable. Easy to approach".

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

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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