

Banana Moon Day Nursery Westhill Day Care of Children

6B Peregrine Road
Westhill
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 May 2025

Service provided by:
Cygnus Enterprises Limited

Service provider number:
SP2015012452

Service no:
CS2018364923

About the service

Banana Moon Day Nursery Westhill is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 107 children at any one time, aged from 0 to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 32 are less than 2 years of age.

The service is provided in the Westhill area of Aberdeenshire. There are four playrooms, for different age groups, all on ground floor level. Generally, the four rooms work as follows, however care is taken to support children's individual needs:

Baby Moons: 3 months to 17 months
Teenie Moons: 14 months to 2 years
Mini Moons: 2 years to 3 years
Full Moons: 3 years until attending primary school.

There is an enclosed garden and an off-road parking area for parents/carers.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 May 2025 between 09:30 and 17:45 and 22 May 2025 between 09:30 and 13:00. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with children using the service
- spoke with three parents/carers
- received 20 completed questionnaires from parents/carers
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

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
- 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 warm and caring interactions, helping them feel loved, safe and secure.
- Staff had formed positive relationships with children and families.
- Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning.
- Children experienced an environment which was welcoming and comfortable.
- Management and staff were committed to the continued development of the service.
- Effective staff deployment supported 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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We evaluated different parts of this key question as very good and good, with an overall grade of good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their wellbeing. Cuddles and reassurance were offered and staff were quick to respond if a child became upset. They followed cues from children and recognised when they needed support. Families commented positively on the relationships that their children had developed with staff. One parent shared, "The team are all very welcoming." Another parent commented, "I feel like my children are in safe hands and have a great time." This contributed to children feeling secure and developing positive attachments.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal planning. Plans included individualised information on children's needs and how these would be met. These were discussed with parents and updated regularly to ensure consistency between the service and home. A parent commented: "Regular meetings have reassured me that [my child] is being supported the best they can be at Banana Moon and allow me an opportunity to discuss any worries or concerns." Staff spoke confidently about children's individual needs and knew them well. This included joint working with other agencies such as speech and language to ensure children were being supported in a way that was right for them. Such as using objects of reference and symbols to aid communication. This meant children were well-supported to reach their potential.

Children enjoyed snack and mealtimes which were relaxed and unhurried. Staff sat with children at these times, helping to promote a safe, sociable experience. Children's communication and language was encouraged through discussions on a variety of topics. Opportunities were provided to develop responsibility and independence skills. For example, children self-served, poured their own drinks, and cleared away their plates and cutlery. Children's allergies and food preferences were well catered for through staff awareness of any allergies or dietary requirements. This helped keep children safe and well.

Children were well-supported during personal care routines. Nappy changing was carried out respectfully as children were asked first and given reassurance throughout the process. This helped children feel supported and cared for.

Children's safety, emotional security and wellbeing were supported through sensitive arrangements for sleep, rest and relaxation. Staff followed children's sleep patterns from home to ensure a continuity of care. Children slept in cots or mats on the floor; appropriate supervision ensured their safety. Children were able to cuddle and read stories with staff which supported rest, recuperation and opportunities for attachment.

Children's safety was promoted through staff's understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns. Staff attended regular child protection training, and a policy was in place to support staff in the processes should they identify a concern.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy and having fun. They confidently explored the play spaces as they participated in a variety of experiences which were developmentally appropriate and relevant to their interests. This included building models, painting, playing games and cooking in the role play areas. A child told us, "I've made a birthday cake." Parents commented positively on the range of play. A parent commented: "[My child] enjoys the play experiences available and I have seen evidence of staff tailoring play experiences to their interests." Another parent shared, "There are many interesting activities on offer."

Since the previous inspection, children's access to outdoor play had improved and they were regularly out playing in the nursery garden, experiencing physical play and exercise. Older children benefited from free flow indoor/outdoor play opportunities. This enabled children to run around, play games and explore outside whilst providing others with opportunities for quieter play inside.

Staff played alongside children, supporting them in their play. They praised children's achievements, made play suggestions and helped them find resources they needed. Effective use of questioning by most staff helped extend children's engagement, widen their skills and consolidate learning. For example, staff supported children's interest in birds and the weather, extending their vocabulary and knowledge. There were a few missed opportunities to extend children's thinking and develop their ideas. Staff should continue to develop questioning to extend learning.

There were opportunities available for children to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills. Storytelling and singing took place individually and in small groups throughout the day. A variety of mark making tools supported children's emerging writing skills. The use of environmental print, such as packaging and signs, provided opportunities for children to recognise and become familiar with letters. Mathematical language was used as children and staff played games, counted and measured. As a result, children were supported to develop key language, literacy and numeracy skills through their play experiences.

Planning approaches supported a balance of spontaneous and planned learning. Children's ongoing learning and development progress was supported by sharing observations and next steps with parents through the service's Blossom app. Overall, observations identified significant learning and next steps which were relevant to individual children. We discussed ways in which the recording of learning observations could be improved. For example, to ensure skills and learning were consistently recorded. The manager agreed this was an area of ongoing development.

Children had opportunities to learn about their community and build connections. This included welcoming visitors into the setting to talk about the world of work and Bookbug sessions. Children were supported to connect to the wider world through sending and receiving letters with their questions to another Banana Moon setting. These experiences supported children to build valuable connections and promoted their sense of belonging. A parent commented, "I'd love to see them utilise the local wood and go out and explore the local environment." The service recognised the importance of community based opportunities and was looking to develop these further.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We identified several strengths which impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were cared for in an environment which was welcoming and bright. Attractive displays around the environment showcased children's work and creations. This promoted children's self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Cosy spaces were available which supported children's wellbeing. Comfortable adult and child sized couches, and rugs and cushions, created homely areas. Quiet sensory tents had been added to provide additional spaces where younger children could play or rest during a busy nursery day.

The nursery was safe and secure with controlled entry and an enclosed outdoor area. Staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. They had taken an active role in raising awareness of the Care Inspectorate's SIMOA (Safe, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) campaign by introducing a soft toy elephant to include and assist children with risk assessing areas, promoting the importance of safety.

Overall, children experienced a well-maintained environment. Staff told us the addition of furniture such as open shelving supported choice, independence and those children learning to walk. We discussed the importance of reviewing the maintenance of furniture and fittings as a few pieces of furniture and areas of decoration showed signs of wear and tear. The manager agreed to take the necessary action.

Staff had been working together to improve the learning environment to ensure children could explore and learn comfortably. Children had fun playing in the role play kitchen areas. The addition of real life resources such as pots, pans, herbs, food packaging and cookbooks helped extend their ideas and sustain interest. Some natural, open ended resources supported children's curiosity and creativity. These included pine cones, wooden rings, tyres and pipes. Staff had been evaluating some areas of play to ensure they were inviting and easy for children to use. Staff should continue with this work to build on play areas for children to ensure they meet their ongoing needs.

Children were supported by some positive infection prevention and control practices. However, in some instances these needed to improve. For example, whilst most spaces were kept clean and tidy, some areas, such as touchpoints, walls and skirting boards would benefit from more thorough cleaning. The provider's nappy changing policy did not reflect current best practice and therefore staff did not take off their gloves and aprons at the correct point whilst undertaking personal care. Children were not always supported to wash their hands following nappy changing. The provider advised that they would ensure their nappy changing guidance was updated without delay. Although staff did encourage children to wash their hands regularly and at key times, such as before eating, this was not always effectively supervised or supported. These measures did not keep children safe from the potential spread of infection (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children are kept safe and healthy, the provider should ensure that effective infection protection and control measures are in place.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11)

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We identified several strengths which impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service's vision, values and aims were displayed and shared with parents. These included "to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment, to create a world of memories and inspire a generation" and "building, creating, supporting and encouraging". These supported staff and families to understand what to expect from the service.

The management team and staff valued the strong relationships they had built with families. Parents highlighted this as a strength of the service and told us they felt they belonged as part of a community. Parents' comments included:

"I really value the parental engagement - the mini library, activity bags, and little touches like the Mental Health Week bags make such a difference. It's lovely to feel included."

"The nursery very kindly run family days also at weekends to bring families together and open up the setting to the whole family."

The manager and staff recognised the importance of consultation with children and their families to support improvement to the service. Parents commented positively on the use of the Blossom App to keep them informed and included in the life of the service. Daily chats, emails, questionnaires and online platforms provided effective communication and opportunities for families to comment and make suggestions. Recent feedback from parents had informed changes to mealtime menus. This led to positive relationships and a culture of working together to promote good outcomes for children.

Positive experiences for children were supported by a realistic, relevant and achievable improvement plan. This included an action plan of key priorities identified at the previous inspection. An improvement floorbook provided a visual and assessable way of showing the improvements that had been made. As a result, children experienced a service that continually developed and improved.

A quality assurance calendar kept management and staff on track with the monitoring and evaluation of the service, supporting the improvement agenda. Regular audits were completed and included the environment, lunchtime experience, personal plans and accidents and incidents. Some of these had been successful in supporting improvements for children. We discussed with management where monitoring of some areas could be strengthened. For example, improved monitoring and quality assurance of cleaning practices and handwashing could have identified areas to improve infection prevention and control.

Regular meetings and support from management ensured staff felt professionally and personally supported. For example, the team benefited from regular support and supervision meetings and staff told us the setting was a fun place to work. Staff were beginning to reflect well together using guidance such as A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare using these reflections to bring about positive change. Regular staff meetings enabled staff to review and discuss current guidance together. Management valued staff's contributions and were keen to distribute leadership roles. Staff were taking on further responsibilities such as developing the environment. This contributed to staff feeling valued and empowered to contribute to improvements.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff who were committed to their role. Staff worked very well together to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children to support the shared vision and a positive working ethos. Parents described the staff team as "friendly and helpful" and "supportive and engaging". Parents' comments included:

"The staff are great, really fun and caring."

"They [staff] welcome the children warmly and have a good relationship with them."

"Staff have always gone out of their way to be friendly, courteous and helpful for both us as parents and my child."

Parents highlighted the positive relationships they had formed with their child's key worker. They felt able to approach them to share information about their child's needs. A parent commented, "All staff are very friendly and I can tell they care about my child. [My child's] key worker is amazing, she always tells me specifics about [my child's] day and clearly has a very good relationship with my child. She listens to our comments and questions and can give suggestions and advice." Photos displayed of staff and staffing information strengthened families' knowledge of who was caring for their child each day.

Children were cared for by a cohesive, supportive team who made very good use of each other's knowledge and skills to support positive outcomes. Tasks were shared and staff were flexible in their approach. Staff helped each other, moved around the setting, and responded to children's needs by positioning themselves where they were needed most. As a result, children were consistently well-supervised and supported to keep them safe and promote their wellbeing.

The provider and manager recognised the importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed. When staff were absent, regular relief staff or staff from within the setting covered. Staff breaks were planned to minimise impact on the children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. This helped to ensure that children were safe and well-supported.

Children benefited from a staff team who were committed to their own professional development. Staff had completed core training including first aid and child protection which contributed to keeping children safe and well. A range of additional training and learning had been undertaken. Some staff told us about the impact training had on their practice. This included supporting children's communication skills and promoting positive behaviour. Staff had grown in confidence since the last inspection and were more skilled in relation to supporting children's care, support and learning.

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

In order to ensure a safe environment for children, the manager and staff should further develop systems for identifying potential hazards and take prompt action to address these.

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 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 24 June 2024.

Action taken since then

All staff had undertaken training on risk assessing. Staff worked together to identify and remove risks to children within the setting both indoors and outdoors. Children's safety was supported by the risk assessments which were in place and reflected in practice.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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