

Tiddlywinks Nursery School

Day Care of Children

Liff Road
Muirhead
Dundee
DD2 5QF

Telephone: 01382 581 581

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 June 2025

Service provided by:
Moorhead Nursery Ltd trading as
Tiddlywinks Nursery School

Service provider number:
SP2012011769

Service no:
CS2012306143

About the service

Tiddlywinks Nursery School provides a daycare of children service in Muirhead in Angus. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 67 children at any one time of whom; no more than 10 are aged under two years; no more than 10 are aged two years to under three years; no more than 22 are aged three years to those not yet attending primary school and; no more than 25 are attending primary school.

The service is located within a residential area of Muirhead and is close to a local park, the local school, and woodland areas. The nursery consists of three playrooms, and two secure outdoor play areas. The school aged children access the Scout Hall which consists of a large hall, kitchen, toilets, and an outdoor play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 June 2025 between 08:30 and 17:00. Feedback was shared with the service on 24 June 2025.

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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the service was registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received completed questionnaires from seven families
- spoke with staff and the management team
- observed practice and daily life
- 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

- Staff knew the children well and positive attachments had been formed.
- Children were engaged in their play and learning experiences.
- It would be beneficial for the larger outdoor play space to be available throughout the whole day to further support children's play and learning.
- Management had recently delivered a range of training events which had provided the opportunity to support professional development for the staff team.
- Parents were regularly involved in sharing feedback to support ongoing developments within the service.

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?	4 - 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 this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff interactions with children were warm, kind and nurturing, and staff were responsive to children's needs. Staff knew children well and interactions took place at the child's level, which supported positive attachments to be formed. One parent commented, 'We enjoy the close relationship all the kids have with the staff and they're very welcoming, it feels like a big family'. Staff were responsive to children's emotions and offered comfort and reassurance when required. This resulted in children feeling safe and valued, which contributed positively to their overall wellbeing.

Children's personal care was carried out respectfully and privacy and dignity was maintained throughout. Nice interactions which included singing took place during the nappy changing experience. Infection prevention and control measures were in place and followed throughout which minimised any possible risk of spread of infection.

Each child had their own individualised care plan to support staff to meet their needs. Expanding the records of information, for example around potty training could support the delivery of responsive and consistent care. Management were responsive to this suggestion and had made changes to personal plans before the end of the inspection process. The personal plans were regularly reviewed with parents, which ensured all information was up to date. A parent shared, 'They frequently have development chats at pick up, as well as formal care plan reviews'. Significant events in a child's life were recorded within chronologies. We suggested ways that these could be developed further to fully support and meet the needs of children.

Mealtimes provided a social experience. Staff sat with children, interacted with them, and supported them throughout. There were some opportunities for children to develop independence and life skills through self-serving and washing their own dishes. The service should continue to review and develop the mealtime experience for children to support further development of independence and life skills.

Medication consent forms were in place which supported the safe administration of medication. The service should ensure that all information held is accurate and should ensure that reviews are clearly signed off by parents on the consent forms. This would support staff to safely meet the health and wellbeing needs of children who required medication.

Staff ensured children were safe and comfortable during rest times. Children slept in cots or on flat beds with their own individual bedding. Staff had an overview of each child's needs and offered comfort through cuddles or specific comforters. Sleep was closely supervised and recorded on the Family app which kept parents informed. These approaches helped children to rest and relax and supported their emotional wellbeing.

Staff took part in regular child protection training and were confident with all processes and procedures in place to safeguard children. This provided staff with the skills and knowledge to keep children safe from harm and abuse.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were leading their own play and were engaged in their play and learning. A wide range of resources supported children to develop their curiosity, imaginations, and creative skills. Provocations which included real vegetables supported children to develop imaginations through mixing and making soup. This play then extended to the development of life skills using safety knives to slice the vegetables.

Children moved around freely and explored their environment. Staff supported fun activities which included singing and dancing. Children were supported through the effective use of questioning and natural conversations took place during play. Children explored real life resources and developed their imaginations when wearing aprons to clean up the kitchen play area, 'I feel like a princess,' 'I'm a superman'. A balance of spontaneous and planned experiences supported children to progress and achieve.

School aged children took part in a range of play and learning opportunities which included active play, exploring and making playdough, painting, and accessing small world resources. A child shared, 'We play lots, and we get to play outside which I like. The best things to play with are water play and art. The staff are nice and kind and happy. Sometimes we get to go to the park and that's good fun'. Children had fun during their play, which was supported and extended by staff when required.

Planning was responsive to children's needs and interests. Daily evaluations helped identify which children needed support or challenge, and weekly plans were shared with parents to extend learning at home. Planning included learning intentions along with learning and challenge questions. Development trackers had been introduced to support the progression of younger children. The child's voice was evident within the planning floorbooks. Management should continue to embed this approach to planning throughout the whole service. This would support staff to continue to plan for a range of meaningful play and learning experiences for children.

Observations of children's play and learning were recorded on the Famly app and were shared with parents. These identified specific learning and next steps to support children to progress. Staff had an overview of individual next steps which allowed them to plan for specific learning opportunities which supported learning and progression.

Language, literacy, and numeracy were evident throughout the indoor environments through signs, displays, real life resources and books. On occasions, counting was seen to be naturally incorporated into children's play. There were opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills both indoors and outdoors. Some children were developing early writing skills in their post office where they were writing letters, writing on envelopes, and using clipboards and pens. The service could further develop language, literacy, and numeracy outdoors which would provide further opportunities for children to develop their skills.

The service had developed links within their local community through regular visits to local stables, parks, shops, and the woodland area. Management were in the process of further developing children's play and learning experiences within the natural woodland environment. The nursery were beginning to build stronger partnerships with families through meaningful involvement. A parent recently visited to lead a music session, creating a fun and engaging experience for the children. The team are now exploring more ways for parents to take part in play and learning activities.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was welcoming for children and their families. Photographs were displayed of children during their play, along with photographs of their families. This provided a sense of belonging for children. Resources were easily accessible, and child sized tables and chairs were accessible to support children during their play and learning. Each area provided comfortable and cosy spaces for children to rest and relax. The hall that was accessed by school aged children was spacious and had been softened through the use of cushions, wall displays and photographs. These approaches supported children to feel valued and respected.

A wide range of resources both indoors and outdoors which included loose parts, construction, sensory and small world, encouraged children to be curious, explore, problem solve, and develop imagination and creativity. Each room had the facilities to offer free flow access to each of the outdoor play spaces. A parent commented, 'They are always outside when I go to pick them up and the other day the owner was putting a big cover over the main garden to keep the sun from hitting them and allowing them to be outside'. It would be beneficial for children to have access to the larger outdoor space throughout the whole day to enhance their play and learning opportunities through den building, planting and growing and being active.

The nursery provided a safe and secure environment for children. A buzzer entry system and high locks helped to secure the main entrance. Perimeter gates with higher locks ensured outdoor areas were secure. One parent commented, 'The space is secure and safe, the resources seem to be well maintained'. The current measures helped children feel protected and allowed them to explore their environment confidently which supported their independence.

Risk assessments were in place which provided a safe environment both indoors and outdoors and during trips and outings. Safety checks were completed daily, prior to children arriving to ensure a safe environment was provided for staff and children.

The environment was clean and specific areas including nappy change areas were now kept clean to minimise risk of spread of infection. Handwashing was taking place at appropriate times by staff and children and all younger children now had access to handwashing facilities. The nursery was well ventilated; however, the staff should be mindful of maintaining an appropriate temperature within the baby room. These measures minimised the potential risk of spread of infection.

How good is our leadership?**4 - Good**

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service had a vision, values and aims in place. Management were planning to review these in consultation with children, staff and families as part of a focus in this year's improvement plan.

Parents had been involved in the ongoing improvement of the service through questionnaires, consultations, sharing of feedback on the Family app and verbal communications. One parent shared, 'Feedback requested often'. Parents regularly attended events held by the nursery which had recently included a tea party. A parent commented, 'Regular opportunities to be involved in what goes on might be something for the future'. Management should continue to develop parental engagement and involve families in the daily life of the nursery.

The service were in the process of completing their current improvement plan and had created their next one for the year ahead. This plan included an aim and the evidence base for their planned focused improvement priorities. Staff shared that they now felt more involved in the quality assurance process and felt that they were being given more ownership of supporting improvement.

The service had a consistent approach to quality assurance. A monthly quality assurance calendar included audits, training, and reviews of My World documents. Staff were supported through regular monitoring, appraisals, and wellbeing check-ins. Tools helped to track what was working well and what needed to improve. Accidents, incidents and medication records were audited regularly. The medication audit could be further developed to ensure accuracy. These systems supported ongoing improvement within the service.

Safer recruitment practices were being followed. The service would benefit from recording more detailed information in relation to the interview process and reference checks. Staff were well supported during their induction period which has been increased to six months to provide additional support. By strengthening the induction process, management had ensured staff were better prepared and skilled to support children's care, wellbeing, and learning.

Staff were supported through regular training that kept their knowledge and skills up to date. All staff had completed mandatory training, including child protection and first aid. In-house training sessions had also been delivered recently to refresh understanding of planning, observations, SIMOA, and trauma-informed practice. Staff shared that this training had been helpful in refreshing their knowledge and practice. This resulted in a more knowledgeable staff team to support children's play, learning and progression.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staffing levels were managed throughout the day. Ratios were consistently met, and additional cover was provided during busier periods such as lunch. Each room had a mix of staff skills and experience, which supported the team to meet children's needs. Head counts were carried out at key transition times, such as when moving between indoors and outdoors. There was the opportunity to increase the frequency of head counts throughout the day to further strengthen safety. As a result of these measures, children experienced a calm, and safe environment where their needs were consistently met.

Staffing arrangements supported positive relationships and effective transitions for children. Consistent staff were present in each room throughout the day, which helped children feel safe and secure and supported good communication with parents. One parent shared, 'They always keep me informed and I feel like we have great communication. My child is always happy to go and comes home with lots of stories about their day'. Families were welcomed into the setting during drop-off and pick-up times, encouraging positive relationships. When staff were absent, familiar staff from sister services provided cover, this helped to maintain continuity. This resulted in children experiencing a consistent and nurturing environment where they were supported to take part in play and learning experiences.

Despite recent staff changes, the current team communicated effectively and worked well together. Staff were respectful, flexible, and supportive of one another, sharing information clearly and keeping each other informed when moving between areas. They spoke positively about team building and building relationships. Staff felt well supported by management and valued the open-door approach. Wellbeing was also being supported through the creation of a new staff room. As a result, children benefitted from being cared for by a team who worked well together to meet their needs.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure a safe environment for children to play and learn, the provider should ensure that a detailed risk assessment is created for the indoor and outdoor environments.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 12 February 2025.

Action taken since then

Detailed risk assessment now in place for indoor and outdoor environments to maintain safe environments for staff and children.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To minimise the risk of spread of infection, the provider should ensure that appropriate infection prevention and control procedures are followed.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) handwashing taking place at all appropriate times throughout the day and that staff and children have easy access to handwashing facilities;
- b) regular deep cleaning of specific areas including the nappy changing area.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

This area for improvement was made on 12 February 2025.

Action taken since then

All children and staff now have access to handwashing facilities and handwashing is taking place at all appropriate times.

The environment was clean which included specific areas including the nappy changing areas.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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