

Busy Bees at Forres Street Day Care of Children

4 Forres Street
Edinburgh
EH3 6BJ

Telephone: 01543 678 593

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 June 2025

Service provided by:
Busy Bees Nurseries (Scotland)
Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003002870

Service no:
CS2017354651

About the service

Busy Bees at Forres Street is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 85 children between the ages of three months and primary school age entry.

The service is located in the centre of Edinburgh close to local amenities including parks, shops and transport links. Children are accommodated over four levels of a townhouse and there is a small garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 18 June 2025 between the hours of 09:15 and 17:00. We returned on Thursday 19 June between the hours of 09:00 and 15:30 to continue with the inspection. 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:

- spoke to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff and the manager
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service
- took into account feedback from five families through the online survey we issued.

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; and
- 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 were happy, confident and had opportunities to lead their play and learning.
- The management team and staff were committed to the ongoing development of the service.
- A welcoming environment promoted an ethos of respect where positive relationships with parents supported partnership working.
- Quality assurance needs to be more firmly embedded into the process of evaluating and improving the nursery as a whole.
- The outdoor area should be improved to ensure children consistently experience an interesting and stimulating environment that captures their curiosity.
- Staff deployment should consistently meet children's needs to ensure high-quality experiences 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated the quality indicators of this key question as adequate and good, with an overall grade of adequate, where strengths had a positive impact, key areas needed to improve.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

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

Children benefitted from staff who were warm, kind and nurturing in their approach. They provided comfort to children in a gentle manner and children were comfortable to seek out staff for comfort and reassurance. This helped them feel safe and secure. All parents strongly agreed with the statement, 'Overall, I am happy with the care and support my child receives in this service'. Comments we received included, "I love the friendly atmosphere when you walk in, the staff are amazing. My (child) is so happy every day and loves all the staff" and "The care my child gets is wonderful".

Staff facilitated and supported children to manage minor disputes. They were patient and allowed time for children to resolve and negotiate with each other. This helped children regulate their emotions and enabled them to resolve conflict. As a result, children were gaining confidence and skills in regulating their individual emotional security and wellbeing.

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning. Key information was gathered in partnership with parents and was used to provide individual care for children. For example, health needs, dietary requirements, and children's interests. Staff were knowledgeable about each child's needs and the strategies in place to support them. The service consulted well with families, and other professionals to support children with additional support needs. Since the previous inspection chronologies were now consistently used across playrooms. This meant that relevant information was captured and updated.

To support children's health, safety and wellbeing, medication was stored and administered safely and securely. Medication boxes were easily identifiable for individual children and stepped approaches were clear. We discussed with staff that children's individual risk assessments should be more easily accessible to staff.

Staff spoke confidently about their role in safeguarding and protecting children. They knew how they would record and report any concerns. Regular safeguarding training helped keep staff up-to-date and be confident in their roles.

Mealtimes were a social occasion, and children were encouraged to make independent choices. Older children had a rolling lunch so they could eat at their own pace which meant minimal disruption and children could make the choice of when to eat and when to play. Opportunities could be further enhanced for some children, for example, through self-serving to give children more sense of responsibility and independence. At times staff became task focussed in managing other tasks. We discussed the need for staff to continue to focus and supervise children throughout mealtimes, including individual support for children with dietary requirements.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Children were confident and engaged in play. They followed their own interests as they explored their environment and took part in learning opportunities. Staff showed enthusiasm in their interactions with children, providing resources and experiences to support their learning.

We saw children take part in and enjoy a range of activities, including role play, constructive play, arts and crafts and dough play. These supported children to extend their imagination and learning in their play experiences. The addition of further natural materials would support children's creativity and curiosity.

Staff used some good interactions to support children's play and learning. This showed that their play experiences and ideas were valued. Staff should continue to develop their skills and confidence in extending children's learning. This should include effective questioning techniques to promote deeper thinking during play. This would help support sustained and meaningful play, providing challenge and extended learning.

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were provided through routines of the day. For example, storytelling and songs. Children could look at books and shared stories with staff throughout the day. We discussed the addition of environmental print within playrooms to enhance children's experiences.

Planning approaches within the service were child centred and responsive to the children's interests and life experiences. For example, staff used children's interests in bugs and animals to shape learning experiences. These, alongside children's development trackers were starting to inform the intentional plans. However, these were not yet fully effective in linking interests and needs to provision and progress. Learning journals were in place and contained observations and photographs. These demonstrated learning experiences which captured achievements and progress. These could be further developed to improve the quality and regularity of observations to capture learning.

At the previous inspection an area of improvement was made to review and develop planning and observations, however, this has not been fully met and remains in place. **(See area of improvement 1 in 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.)**

We found that the upper level of the garden for older children had limited resources and was not suitably planned for or set up to provide and stimulate children's interests. We discussed with staff that outdoor play should be purposeful so learning opportunities are not missed. For example, providing space for physical activity or to extend learning in a specific topic. **(See area of improvement 1.)**

Areas for improvement

1.
To further support children's interests, development and learning, the service should continue to develop the outdoor space. Staff should evaluate the spaces to ensure children consistently experience an interesting and stimulating environment that captures their curiosity.

This will ensure children engage in more purposeful play and learning.

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

'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 2.2).

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

Children benefitted from a warm and welcoming environment. There was plenty of natural light and ventilation to support children's wellbeing. The setting had recently had a major refurbishment, including new flooring, all areas repainted, new toilets, sinks and an additional nappy changing area. This had created a more comfortable and positive atmosphere. The entrance area was a welcoming space to meet parents and there was a range of information available. One parent told us, "The place is always clean considering the mess children make".

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to ensure children did not come to harm. The management team positioned themselves at the entrance of the building, which meant there were systems in place to monitor and supervise children arriving and leaving the setting.

Play spaces reflected children's interests and preferences, and staff supported children during play. Staff had set up playrooms to encourage children to choose what they wanted to play with. This included cosy corners for the children to relax and rest as needed. We saw that the room layouts had been improved, and the staff were keen to continue to develop them.

Infection control practices helped to minimise the potential spread of infection, supporting a safe environment for children. Handwashing took place regularly and nappy changing areas were clean with personal protective equipment (PPE) being stored appropriately.

The service had made good use of the local community, using the local community garden local parks and the library. This contributed to children having opportunities to be active and lead a healthy lifestyle. This helped children learn about their local area, build new skills, and develop a respect for nature.

Risk assessments supported children to consider and be involved in minimising measures of risk. For example, using the stairs and crossing roads. They could be further involved in decision making through risky play, for example, tree climbing and climbing frames. Staff could support this by using language and questions to spark children's thinking skills.

How good is our leadership?**3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management team and staff engaged well during the inspection process. Staff told us they felt valued and supported in their role. The recently appointed role of assistant director would help strengthen the management team and support continuous improvement and development of the service.

The service has undergone major refurbishment since the previous inspection. This has been a main focus of the manager. Planning was effectively carried out prior to the works commencing and clear communication meant staff and families were kept informed and included. Appropriate notifications were submitted to the Care Inspectorate with a clear plan in place to ensure the safety and comfort of children, their families and staff.

Parents were welcomed into the service at drop off and collection of their child. This gave parents regular opportunities to speak with staff which helped develop relationships and communication. Opportunities to include families in the service and welcome their feedback was provided through questionnaires and informal chats, newsletters and online platforms.

The service improvement plan had identified key priorities to support improvement. These included outdoor provision, quality assurance and the overall refurbishment of the setting. While the refurbishment programme priority had been effectively carried out, it had had a significant impact on the other key priorities. The centre director told us the key priorities would be carried forward into the following year. Moving forward we suggested the use of action plans, highlighting timescales and delegated roles. This would help staff feel included and take ownership of improvements within the service.

Quality assurance systems were in place including a monitoring calendar to identify and audit processes, for example, personal plans, medication and staff practice. However, effective monitoring of practice was not yet established to support continuous improvement. At the previous inspection an area of improvement was made to develop systems to help the delivery of service, however, these were still not robust enough in auditing and monitoring so had not been met and remains in place. **(See area of improvement 1 in 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.)**

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

Staff were kind, nurturing, and caring. They worked well together to create a welcoming environment for children and families. Staff told us, "We are a good team and support each other". Parents' comments were positive in support of staff and included, "Kind and thoughtful and always on hand to give (child) a cuddle" and "Very friendly and attentive staff".

Staff were deployed to promote continuity of care and were flexible in moving across areas as needed. The management team supported staff by spending regular time on the nursery floor, including during busier times of the day, for example, mealtimes. This helped build positive working relationships. While we found that adult to child ratios were met, at times staff deployment impacted on the quality of experiences available to children. We discussed the need to ensure playrooms at all times to be staffed with suitably skilled and knowledgeable staff. **(See area of improvement 1.)**

The staff team brought a mix of experience, knowledge and skills to benefit children's care and learning. These skills helped staff to observe children and appropriately identify how to enhance their development. For less experienced staff, there were opportunities for role modelling and to come together as a team to support professional dialogue and effective practice.

The service had an effective approach to staff training and meetings. These gave staff opportunities to reflect on priorities and plan for ongoing improvements. Staff had completed mandatory training of child protection, food safety and first aid. They were also encouraged to build further skills and knowledge in areas of individual interests, these included outdoor play and children with additional support needs.

Staff had been safely recruited and were suitable registered with the Scottish Social Services Council, the professional body overseeing registration of childcare staff. An induction programme supported new staff at a pace that was right for them. This included being mentored by a designated member of staff and the wider team who shared their skills and knowledge.

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should ensure that there are enough skilled and competent staff based within the nursery to ensure high-quality experiences for children.

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

'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

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 support children's progression in their learning and development, observations should be regularly recorded and shared with families and identify children's progress in their learning. Next steps in children's development should be meaningful, achievable and monitored to ensure children are supported well to reach their full potential. Planning processes should be reviewed, clarified and improved.

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 achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

This area for improvement was made on 24 October 2023.

Action taken since then

We saw improvements in the learning journals, however, these needed to be consistent for all children. There were some good examples of planning although the outdoor space had not been considered in the planning cycle process and now need to improve to ensure children's needs and interests were met in both the indoor and outdoor spaces.

This area of improvement has not been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure they monitor the quality of provision across the service and quality assurance processes are improved and impact positively on outcomes for children and families.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 26 November 2024.

Action taken since then

Improvements had been made since the previous inspection however quality assurance processes need to be robust and sustainable to ensure they are having a positive impact on outcomes.

This area of improvement has not 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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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