

# Highway Day Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
31 August 2023

**Service provided by:**  
The Highway Day Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002006

**Service no:**  
CS2003009309

## About the service

Highway Day Nursery is registered to provide care to a maximum of 50 children at any one time aged from 2 years up to children attending school in S1. Within this number no more than 16 children will be of school age.

The service is provided from a one storey community building located in a residential area of Eyemouth in the Scottish Borders. There are two playrooms, a kitchen area and toilet facilities. Children also had access to secure garden areas to the front and rear of the property. The service is close to local amenities, schools and green spaces.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that took place on 28 August 2023 between 09:30 and 17:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for this inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with and observed children using the service
- received written feedback from three families
- spoke with staff and received written feedback from five staff members
- spoke with the provider and manager
- observed practice and children's routines and experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff warmth, kindness and compassion enabled children to feel valued, loved and secure.
- Routines across the day were flexible and adapted to meet the needs of individual children.
- Loose parts and open-ended materials supported children's natural curiosity, imagination and creativity.
- The nappy changing facilities required to be developed to bring this in line with current good practice guidance.
- Children were happy and confident as they extended their interests and developed their own ideas.
- Leaders had developed a culture of continuous improvement across the service.
- Effective use was made of the differing experience, knowledge and skills of the staff group.

## 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

Children benefited from warm and responsive relationships with caring staff who took a genuine interest in them as individuals. Staff offered children warmth and encouragement through their body language and made themselves available to children at their level. As a result, children felt safe within the environment and were approaching staff for reassurance and comfort when needed.

Personal plans had been updated every six months in line with legislation. While we recognise the service had worked in partnership with parents and other key professionals, this information was not always being used effectively to create meaningful strategies. Some children that required additional support did not have any detailed strategies in place to support their care, play and learning. Moving forward, the service should develop clear, up to date meaningful strategies that are followed by all staff. These should be recorded, monitored and evaluated to ensure they are having an impact on the child. This would support children to experience consistency and predictability in their overall care, play and learning (**see area for improvement 1**).

Routines across the day were flexible and were adapted to meet the needs of individual children. Children's individual needs were being met by sensitive staff that recognised their needs in the context of the wider group. For example, staff adapted the mealtime experience to respond to individual children's needs. This supported children to experience predictability across the day through set daily routines, whilst still being able to make choices and experience care, play and learning that was right for them.

No children required medication within the service at the point of inspection. The manager was confident in the procedures to correctly store, and administer medication if required. We directed the service to the Care Inspectorate, 'Management of medication in day care of children and childminding services' (2018). The service should revisit this good practice guidance to refresh their knowledge and understanding when required. This would ensure that children's health and wellbeing needs are responded to consistently by knowledgeable, skilled staff.

The nappy changing facilities required to be developed to bring this in line with current good practice guidance. For example, we found additional resources being stored within the space which posed a potential infection prevention control risk. Moving forward the service should develop and improve their nappy changing area, along with their policy and procedures. This should be brought in line with current good practice guidance. To support this improvement, we directed the service to the Care Inspectorate, 'Nappy changing for early learning and childcare settings (excluding childminders)' (2023). This would contribute to children's overall health, wellbeing and safety (**see area for improvement 2**).

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were leading their own play and learning. Children were happy and confident as they extended their interests and developed their own ideas. One staff member shared, "We have well trained staff who know and love the children and are passionate and enthusiastic about their play and learning". Staff celebrated children's achievements and shared in their joy as they followed their natural curiosity and developed their own ideas. For example, staff used digital technology to take photographs of a child's 'tower' that they had carefully constructed from magnetic tiles. The child had been focussed as they spent time developing early maths and science through use of magnets, pattern and design. This supported children to feel valued and gave them the opportunity to revisit their learning.

Children had access to a balance of planned and spontaneous activities that offered new play experiences. There was a variety of resources both indoors and outdoors. Loose parts and open-ended materials supported children's natural curiosity, imagination and creativity. For example, two children used their imaginations as they used loose parts to feed and look after their baby doll. The children created characters and a storyline to accompany their play. This supported children to develop their early literacy skills through storytelling and role play.

Children's play and learning was supported by a responsive planning approach. This meant children could see their current interests reflected within the environment. For example, children had shown an interest in making 'soup' in the garden. Staff had recognised this and supported children to pick herbs and add to this area to extend this interest. This enhanced children's play and offered a new sensory experience to children as they explored the different smells and textures of the herbs.

Staff understood when to engage and when to stand back and enable children to develop their play at their pace. Through skilful sensitive engagement staff were able to support, extend and challenge children's thinking. As a result, most children were highly engaged in their play both indoors and outdoors. However, we did see some missed opportunities where children's interests or patterns of play may have been missed. This was also evident within some children's learning journals, where next steps were not always relevant to children's play, learning and progression. The service had already identified this as an area for improvement and this was detailed on their quality improvement plan. The service should continue to develop this area of practice and ensure staff are confident in capturing children's interests, learning and planning for meaningful next steps. This would contribute to children experiencing quality play and learning that supports their ongoing progression.

Staff shared learning with parents through daily conversations and updates, newsletters, a closed parent forum and termly parent consultation meetings. The service also delivered a parental engagement programme, along with regular stay and play sessions. This supported families to be involved in their child's play and learning and feel an important part of the service.

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience the right care at the right time, the provider should ensure that they proactively work with parents, professionals and outside agencies to develop meaningful support strategies. These should be consistently implemented by all staff. The impact of these strategies should be recorded and regularly evaluated to ensure that they are having a positive impact and meeting children's needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

2. To ensure children experience personal care in a welcoming, safe environment, the provider should ensure the nappy changing facilities comply with best practice guidance, and protects children from risk of infection.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed' (HSCS 5.4), and 'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

This is to comply with the Care Inspectorate guidance, 'Nappy changing for early learning and childcare settings (excluding childminders) (2023).

## 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.

Children experienced a warm, welcoming environment that benefited from natural light and was well ventilated. Play spaces had been developed to reflect children's current interests and pace of learning. Staff had developed spaces that were inviting, thoughtful and sent the message to children that they mattered. One parent shared, "The nursery is very cosy, comfortable, warm and full of personal touches and curiosities, I love the variety of house plants inside and the boat outside". This supported children to feel valued and important.

Children had access to core resources such as, sand, water, paint and mark making. The service was committed to introducing new resources to support children's play and learning. For example, children were exploring a new dark tent and light resources. Children worked together and took turns to tell their own stories. A light box and a variety of props supported children to bring their story to life. Children used their imagination and creativity. The joy and excitement from children while exploring this new resource contributed to their overall wellbeing.

Children were able to choose where they spent their time and were freely moving between indoors and outdoors. The garden space had been thoughtfully developed and offered a variety of well-resourced spaces. One staff member shared that a strength of the service was the, "Large outdoor spaces for physical play and exploration". With one parent sharing, "The setting is free flow so the children always have access to the garden on a nice day. Great care is taken to let them be free and learn. It is a large space and always clean". This supported children to enjoy the many benefits of being outdoors in the fresh air.

Parts of the environment felt busy and cluttered. For example, busy outdated wall displays throughout and some play areas and staff areas had high levels of clutter. Moving forward the service should look at opportunities to reduce the levels of clutter throughout the space. This would support the calm atmosphere that staff were working hard to create whilst ensuring that all areas can be effectively cleaned. This would contribute to children's overall wellbeing.

### How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Leaders had developed a culture of continuous improvement across the service. One staff member shared, "All staff are also keen to learn and train in new things to ensure that the children are getting the best care and learning that they can be". Staff were supported to attend training that helped to promote and sustain a shared ethos for the setting, one that understood the importance of wonder, curiosity and recognised children as natural investigators. This contributed to the positive atmosphere that children experienced.

Children and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting. Staff understood the importance of building relationships with children and families. One parent shared with us, "They are a fabulous team and work very well together". Parent questionnaires had been used to welcome child and parent feedback and comments in relation to the service. The service recognised the importance of working in partnership with children and parents and remained open to their suggestions and feedback. For example, staff shared several examples of how observations of children's play and learning had influenced developments within the service. This supported children to have their voice heard and bring about positive changes to their environment. Listening to both children and families contributed to building strong, trusting relationships and sent the message that they were an important part of the service.

Ongoing self-evaluation processes had contributed to bringing about positive changes within the service. We saw evidence of a number of ways in which self-evaluation and reflective practice took place. For example, daily reflective discussions, daily planning conversations and weekly team meetings. Staff had developed a floor book as part of their ongoing planning and self-evaluation. This contained children's contributions and voices. The service had a quality improvement plan which was used to inform improvement in the quality of the service for children and families. This contributed to positive outcomes for all.

Staff practice and professional development was supported through an effective support and supervision programme. Support and feedback were used constructively to build effective and professional relationships and address gaps in staff practice. Staff were supported to reflect on and improve their practice which enabled learning needs to be identified that was centred on improving outcomes for children. As a result, staff felt valued and important, and this was mirrored in their interactions with children.

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Staff warmth, kindness and compassion enabled children to feel valued, loved and secure. Children experienced kind, warm and responsive interactions throughout their day. Staff recognised the importance of building strong attachments and took time to support, speak and listen to children. This supported them to understand children's individual needs within the context of the wider group. For example, when children were settling into the service, staff took time to offer reassurance and responded sensitively. This contributed to the warm atmosphere that children experienced.

Effective use was made of the differing experience, knowledge and skills of the staff group. This ensured children's experiences across the whole day was positive and that they were safe. Staff communicated well with their colleagues when a task may take them away from their responsibilities. For example, moving between indoors and outdoors. Staff were flexible and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with the children continued. This supported children's positive play and learning experiences.

Staff took on a variety of roles across the space to support and extend children's play experiences. For example, staff were observed being invited into children's play, facilitating play opportunities and scaffolding children's learning through skilled conversations. Parents shared with us, "The team are amazing and very patient with the children" and "They are a fabulous team and work very well together". This contributed to the positive, trusting relationships that had been built and supported children to thrive.

Staff were confident in their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and protected from harm. The service had an appointed lead person who was confident in taking forward any concerns and following the correct reporting procedures. This contributed to children's overall health, wellbeing and safety.

Children were cared for by staff that had been safely recruited. The manager had used the Scottish Government National induction resource to support newly appointed staff as they started in their new roles. We encouraged the service to consider this resource with all staff and use this as a reflective tool to enhance professional practice discussions.



## 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 that children have a meaningful and enjoyable experience at meal times the manager and staff should assess the current routine and make significant changes to ensure that children receive an experience which takes account of the good practice guide Food Matters, nurturing happy healthy children. Care Inspectorate 2018.

This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 1.33, 1.34, 1.35, 1.36, 1.37

**This area for improvement was made on 22 August 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Staff supported children to be independent as children showed confidence following the lunch time routine. For example, independently washing their hands, collecting their own cutlery, pouring their own drinks and self-serving parts of their own lunch. Lunchtime was calm, relaxed and unhurried, which meant children could take their time and eat at their own pace. Children were developing skills such as turn taking, sharing and able to make choices about their mealtime experience. Staff sat with children and used this as an opportunity to check in with children's wellbeing and hear updates from the children about events and news they chose to share about their life outside of nursery. This contributed to the positive atmosphere and strong relationships that had been built.

**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](http://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
3.3 Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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