Nursery Rhymes
Day Care of Children

333 Brook Street
Broughty Ferry
Dundee
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Telephone: 01382 738 400

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 July 2026

Service provided by:
Nursery Rhymes

Service provider number:
SP2003000130

Service no:
CS2003000720

About the service

Nursery Rhymes provides a day care of children service for a maximum of 36 children at any one time, aged from birth to five years. On the ground floor, the service care for a maximum of 24 children aged from two to five years. On the upper floor, the service care for a maximum of 12 children aged from birth to three years and six months. At the time of inspection there were 66 children registered with the service.

The service is based in a residential area of Broughty Ferry, Dundee. The nursery accommodation includes a playroom on the ground floor and a playroom on the upper floor. Children also have access to an outdoor play space, which can be accessed from the two-to-five play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 01 July 2026 between 08:45 and 16:45. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received 16 completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with two families during the inspection
- spoke with four staff and the Manager
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

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.

Key messages

- Children experienced high-quality play and learning opportunities which supported curiosity, creativity, independence and sustained engagement.
- Staff planned effectively to build on children's interests and support their learning and progress.
- Leaders used self-evaluation, improvement planning and quality assurance well to support positive outcomes for children.
- Staff benefited from strong leadership, wellbeing support, training and induction, which helped them meet children's needs.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The service had developed its vision, values and aims in consultation with families, staff and children. This helped create a shared vision which leaders and staff used well to guide practice. These were revisited regularly to ensure they remained relevant and reflected the current views and ideas of the nursery community. This supported a consistent approach and helped ensure children's experiences were shaped by the values of the service.

The service was highly committed to its improvement journey and had a well-established improvement planning cycle. The plan was clear and linked well to nursery aims. This helped show how priorities connected to the overall direction of the service. Improvement priorities focused on strengthening self-evaluation, inclusion, children's rights and showing the impact of improvements on children's experiences. Leaders maintained strong oversight through monthly progress checks for each priority. This helped keep improvement work active, meaningful and focused on improving outcomes for children.

Well-considered and purposeful self-evaluation enabled the service to reflect on its strengths and areas for development. Leaders gathered the views of families, staff and children in a variety of ways, including Microsoft Forms, the Family app and feedback discussions after events. Feedback was used to inform meaningful changes to children's daily experiences. For example, when adapting mealtimes to meet new guidance expectations, the service asked families what would work best and considered their preferred options. This helped ensure improvement work reflected children's needs, interests and experiences and supported positive outcomes for children.

A robust quality assurance calendar included well-planned and timely monitoring and moderation of practice. This included key activities such as planning, learning documentation, environments, medication, accidents and safeguarding. This helped leaders gather evidence, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and maintain clear oversight of practice. The impact of this was evident in the approaches staff used to support children's safety, wellbeing and learning experiences.

Leaders supported staff through regular reviews and wellbeing check-ins. These gave staff time to discuss professional development, training, next steps and wellbeing. Staff told us leaders were supportive and described a positive culture where they also supported each other. This helped staff feel valued and strengthened team working. As a result, children benefited from a committed team focused on promoting positive outcomes.
The service was highly committed to developing staff skills through a range of training linked well to improvement priorities. For example, all staff had taken part in enquiry-led practice, quality interactions, and identifying and responding to additional support needs. Staff reflected on this learning and planned how it would improve their practice. This helped staff strengthen their skills and knowledge, which supported more responsive interactions and positive experiences for children.

Leaders ensured new staff were recruited through safe recruitment procedures. They had processes in place to help staff understand their roles and responsibilities. New staff were supported through induction using national resources, with leaders providing ongoing support. This meant children had access to staff who understood the setting, knew their responsibilities and were prepared to meet children's needs.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children demonstrated high levels of engagement in their play. They moved confidently around spaces that were well resourced and thoughtfully organised. High-quality materials reflected children's needs, interests and stages of development. As a result, children benefited from rich play experiences that supported curiosity, creativity, problem solving, imagination and sustained engagement.

Staff promoted a broad range of skills, including literacy and numeracy, through songs, stories, games and effective questioning. They followed children's lead, responded to their cues and supported play when needed. Responsive interactions helped staff understand children's interests, ideas and stage of learning. This enabled staff to provide meaningful experiences, extend children's thinking, build on their skills and support progress in learning.
Staff offered children time and space to make decisions and develop independence in their play.

Children moved freely around well-considered spaces and chose where and how they wanted to play. Opportunities included snack experiences, playdough, open-ended play resources, mark making, building and cosy spaces. Younger children explored tactile and messy experiences within their playroom, which supported sensory learning and sustained engagement.
Outdoors, older children had free-flow access, giving them regular opportunities for climbing, exploring obstacle courses, the mud kitchen, sand and bikes. They explored herbs in the herb garden, which supported their curiosity about the natural world. Although younger children did not have free-flow access outdoors, staff managed this well and ensured they accessed the outdoor space in the morning and afternoon. These experiences supported children to be independent, active, curious and engaged in their play.

Planning was a strength of the service and responded to children's interests and ideas while also providing a good balance of intentional learning. Staff used children's interests to develop learning across the nursery, scaffold skills and provide a variety of meaningful play experiences. Staff confidently explained how planning was structured and used to follow children's learning and development. This helped ensure children experienced consistent, meaningful learning opportunities that built on their interests and progress.

Observations detailed children's significant learning and identified their developing skills. Children's voices were included, and families were encouraged to contribute through the "questions for home" approach. Staff were exploring ways to capture children's views and preferences when they communicated in different ways. Staff carefully planned meaningful next steps which highlighted children's targets and achievements. This enabled children to make steady progress at a pace that was right for them.

The service had good links with the local and wider community and children took part in regular outings. These opportunities were used as meaningful starting points for learning and were followed up across the setting. For example, children's interest in money was extended through a visit to a shop where they paid using a card. This helped children make connections between their experiences in the community and their learning in the nursery.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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

Children experienced mostly warm, caring and responsive interactions from staff. They offered comfort, reassurance and affection when needed. This helped children feel safe, secure and valued. While interactions were mostly nurturing, there were some inconsistencies in practice at particular times of the day that impacted on children's experiences. Leaders responded proactively to our feedback and took immediate action to address these inconsistencies. This supported more positive and responsive experiences and outcomes for children.

Staff knew children well, and had a good understanding of their individual routines, preferences, family circumstances, and support needs. This supported responsive and personalised care and support. Children's personal care was managed respectfully and sensitively. Staff promoted dignity and independence during nappy changing and followed infection prevention and control procedures. As a result, children experienced care that was consistent, respectful and tailored to their individual needs.

Children were sensitively supported during their settling-in visits where familiar staff ensured their wellbeing and emotional needs were met. Most transitions were well managed throughout the day to minimise disruption to children's play. However, children in the under-three area experienced extended periods of waiting before and after lunch and were subsequently gathered together for a whole-group session. This resulted in some children becoming less engaged and limited opportunities for choice and child-led play and learning.

Mealtimes provided a valuable social experience where quality interactions took place between staff and children. Older children were encouraged to develop independence and life skills through self-serving and pouring drinks. Opportunities to promote independence during mealtimes were not fully maximised for younger children. They would benefit from more consistent opportunities to self-serve, use utensils such as tongs, and participate in clearing away. More consistent opportunities for younger children to participate fully in mealtime routines would further enhance their independence, choice making and sense of achievement.

Personal plans were detailed and meaningful and were updated to support children's changing needs. Parents were involved in regular review of these plans. Effective communication between staff and families, alongside regular team discussions, ensured important information about children's wellbeing and development was shared appropriately. This ensured staff provided consistent care which remained relevant to children's needs and circumstances.
Positive partnerships with families were evident. Parents were welcomed into the setting on a daily basis. They received regular information about their child's day. Parents shared that they were happy with the communications shared by the service. This contributed to positive outcomes for children through strong partnership working and shared understanding of individual needs.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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