Blossom Day Nursery
Day Care of Children

15 b/c Bath Street
Edinburgh
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Telephone: 01316 572 233

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 June 2026

Service provided by:
Joan Finlayson trading as Blossom Day Nursery

Service provider number:
SP2003002966

Service no:
CS2003012071

About the service

Blossom Day Nursery provides a day care of children service situated in the residential area of Portobello in the city of Edinburgh. The service is close to local amenities including parks, shops, the library and the beach.

The service is registered, "To provide a care service to a maximum of 22 children at any one time, age from 0 to 8 years, of whom no more than 9 children may be less than 2 years of age." During the inspection, there was a maximum of 16 children attending the service each day.

The accommodation comprises of one large playroom for older children with direct access to the enclosed garden. The main area of the garden is located above street level and is accessed via a ramp. The youngest children and babies have their own playroom, which includes a small outdoor area. There are toilet and nappy changing facilities, a cloakroom and an office space within the building.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday, 23 June 2026 from 09:45 until 16:15 hours and Wednesday, 24 June 2026 from 09:45 until 15:30 hours. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received 14 responses from parents to our electronic requests for feedback.

Key messages

•Children benefitted from improvements that had been made and sustained since the last inspection.

•Children were cared for by staff who knew them well and were nurturing and sensitive in their interactions.

•Children enjoyed their time in the service and benefitted from opportunities within their local community, such as visits to the library, parks and beach, as well as links with local residential care homes.

•Children's plans would benefit from further development to ensure that strategies of support were documented and reviewed to improve outcomes for children.

•Improvements to planning approaches were benefitting children's experiences. These could be strengthened further to add greater depth to children's learning.

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.

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	4 - Good
Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

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

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: Leadership and management of resources

Changes within the leadership and management of the service had taken place since the last inspection. The new manager had a clear vision for the service based on shared values and children's experiences. The manager had motivated the team to have ambitious aims for the service, including re-establishing the service in the local area and making links with local services. This enhanced opportunities for children to be connected to their local community.

Since the last inspection, processes and templates that had been in place were no longer accessible to the new manager. As a result, new systems were in the process of being developed and had impacted on the pace of change. However, the manager and team had sustained the improvements made at the last inspection. This meant that children continued to experience the same level of care and support. Moving forward, the manager and provider should establish clear management systems so that key paperwork can be easily accessed by the service. This would support the pace of change over time, and benefit children's experiences.

A quality assurance calendar had been developed to manage self-evaluation tasks throughout the year. The manager had prioritised the areas for improvement made at the last inspection and used this to develop an improvement plan. As a result, most areas for improvement had been achieved. Action plans were in the process of being developed further to address outstanding areas for improvement. Audits supported the manager to address barriers to improvement and to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. For example, audits of accidents highlighted areas or equipment that required adjustments to keep children safe.

Efficient recruitment processes were in place, staff checks were completed prior to new staff starting and relevant references for the job role were sought. Having the values at the centre of recruitment, ensured staff were recruited with shared values for children. A member of staff told us that they found the induction process helpful and informative.

Quality indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

Staff were kind and caring towards children, using sensitive approaches through daily interactions. This let children know they were safe and cared for. Effective team work ensured that children were cared for by enough staff. Staff communicated their movements and were confident to ask each other for help when needed. A rota ensured there were enough staff across the week and planned absences were covered effectively. Members of the leadership team supported staffing at busier times of the day, including over lunch time periods.

Staff spoke positively about their own learning and development. Most staff liked that the training was online which meant they could revisit parts of the course to further process information. The manager had an overview of staff's completed training and was able to assign courses to support staffs professional learning. Mandatory training was complete and up to date, including first aid and child protection. This meant that staff's practice was informed by the most recent knowledge and information. Regular team

meetings were a beneficial way to share information with the wider team, discuss practice and approaches that improved practice and outcomes for children.

Supervision and one-to-one meetings created space for staff to discuss their practice and professional development with the manager and to receive feedback. Staff took responsibility for sharing ideas to take forward to support children and the development of the service. For example, a member of staff took the lead in arranging visits to the local care homes. This provided an opportunity for children to be part of their local community and to share musical experiences across generations through the music group facilitated at the care home.

Children play and learn 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were engaged in the play experiences provided and available to them. A selection of resources were stored where children could see them and were confident to ask for additional resources when required. Areas were set up for children arriving, which let them know that they were valued.

Outdoors had been further developed with experiences set up in response to children's interests. For example, crates had been used to create a balancing obstacle course. Children led their own play by moving logs to add different heights and risk to their play. Younger children had access to water and sand outdoors with soft mats to sit and crawl on. Children benefitted from having regular walks in the local community with access to the beach and local parks to play and have fun in.

Children's literacy and numeracy was beginning to be supported through resources and activities including, jigsaws and shape sorters. Children enjoyed sharing stories with staff and there were opportunities to develop mark making skills through popping bubbles, playdough and drawing areas. To strengthen opportunities for literacy and numeracy the service could consider how to further develop areas through additional resources, factual books and interactive displays. Providing opportunities for children to revisit and replicate experiences will help them to consolidate learning and practice new skills. Some open-ended and natural resources had been introduced which was beginning to encourage curiosity and wonder through children's play.

Staff engaged positively with children and were positioned at their level. This meant that staff were accessible which made it easier for children to initiate engagement and play. Staff noticed children and could interpret when they needed to interact. For example, a child was watchful of others playing and a member of staff gently encouraged them to take part, by finding a safe space to store their bag and toy to allow them freedom to play. Staff spoke to children during play; this was often a narration style about what they were doing. Staff could be further supported to communicate in a way that encourages children to be curious and to problem solve to deepen their learning.

Approaches to planning would benefit from improvement to support children's existing and new learning. Monthly plans were a mix of seasonal and cultural celebrations delivered as topics. These were not recorded consistently and therefore made it difficult to know what learning had happened or how interests could be further developed. Responsive plans were based on children's interests, and for most children this was reflected in their online journal application as an observation of experiences and learning. Floor books were

capturing children's experiences and quotes, and work had been done to link experiences to curricular planning frameworks. Further work was needed to record evaluations of children's learning rather than an evaluation of the activities. Using current guidance documents, such as 'Growing my Potential' (Care Inspectorate 2023) and 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: early learning and childcare' (Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate 2025) would support the service to consider experiences provided and learning opportunities.

Children in the younger room benefitted from a child-centred approach to support their learning and development. Each child had an identified next step in their learning and development that was recorded and shared with parents. The approach was informed by 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (Education Scotland 2020) and provided a foundation for the experiences provided to the children. The leadership team were considering adopting this approach across both playrooms. This would create a consistent approach to ensuring that each child was being supported in a way that was right for them (see area for improvement 5 in 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Children are supported to achieve 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: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing care from staff. Children's names were used during interactions which supported children to understand their own and others identity; for example, children in the under two room knew other children and staff's names. Relationships were extended across both rooms through spending time in each other's play spaces and acknowledging each other as they moved around play spaces.

Children experienced improved mealtimes that were supportive to their wellbeing and development. Staff had designated roles during lunch including preparing, serving and supporting children. This meant that staff understood their role and tasks and were present with children. Staff sat with children ensuring their safety and facilitated relaxed and engaging conversations. Children had the opportunity to develop independence through self-service and tidying up. Younger children sat independently on low level chairs and tables that supported social interactions and independence skills as they self-served and fed themselves.

Children's sleep and rest times were responsive to their needs and reflective of their personal plans. Individual beds, bedding and comforters were available to children ensuring that sleep and rest was comfortable. Children were supervised when sleeping and regular checks were made and recorded. Changes to sleep routines were communicated to parents during the day. This let parents know of their child's changing needs.

Personal plans were in place for all children and reviewed in line with current guidance. Personal plan templates were in the process of being updated to record children's needs and strategies of support. Although staff knew children well, there were inconsistencies in approaches used to support children. For example, a member of staff used signing to support a child's communication; however, this was not used by additional staff. This area for improvement was not met and remains (see area for improvement 2 in 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Warm relationships had been established between the service and families. Interactions were relaxed as families were welcomed into the service. A parent commented that, "Amazing staff, respectful, caring and really kind to children and parents."

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 promote children's wellbeing, the provider should improve mealtime experiences. This should include but not be limited to, ensuring staff consistently sit with children to improve supervising and interactions.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can enjoy unhurried mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

This area for improvement was made on 21 July 2025.

Action taken since then

Improvements had been made to mealtimes. Staff sat with children ensuring safety. There were opportunities for children to develop independence skills through self-service and tidying up. Staff had reviewed 'Setting the Table Guidance' (Scottish Government 2024) to ensure meals were nutritious. Younger children sat at lower tables and chairs with staff, creating a sociable and relaxed mealtime experience. Younger children were supported and encouraged to fed themselves and help was provided when needed. Children were familiar with the mealtime routine and a wash station had been introduced in addition to using the hand wash basin.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing and development, the provider should ensure personal planning approaches are developed to ensure they set out how children's individual needs will be met.

This should include, but not be limited to, ensuring personal plans:
- are regularly reviewed with children and parents,
- are kept up to date to reflect children's current needs, wishes and choices,
- outline strategies of support to aid children's care, play and learning 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).

This area for improvement was made on 21 July 2025.

Action taken since then

Some improvements had been made since the last inspection. Personal Plans were updated with parents, ensuring information was up to date. Some children had care plans in place detailing strategies of support; however, these could be developed further to clearly document the approaches being used, timescales and reviews to ensure that they supported outcomes for children. Future ideas and plans were detailed in the service's action and improvement plan, including additional monitoring and introducing tools to help staff with observations.

This area for improvement had not been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children experience consistently positive care and support, the provider should further develop and embed a focused and effective approach to improving staff skills, knowledge and confidence.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 21 July 2025.

Action taken since then

Staff engaged in online training which ensured that mandatory training was completed. Additional training could be undertaken by staff and allocated to by the manager to support professional development. Staff meetings had provided an opportunity for additional professional learning relating to practice documents including 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (Education Scotland 2020) and 'Setting the Table Guidance' (Scottish Government 2024). This enabled staff to put this into practice as part of ongoing improvements. Morning huddles and check-ins ensured that staff were up to date on changes for children and the service. For example, changes to pick up times and children visiting school as part of school transitions.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

The provider should ensure planning for staff deployment consistently promotes positive outcomes for children. This would include, but not be limited to, ensuring busier times of the day are planned with an outcome-focused approach.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14) and 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

This area for improvement was made on 21 July 2025.

Action taken since then

A staff rota had been adjusted and introduced to ensure that busier times of the day were covered by enough staff; for example, lunch times. Staff shift patterns were reflective of the busier and quieter times during the session. The leadership team were not included in the adult to child ratio and therefore were available to cover busier times in the day, as well as planned and unplanned staff absences.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To support the quality of children's play and learning experiences, improved approaches to planning for play and learning should be developed and implemented.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 19 December 2022.

Action taken since then

Staff were still in the process of developing approaches to children's play and learning. Further work was needed to improve the quality of planning related to play and learning. Children's learning, progress and next steps in learning were beginning to be considered, recorded and planned for. Floor books were introduced and the manager supported staff to understand how these could be used to support planning and enable children to record and reflect on their own learning over time. Staff used floor books and an online platform to record observations of children's experiences and learning. Observations of children's learning and development were developing but were inconsistent in quality. They did not always identify significant learning or plan meaningful next steps. As a result, there were missed opportunities to effectively plan for and support children to make progress. To ensure all children were supported with sufficient levels of learning and challenge, further work was needed to develop the approaches to planning for play and learning.

Play experiences have improved and were reflective of children's interests. Further strengthening of evaluations of children's learning is needed to support outcomes for children over time.

This area for improvement had 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.scot.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	4 - Good

Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Playing, learning and developing	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

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