Tiddlywinks Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Liff Road
Muirhead
Dundee
DD2 5QF

Telephone: 01382 581 581

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 May 2026

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, Angus. The service are registered to provide care to a maximum of 67 children at any one time of whom; no more than 10 are aged under 2 years; no more than 10 are aged 2 years to under 3 years; no more than 22 are aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school and; no more than 25 are attending primary school. The service currently have 60 children registered.

The nursery consists of two playrooms. Each playroom has access to toilets and changing facilities. Both playrooms have access to outdoor play spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 May 2026 between 08:45 and 17:00. Feedback was shared with the service on 28 May 2026.

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 complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

· spent time with 31 children using the service
· received 11 completed questionnaires from families and spoke to three parents
· spoke with staff and the management team
· 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

• Staff knew children well and had formed positive relationships with them.
• Children were happy and relaxed during their play and learning which supported them to develop and achieve.
• Parental engagement had been developed which supported effective sharing of information and ensured parents felt valued and included.
• Children regularly visited the local woodland area and took part in a range of outdoor experiences which supported curiosity, imaginations, and critical thinking skills.
• School aged children took part in a range of play and learning experiences and were given the opportunity to rest and relax.
• The service had developed positive links with the local community through the introduction of a community café and community Bookbug 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

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
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

Quality indicator - Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The service had a clear vision, values and aims in place, which had recently been reviewed in consultation with families. This collaborative approach supported shared understanding of the service's ethos and helped ensure that the views of families informed future direction. During the inspection, we saw these values reflected in practice through warm and respectful interactions, with staff promoting kindness, respect, and love across the setting. This supported positive outcomes for children.

An improvement plan was in place which supported continuous improvement. This had been regularly updated to reflect progress made. Monthly quality assurance calendars provided a structured approach to reviews, audits, and monitoring activities. This supported the service's approach to ongoing quality assurance.

Monitoring of practice, interactions, experiences, and environments effectively supported ongoing improvement within the service. They used a red, amber, and green approach to identify strengths and areas for development. Action plans had been created in response to this monitoring. In some areas, monitoring had been revisited which demonstrated progress and its impact. This could now be developed more consistently so that the service can clearly evidence sustained improvement and the impact this is having on children and families.

Parents were meaningfully involved in a range of consultation activities. This included a review of the vision and values, questionnaires linked to the improvement plan, and feedback on Bookbug sessions. Most parents agreed or strongly agreed that they are involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. One parent shared, 'We are often asked how they can improve things.' This helped the service to gather views from families and supported a more inclusive approach to ongoing improvement.

Self-evaluation was supported using challenge questions from 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: early learning and childcare.' This demonstrated that the service was engaged in reflective practice and used this approach to improve outcomes and experiences for children.

Staff had completed all mandatory training and had accessed a range of additional learning opportunities to support their professional development. They recorded their learning and reflected on the impact this had on their practice. Staff also identified further training that they felt would be beneficial to their practice and where possible, this training was located for them. These opportunities supported their ongoing professional development and improved outcomes for children.

Staff appraisals took place annually. Management had recently introduced an anonymous peer appraisal process, where staff identified colleagues' strengths, recognised areas of strong practice and highlighted aspects which could be further developed. This approach encouraged reflection within the staff team; however, the service had appropriately identified that the next set of appraisals would be completed by management. This would ensure a robust oversight of individual performance and development needs.

Recruitment procedures were in place to support management to complete required checks prior to a new staff member starting work. To provide clearer assurance that safer recruitment processes had been fully completed, all relevant dates should be recorded on recruitment checklists. This would include confirmation of The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme along with reference checks. This would ensure that all relevant checks had been completed in line with 'Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment' and would ensure children were kept safe.

Policies were in place to support consistent safe practice. We discussed that some policies should be reviewed and updated to reflect the relevant notifications that need to be submitted to Care Inspectorate within specific timescales. The service had recently identified this as an area to be developed. Management had taken steps to increase their knowledge of 'Early learning and childcare services: Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make.' This would ensure that we are notified of specific events or changes to service delivery and can appropriately support the service.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator - Playing, learning and developing

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 were happy, settled and having fun during their play and learning experiences. Across the service, children were mostly leading their own play, choosing where to play, and selecting resources which interested them. A parent shared, 'Huge range of activities from outdoor play, walks, arts and craft, role play, emotional development, sounds and numbers.' Most children were engaged in play for sustained periods of time. Older children accessed a broad range of experiences, which included being active, developing creativity, imagination, and critical thinking skills. We observed children fishing using loose parts, and mixing recipes using open ended resources. These opportunities extended their ideas and imaginative play.

Younger children enjoyed walks in the local community, creative painting experiences, story sharing and singing. They also explored real food as part of sensory and imaginative play. Staff recognised the importance of schematic play in the younger room and used this understanding to support children's learning and development. School-aged children were active and creative and also took time to relax and read during their time at the club. These experiences supported children to feel happy, relaxed, and confident in their play and environments.

Staff interacted well with children and were responsive in their approach to supporting and developing play and learning opportunities. Meaningful discussions took place and questioning was used to help children think, solve problems, and extend their ideas. Staff added resources to build on children's interests and deepen their play. To build on this further, the service could continue to consider the level of challenge available for all children. This would support ongoing learning and progression.

Group time in the 3-5 room provided an example of intentional learning being meaningfully linked to children's current interests. Discussions about planets supported children to share their current knowledge. This demonstrated that staff were responsive to children's interests and extended these to support further learning.

Numeracy, literacy, and communication were supported well throughout the playrooms and outdoor environments. Children had access to books, songs, signs, measuring resources and natural materials. These resources and experiences helped to embed numeracy, literacy, and early communication skills in meaningful ways across daily play experiences.

Planning had been developed over recent months, and this supported staff to observe and respond to children's interests. Staff were taking forward intentional learning experiences and used learning questions to support children's thinking and development. The service could now continue to strengthen this approach to ensure planning effectively supports children's progression over time.

Observations were recorded and shared with families through the Famly app. Most observations identified the learning, and skills children had developed and some captured the child's voice. Next steps were recorded alongside some observations; however, some of these needed to be more specific. These would benefit from being broken down to identify clearer and more manageable next steps to support children to achieve and progress within their learning.

Floor books were in place and captured children's play and learning experiences. One floor book demonstrated high-quality woodland experiences which had supported meaningful play and exploration. The service should continue to develop the child's voice within these books. This would support children to share thoughts and be fully involved in the evaluation of their play and learning.

Children took part in a range of outings within their local community, including visits to the park, woodland, shops, and stables. These experiences broadened children's learning beyond the setting and helped them to make connections with the world around them. Some children were involved in planting and growing activities within the community. This was enhanced by support from local residents, who donated resources and contributed to the planting experiences. These positive links with the local community helped children to develop a sense of belonging and supported meaningful opportunities for learning and participation.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality indicator - Nurturing care and support

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.

Interactions between staff and children were warm, kind, and caring. Staff knew children well and had a good understanding of their home routines, interests, and individual needs. A parent shared, 'The staff are always happy to help and build up good relationships with children and parents alike. Nothing is too much trouble and I wouldn't look at any other nursery for my children.' They responded sensitively to children and offered praise and encouragement throughout play, which children responded well to. Positive relationships had been developed across the service and children were confident in seeking staff out for comfort, reassurance, and affection. We heard children expressing their love for staff, with staff responding warmly in return. This demonstrated that children were at the heart of the service and were valued and respected.

Personal plans were in place for all children and contained detailed information to support staff to effectively meet children's needs. These plans included strategies, where needed, to support children's care and development. Personal plans were reviewed regularly with parents and changes were clearly recorded and highlighted within the Famly app. Each child had a chronology in place where significant events and potential concerns were recorded. To strengthen this further, the service should consider how relevant information from chronologies could be reflected within personal plans. This could support staff to respond consistently to a child's ongoing needs. School aged children had completed their own 'all about me' information independently, which supported their participation and involvement in their care.

Medication was stored safely and securely, with three monthly reviews taking place with parents. Consent forms held on the Famly app included relevant information such as signs, symptoms, and some emergency procedures. To strengthen this further, the service should discuss individual health plans with parents to ensure they have all the required information to deal with an emergency situation. This would ensure children's health and wellbeing needs could be fully met.

Snack and mealtimes supported children to develop independence and life skills. Children in the 3-5 room helped to set up for lunch. Staff sat with children in both rooms, ate alongside them, and created opportunities for meaningful discussions. Children talked about what they were eating and shared their likes and dislikes, which supported a social and relaxed mealtime experience. The service had identified the transition to mealtimes in the younger room as an area for development and staff were trying new approaches to support a smoother transition. Staff in the 3-5 room were also reflecting on how mealtimes could be further developed on busier days to ensure these remained calm, positive, and enjoyable experiences for children.

Parents were welcomed into the service each day, which helped to create a friendly and inclusive environment. A parent commented, 'Staff keep in regular contact with parents via the app. Pick up time is a great time to hear from staff about how my child's day went.' Parental engagement had been thoughtfully considered, and families were regularly invited to attend events within the service. This supported positive relationships with families and provided valuable opportunities for sharing information. This helped staff to respond well to children's needs and supported continuity of care between home and the setting. The service had recently created a community café and community Bookbug sessions which had been set up in a separate building from the nursery. Families were becoming involved in supporting these sessions. This extended opportunities for family involvement and supported a stronger sense of belonging.

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

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

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

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