

Doodlebugs Day Nursery (Aberuthven) Day Care of Children

Main Street
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Telephone: 01764 662 266

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 September 2026

Service provided by:
Doodlebugs Day Nurseries Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2013012143

Service no:
CS2013319773

About the service

Doodlebugs Day Nursery (Aberuthven) provides a daycare of children service in Aberuthven in Perth & Kinross. The service are registered to provide care to a maximum of 74 children up to the age of eight years at any one time which includes; a maximum of 19 children aged under two years, a maximum of 21 children aged two to three years a maximum of 34 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school of whom there can be a maximum of 10 children of primary school age up to the age of eight years. There are currently 61 children registered with the service.

The nursery consists of four playrooms, a kitchen, toilets, and changing facilities for all playrooms. Two of the playrooms have free flow access to outdoor play spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 September 2026 between 08:00 and 16:45 and 16 September 2026 between 09:00 and 11:15. Feedback was shared with the service on 16 September 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with 33 children using the service
- spoke to three parents during the inspection, and received 14 completed questionnaires from families and staff
- 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

- The service have developed their approach to quality assurance and self-evaluation. This now needs to be further developed by evaluating and identifying the impact on children and families.
- Most children were engaged in play and learning experiences which supported them to progress and achieve.
- Planning has been developed since the last inspection to provide a balance of intentional and spontaneous learning to support children's play, learning and progression.
- The service could develop their knowledge of infection control guidance to ensure a consistent and effective approach to minimise the risk of spread of infection.
- Child protection procedures have been developed and are now being effectively followed to keep children safe. Staff are now more confident and have a greater understanding of child protection procedures.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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's vision, values, and aims had been reviewed within the last year which involved a consultation with families. We observed that some aspects of the service's values were being reflected in practice. It would be beneficial for the staff team to fully reflect each of the four values into practice and ensure these are fully embedded within the service.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation systems had been developed since the last inspection. An improvement plan was in place with priorities which focused on planning, transitions, and high-quality interactions. The manager had created a quality assurance calendar which supported ongoing audits, reviews, and monitoring. The approach to quality assurance was now more manageable and meaningful to support ongoing improvement. Audits had been further developed which highlighted any potential patterns or discrepancies. Regular monitoring of practice, environments and interactions were being carried out to improve outcomes and experiences for children. Peer monitoring was taking place which was beginning to support consistency and reflection within the staff team. Staff were now reflecting on their practice and the play spaces for children and were now beginning to make changes to support children's play and learning opportunities.

Feedback from families was regularly requested which included them in the service's self-evaluation process. A parent shared, 'The nursery often asks for feedback on how they can improve the service, they also put on events that parents are able to attend.' Moving forward, the service should further develop quality assurance and self-evaluation activities to fully consider actions and next steps. This would support the service to identify the impact that changes made, have had on outcomes for children. This could support the service to embed quality practice within the service. A previous area for improvement has been partially met and has been rewritten to reflect this. (See area for improvement one).

Risk assessments were in place for each playroom. Daily garden checks were completed by staff prior to children accessing the outdoor space. It would be beneficial for the service to be mindful of where resources are placed in the garden. Pallets and other resources positioned against fencing could provide the potential for a child to climb over the fence. Being responsive to this could ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

The service's child protection procedures were now being followed. Staff were confident in recording significant events in a child's life within their personal plans. Chronologies were now recorded electronically to maintain confidentiality. Staff had all completed child protection training along with having further discussions at staff meetings. This had increased staff knowledge and was supporting them to appropriately deal with any potential concerns about a child. This was supporting the staff team to keep children safe.

Annual supervision and monitoring meetings helped staff to reflect on their strengths and development needs. Regular support and wellbeing check-ins had also been developed which supported the staff team. Staff spoke about feeling supported and it was evident that they were now more reflective as a team.

Areas for improvement

1. To promote consistent high-quality practice the provider should ensure that quality assurance and self-evaluation processes are further developed. This should include, but is not limited to:

a) revisiting effective and well managed quality assurance and self-evaluation processes once actions and next steps have been developed. These quality assurance processes should be meaningfully evaluated and highlight the impact on outcomes for children and families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with 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).

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 now more engaged in their play and learning. They had opportunities to develop imaginations, be creative, explore and take part in story sharing. A parent shared, 'They go to the local park and play in the nursery garden. They seem to do a range of outdoor learning and play experiences'. On occasions, older children were not fully engaged in play outdoors and moved around the outdoor space without purpose. Staff recognised this and engaged children in a purposeful play experience. It would be beneficial to review children's engagement within the outdoor space. This could provide the opportunity to identify what was working well and what could be further developed. Children could be involved in this review and work with staff to develop and make changes to their outdoor environment.

Staff shared that they had reflected on indoor environments and resources to improve experiences for children. Spaces had been developed to provide more nurturing play spaces for younger children to develop and learn. Resources were being rotated more frequently in the older rooms to extend play and learning and encourage children to explore and be curious. Some staff were now more skilled at using questioning to extend children's play and learning. However, there were several missed opportunities to effectively extend children's learning and develop skills. Some staff members could be effective role models which could support ongoing professional development and consistent interactions. This could develop children's play, learning and development opportunities.

Two of the playrooms had free flow access to the outdoor play spaces. All children were outdoors, had fresh air and active play during our visit. A parent commented, 'My child has really enjoyed the outdoor activities at nursery. They get to explore the garden and take part in different activities outside. It's nice knowing they get plenty of fresh air and time to play outdoors'. Younger children were supported to explore a range of natural resources outdoors. This play was skilfully extended by the staff team to support children to develop an awareness of their senses.

Planning had been developed since the last inspection and there was now a balance of intentional and responsive learning. Staff were responsive to children's interests and extended these through a range of play experiences. Staff spoke confidently about developing children's learning over several weeks and how they used next steps and tracking to support intentional learning. This was supporting children to progress within their learning and development.

Observations of children's learning were now being recorded more frequently. Management should continue to review and monitor staff's recording of observations. A parent shared, 'There are often more group observations than individual observations for my child'. Next steps within children's learning were in place following some observations. Most of these were specific to support children to progress. Staff had an overview of each child's next steps and spoke confidently about linking these to specific observations to show progression and development.

Floor books in the older room clearly evidenced progression within children's interests and how these had been extended. Children's voices were evident within the books which promoted ownership of their learning. Floor books in the younger rooms shared clear and specific learning and progression. Moving forward, the service could consider linking learning and experiences to SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators, Realising the Ambition and UNCRC (The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). This could further promote and develop the knowledge and skills of staff and children.

Children are supported to achieve 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator - Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Most children appeared happy and settled within the nursery. However, staff interactions were inconsistent throughout our visit. Some staff were warm and caring and offered cuddles and reassurance to children. On occasions, some staff became more task focused rather than interacting with children. One parent shared, 'Many of the staff are very engaging and are wonderful to interact with'. Some positive relationships had been formed, and a child was observed to seek out a specific member of staff on several occasions. Staff were currently being supported through training to develop quality interactions with children. We discussed that consistent staffing in rooms could support positive relationships and quality interactions with children. A parent shared, 'I think there is enough staff, but not always the same staff.'

Transitions were being developed within the service. The settling-in approach was flexible to support the needs of children and families. Transitions within the 3-5 room were beginning to maintain children's engagement. Most children were sensitively supported during main transitions, for example, when moving outdoors. There was scope to further improve these to ensure all transitions were smooth and minimised interruptions to children's play and learning. Moving forward, staff could use their knowledge of children's individual needs to ensure children experience smooth and successful transitions.

Staff effectively maintained children's safety as they communicated well with each other. Staff had oversight of how many children were within spaces and ensured this information was shared as they moved between indoors and outdoors. They were developing their use of SIMOA (safe, inspect, monitor, observe and act) and had created home link bags where children shared their learning about safety at home.

Safe sleep practices were in place and were followed by staff. Children were provided with comfortable and calm spaces to sleep. Children were supervised and monitored while sleeping to maintain their wellbeing and keep them safe.

Mealtimes were calm, relaxed and positive, providing older children with meaningful opportunities to develop confidence, independence and practical life skills. Children were able to enjoy their meals at their own pace and return to play when they had finished. Staff were responsive to children's verbal and non-verbal cues indicating hunger; however, more timely responses would further enhance children's wellbeing. Opportunities for younger children to develop independence and life skills during snack and mealtime experiences could continue to be strengthened to ensure a consistent approach across all age groups. The service could continue to develop mealtime practice to ensure all children experience high-quality, nurturing and developmentally appropriate experiences.

Personal care routines were carried out respectfully, with children's privacy and dignity maintained throughout. Warm, responsive interactions were observed which supported children to feel secure while encouraging the development of independence. During the inspection, it was noted that PPE (personal protective equipment) was not always used appropriately. Hand hygiene practices were also not consistently followed by all staff following nose wiping. These inconsistencies increased the potential risk of cross-contamination and the spread of infection. We discussed the importance of ensuring infection prevention and control procedures were implemented consistently by all staff to safeguard children's health and wellbeing. Concerns were also identified regarding the presence of mould in one bathroom area. The provider responded promptly to this issue and began taking action to address it during the inspection.

Personal Plans were in place for each child and provided detailed information to support staff to meet children's individual needs. 'We know our children well' documents provided an overview for staff of each children's current all about me information. The use of specific planning approaches and tools identified targeted strategies and demonstrated a commitment to ensuring children received appropriate support at the right time.

Floor books highlighted a range of opportunities for families to meaningfully engage in the life of the service. These included special event days such as the Doodlefest, sports day, stay and play sessions and sharing their own skills. Parents were communicated with daily through the nursery app and during pick up and drop off times. One parent shared, 'Communication is always improvable. It has made great strides, but I think there is still room for improvement here'. Family feedback was valued as parents were asked about their experiences within the setting. This demonstrated that families were valued and respected as part of their child's journey in the service.

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 consistent high quality practice the provider should ensure that quality assurance and self-evaluation processes are further developed. This should include, but is not limited to:

a) audits being further developed to ensure they are effective and robust to identify errors, missing information and patterns or triggers. This is in relation to accidents and incidents and the safe management of medication;

b) developing effective and well managed quality assurance and self-evaluation processes including monitoring of practice, interactions, spaces and children's experiences. These should be meaningful, evaluated and highlight the impact on outcomes for children and families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with 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).

This area for improvement was made on 29 January 2026.

Action taken since then

The service have further developed their audits to support them to identify discrepancies, errors and patterns. This system is now working effectively.

Quality assurance has been developed and monitoring is now more meaningful to support change and improvement within the service. Staff have a greater input into the monitoring and self-evaluation within the service and use the two stars and a wish approach to share feedback with peers.

The service are in the early stages of revisiting monitoring. Dates have been recorded on monitoring records to revisit, evaluate and record impact.

This area for improvement has been partially met and has been re-worded and continued within this report.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children are kept safe from harm and abuse, the provider should develop the service's child protection policy to keep it in line with 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023.' This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) ensuring that processes and procedures are clear and consistently followed;
- b) ensuring clear guidance on how to effectively manage allegations made in relation to a staff member;
- c) ensuring concerns recorded in children's chronologies are acted upon;
- d) ensuring all staff have received additional child protection training to develop their knowledge and skills to support them to recognise signs of abuse and keep children safe.

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

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 29 January 2026.

Action taken since then

The service have reviewed and updated the child protection policy and have developed a further policy to provide the processes to be followed if an allegation is made against a staff member.

Chronologies were in place and were held safely and securely to maintain confidentiality.

Staff have all completed child protection training and some have completed additional training. Staff were now more confident in sharing how to deal with child protection concerns.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children experience high quality learning and development, the provider should ensure that a balance of intentional and responsive planning is offered. Observations should be effective and clearly identify progress and next steps within a child's learning. Next steps should be developed and regularly re-visited to support further progression and achievement.

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

This area for improvement was made on 29 January 2026.

Action taken since then

Planning has been developed with the support of Perth & Kinross local authority. There is now a balance of intentional and responsive planning to support children to develop and progress. Observations are now more specific and most identified learning and the development of skills. Next steps were in place for children and staff had an overview of these and planned for progressing these. Staff could share how they linked observations to next steps to clearly evidence progression in a child's learning.

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.scot.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Nurturing care and support	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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