The Corstorphine Nursery
Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 June 2026

Service provided by:
The Corstorphine Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2013012199

Service no:
CS2013321649

About the service

The Corstorphine nursery is a daycare of children service provided by The Corstorphine Nursery Ltd. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 61 children at any one time, not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 17 will be aged under two years.

The nursery operates from a detached property in the Corstorphine area of Edinburgh and is close to local amenities and bus routes. The accommodation is provided over two floors. The ground floor space includes three playrooms, kitchen, laundry area, staff room, toilet and nappy changing facilities, office space and outdoor play areas used by all playrooms. The first floor space consists of toilets and nappy changing facilities, kitchen and two playrooms. The Sunbear room also has direct access to a roof terrace garden area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 03 June 2026 between 10:00 and 18:00 and Thursday 04 June 2026 between 07:30 and 13:00. We gave feedback to the service in the afternoon of the second day. 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 information, complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke and interacted with children in each of the rooms, and five of their parent's carers.
- we also received 26 responses to our electronic questionnaire
- spoke with members of the staff and management teams
- observed practice and how children were supported with their routines and play
- 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 were well supported by staff who knew them very well and understood their individual personalities which met their needs, rights and choices.
- Recording children's learning and development could be further developed by using observations better to demonstrate children's learning and progress.
- Self-evaluation was used well to inform and support change that has a positive impact for children and families.
- Communication was a key strength of the service, which supported inclusiveness and effective partnership working with families.

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	5 - Very 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 on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children and families benefited from a leadership and staff team who were committed to providing a quality service. The vision, values and aims in place reflected the current provision and the importance of working in partnership with families. This helped to support a shared understanding of what the service wanted to achieve for children and families. Parents had established opportunities to be involved in the life of the setting. For example, through feedback processes and participation in nursery experiences. As a result, families felt included as they worked well in partnership with staff and had built strong, trusting relationships with them. They shared, "We appreciate the consistency and professionalism of the management team."

The service used national and local guidance to support improvement. Leaders demonstrated a responsive approach, as they listened to staff feedback about processes used to support change. For example, reducing the three-month programme to an eight-week model helped make change more manageable for the staff team. This helped leaders and staff maintain focus to develop the service. Moving forward, they had identified the need to take a measured approach to quality assurance. For example, sampling audits to make the task manageable.

As part of the improvement journey, staff had considered changes for individual rooms. For example, improving the layout to support children's play experiences. To strengthen this further, leaders should continue to support staff to evaluate the impact of changes made. This should clearly demonstrate how improvements had enhanced children's experiences, engagement and outcomes.

The views of parents, carers and children were regularly sought about the service. Using feedback, supported leaders to make informed decisions about improvement priorities. Improvement planning was specific and measurable, which supported continuous improvement. A pro-active and flexible approach was enabled by additional action points being identified throughout the year. This meant areas needing attention were addressed in a timely manner.

Monitoring of practice took place and helped leaders identify where staff needed support or further professional development. This contributed to a culture of continuous improvement and supported staff to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence. Engaging in professional discussion could enhance the process by encouraging reflective practice and agreeing next steps. This should build individual and team knowledge. Following up and assessing progress made, would further strengthen the service's ability to show how professional learning improved outcomes for children.

Recruitment and induction procedures were in place and demonstrated that staff had been safely recruited and supported in their role. This helped to protect children and supported safer staffing arrangements within the service. Through this process, staff were supported to develop their skills and knowledge as they reflected on activities completed. These arrangements helped staff to understand their roles and responsibilities, and helped leaders identify any further support needed at an early stage.

To improve this further, leaders should ensure staff reflections within induction and supervision records were sufficiently meaningful. Staff should be encouraged to explain how their learning had influenced their practice and how this had supported positive outcomes for children.

Staff communicated effectively and worked well as a team, ensuring children were supported and supervised throughout the day. Their flexible and responsive approach meant they were able to adapt to changing situations, maintaining continuity of care and supporting children's wellbeing. Parents liked that staff had, "Very open communication, regular updates around their development." And, "Staff are really warm and rapport/trust was established immediately."

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing.

A range of spontaneous and planned opportunities were available in each room. This supported children to make choices, follow their interests and experience a positive start to their day. They settled quickly as they were able to explore, play and learn at their own pace and alongside friends. Most remained settled and interested throughout their time in the service. Parents told us, "Every week there is a range of activities on offer - both indoors and outdoors. We love to see the variety each week, such as art and craft activities, role play, mud kitchen, small world, etc."

Staff knew children well and were able to talk about their individual interests. However, this knowledge was not always used consistently to support children who were less engaged. For example, children's interests were not always used to support a deeper involvement in play. Staff should continue to use what they knew about individual children to plan and adapt experiences, so that all children were supported to be meaningfully engaged.

Children's access to all play spaces was not yet consistent across the day. For example, the outdoor area and multi-purpose room were not available at the start of the day. This limited children's choice and opportunities for movement, exploration and quieter play during the early part of the day. Making all areas available throughout the day would help reduce noise levels and support higher levels of engagement, particularly for children who benefited from more space or outdoor play.

Almost all staff interacted warmly with children and positioned themselves at children's level. They supported children's play by sitting alongside them and joining in with what they were doing. This helped children feel noticed, listened to and included in their play. Staff working with younger children responded well to their non-verbal cues, which supported children who were not yet using verbal language to communicate their needs, choices and interests.

There were varying levels of confidence, skill and experience across the staff team. Leaders were aware which staff would benefit from support, and had identified how they could develop their interaction skills. For example, naming objects and actions and commenting on children's play would support children's speech, language and communication development more consistently. There was also scope to deepen learning for some of the older children.

Staff should continue to develop their use of open-ended questions, sustained conversations to offer appropriate challenge. This could help support and extend children's learning.

Intentional and responsive planning was in place. Staff met as a team and shared observations about children's interests and development. This helped staff plan experiences that reflected what children were interested in and what they needed next in their learning. There was scope to further develop observations by recording more clearly significant learning and children's progress. This would help staff make better use of observations to inform planning and demonstrate how children's learning was being supported and extended.

Milestones were used to support assessment of children's development. This helped staff consider children's progress and identify possible next steps. There was scope to strengthen the links between individual personal learning goals, planning and postcards, so that records gave a more holistic overview of each child's learning, development and progress over time. Parents found, "The journals are a good insight as to what they get up to in their busy days." And, "Parent postcards are sent out termly with focus and plans of their intentional learning."

Children are supported to achieve — 5 - Very Good

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

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from staff who knew them well. Staff interacted with children in kind, caring and respectful ways. They consistently used children's names, including during mealtimes, which helped children feel recognised and valued as individuals. Children were warmly greeted on arrival and confidently separated from their carers, demonstrating they felt safe, secure and valued.

Children were encouraged to develop friendships and were able to choose who they played with. Younger children were supported to share, take turns and begin to understand the needs of others. This helped them develop early social skills and positive relationships with their peers. Children were offered physical comfort and reassurance when they needed it. Staff were calm in their approach and used eye contact and gentle interactions to support children's emotional wellbeing.

Personal planning arrangements were used effectively to support children's health, wellbeing and safety. Important information, including dietary needs, allergies, medical conditions and individual strategies had been gathered and reviewed regularly. Staff were knowledgeable about children's plans and used them effectively to provide consistent support. Medication systems were managed very well, which helped ensure children's health needs were met safely and accurately. Parents shared, "We are invited to review the care plan periodically and also to share achievements from home through the learning zone portal." And, "The staff regularly ask for updates. Really structured with care plans and also postcards on development things at home. If I have forgot to update staff will remind me to, which is good!"

Mealtimes were well organised and staff prepared children for lunch and snack routines. Staff sat beside children while they ate, which helped provide supervision and reassurance. Where staff engaged in warm conversation, children benefited from a more sociable and relaxed experience.

Children had some opportunities to develop independence by serving themselves, pouring drinks and clearing up after themselves. Older children were involved in setting up snack and were enthusiastic about helping. These experiences supported children's confidence, responsibility and developing life skills. There was scope to extend children's involvement in these routines. For example, they could take a more active role if they were snack helpers. Increasing opportunities for self-service would help children learn about portion size, make choices and take responsibility for their own needs. In addition, the service could consider a 'rolling' approach to mealtimes as this enables children to choose when they eat.

Partnerships with families were a significant strength. Staff demonstrated a strong commitment to effective partnership working, building highly positive and trusting relationships with families. Families told us they felt listened to, included and well supported.

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	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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