The Bees Knees Nursery
Day Care of Children

280 Lanark Road West
Currie
EH14 5RU

Telephone: 07770 060 373

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 May 2026

Service provided by:
The Bees Knees Playgroup Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2015012460

Service no:
CS2015336137

About the service

The Bees Knees Nursery is an early learning and childcare setting situated within a community building in a residential area of Currie, close to transport links, shops and community services.

The setting provides day care for up to 19 children aged from birth to entry to primary school age. The setting comprises of two playrooms, one for children under the age of two years and another for children aged over two years. Children over the age of two have direct access to the outdoor play space. The provider of the service is the registered peripatetic manager of this service and The Outdoor Nursery Edinburgh, and responsible for the day-to-day running of the service.

At the time of inspection, a section of the outdoor play space was not accessible to children due to planned refurbishment.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday, 11 May 2026 from 10:00 until 16:30 hours and Wednesday, 12 May from 09:45 until 14:00 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 with children and families using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed seven parent surveys
- 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 inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within Leadership, and Children play and learn.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing, warm and kind interactions from staff.
- Children had fun as they engaged in their play with friends.
- Children benefitted from healthy meals.
- Children's play and wellbeing was impacted on with the limited experiences available, particularly outdoors.
- Children benefitted from daily outings in the local area.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

Since the last inspection, the service had undergone major changes, including a new provider taking over, the recruitment of new staff and those deployed from the provider's other service, The Outdoor Nursery. The management team worked across both sites to provide support and oversight. The leadership team and staff were still establishing clear roles and responsibilities to drive improvement. They should continue developing these to build a strong culture of continuous improvement that leads to positive outcomes for children.

Leaders were passionate about their service, and the vision, values and aims had been created with high aspirations for children. We suggested revisiting these to ensure they accurately reflected the experiences children received. Leaders explained that the team had been built on shared values, including kindness and positive relationships with each other, parents and children. This was evident in their daily interactions and in the respectful, relaxed communication role modelled.

Approaches to quality assurance were in the process of being developed. A calendar plan provided structure to tasks across the year. Room meetings and a communication diary had been introduced. This created opportunities to share ideas and share information about children and changes in the room. These approaches would benefit from further development, with dates and a summary of discussions and agreed actions being recorded. This would enable leaders to track developments in the service over time. Some self-evaluation approaches were in place, including peer practice and room observations. These approaches should be strengthened using guidance documents and frameworks including 'A Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: early learning and childcare' to support effective self-evaluation to positivity impact on children's experiences (see area for improvement 2 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at the last inspection?').

Staff were safely recruited, with all checks completed before they started. Interviews were carried out with the service's vision and values in mind, and candidates had opportunities to spend time in the service with children and staff, allowing leaders to assess their skills and attributes. Feedback from staff and children was gathered as part of this process, and there was potential to involve children further by supporting them to create their own questions. An induction process was in place for new staff, informed by the national induction resource, and staff reported feeling well supported by it.

Quality indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

Children benefitted from leaders role modelling and communicating strong, values-based practice. As a result, they experienced respectful interactions, active listening and consistent validation of their feelings.

Children were cared for by staff who were qualified or working towards professional accreditation. Mandatory training, including first aid and child protection, ensured children were kept safe. All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and accessed training through this, alongside online learning. Leaders encouraged staff to seek wider professional learning opportunities. Staff were supported to develop their interests, for example, by taking responsibility for specific areas of the service and

requesting training linked to these. They were encouraged to share new learning at team meetings and reflect on how it influenced their practice, such as applying learning from mental health training or improving their planning and recording skills.

Staff benefitted from supervision sessions with leaders, where they could discuss professional and personal matters. Staff told us they found this helpful and gave them confidence to take forward their practice. For example, a member of staff was developing their skills in documenting planning for children.

There were enough staff to care for children safely. Staff were responsive to children's needs and deployed themselves effectively; for example, supporting older children to settle for sleep while also assisting colleagues. They communicated well about their movements, ensuring each play space remained appropriately staffed.

Arrangements were in place to cover absences, and leaders were present in rooms to support continuity of care. Staff from the sister service provided additional support when needed and were familiar with the children and the setting.

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 available to them. They had fun as they played with friends and staff. Children were confident to ask for additional resources and staff were responsive to this. For example, a child asked for role play resources and staff responded by making these available.

Play spaces had been developed with defined areas, including home, construction and story areas. To support children's play experiences, areas should be further developed to reflect children's interests and to enhance their play. For example, providing enough resources that will enable children to lead their learning and explore their play in a meaningful way.

Children benefitted from daily outings to local parks and greenspaces, providing them with regular fresh air and opportunities for physical activities. The service should consider how to ensure equity of outdoor play experiences for children who have different patterns of attendance and may not have the opportunity to be part of the morning outings.

The grassed area of the garden was not accessible to children as there was planned refurbishment work. The outdoor area available to children was typically accessible in the afternoon. Children had fun and enjoyed the resources that were on offer, playing with the balls and large tunnel. Outdoor play experiences for younger children were limited and were not reflective of their needs and development. The outdoor area consisted of a paved pathway with sand and water trays that were at a height that was not accessible for younger children. The barked area had a slide and large tunnel that older children enjoyed. The outdoor area would benefit from being tidied and developed to offer all children a variety of outdoor learning opportunities. A parent commented that, "It will be great when the garden area is finished so that the children can use the whole space." Quality assurance and self-evaluation should support the development of a suitable outdoor play space for children to play and learn in throughout the day (see area for improvement 1 and 2 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at the

last inspection?').

Planning approaches had been introduced and were beginning to be informed by observations of children and their interests. Floor books were being used to record activities and children's comments. Children enjoyed the activities and experiences available to them. However, they were not yet extending or consolidating children's learning. As a result, the area for improvement made at the last inspection was not met. Planning approaches and the floor book should continue to be developed to reflect children's interests, and capture children's existing and new knowledge and learning (see area for improvement 1 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at the last inspection?').

Interactions between children and staff were positive and responsive. For example, younger children were supported to participate in making play dough. Children experienced turn taking, using utensils to mix or use their hands. Staff used descriptive language to describe the activity to children. For older children, conversations to support play and learning were mostly narrative rather than supporting children to be curious and offer challenge. Current guidance documents would enable leaders to effectively evaluate and develop staff interactions further to promote children's play and learning.

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 interactions from staff who knew them well. For example, during lunch staff spoke to each other about a child previously not liking fish cakes but today appeared to as they had eaten them. This meant that staff were recognising changes in children's likes and dislikes as they developed as individuals, and staff referenced children's preferences in daily conversations.

Children benefitted from respectful approaches, including their names being used when spoken to. This helped them to build an understanding of their own identity. Staff spoke to children prior to transitions and carrying out care routines. For example, asking before wiping their face or before moving to other spaces in the nursery. As a result, children were confident to approach staff. Nonverbal communication was picked up on; for example, younger child gesturing to be picked up.

Children experienced mealtimes that were relaxed with meals that were nutritious and cooked on site. Menu plans had been developed in line with Setting the table (Scottish Government 2024). Most parents agreed to the statement from our inspection survey "My child can choose from a range of healthy food that reflects their individual needs". There was a relaxed and child-centred approach to supporting children with dietary needs. For example, encouraging children to taste meals provided but have familiar food from home available. Staff were aware of dietary needs and food preferences, with information being easily available for reference. This meant that mealtimes were reflective of children's needs and preferences. Staff sat with children and had conversations about their day whilst ensuring that they were safe as they supervised them.

Children washed their hands at key points in the day, including before and after mealtimes and after playing outdoors. All children were familiar with the hand-washing routine and as a result, children's independence and wellbeing was supported.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal plans that contained information from home and were reviewed in line with current guidance. To strengthen plans further, strategies of support could be more focussed and specific. This would enable fuller evaluations of children's progress, development and inform future plans. To further ensure that children receive the right support at the right time, the service should consider when strategies of support progress into a more formalised child-planning approach.

Sleep routines were in place and reflective of parents' requests. A sleep space was created in the younger room, with low level beds. This meant the younger children could easily access the beds and let staff know when they were tired. Sleep mats were available for older children who required to sleep. Each child had their own blankets and comforters if needed. Children who did not require a sleep continued to play either in the younger room or move through to the older room. Children' s wellbeing was supported as children had access to their comforters or small toys from home.

Stay and play sessions were available for parents to attend, and enabled parents to spend some time in the service with their child. Parents spoke positively about the relationships they had with the staff. A parent commented, "The staff are friendly and easy to talk to." Transitions into the service were managed flexibility which meant that parents could stay for longer periods in response to their child's needs.

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 support children's play and learning and enable them to achieve their full potential, management and staff should:

Review and further develop their planning approaches to create a more balance child centred, intentional and responsive plan to learning experiences.

Ensure appropriate levels of challenge and depth in play and learning that supports children's curiosity and creativity and enables them to lead on their play and learning.

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27); and 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 30 April 2025.

Action taken since then

Planning approaches had been introduced. Floor books were being used to document children's comments and activities experienced. Approaches need to be further developed to create a balanced approach to responsive and intentional planning based on children's interests. Activities provided were engaging for children; however. they were not providing opportunities for challenge or to create curiosity.

This area for improvement was not met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children benefit from a high-quality service, the manager and staff team should continue to further develop an effective quality assurance system. This should include ongoing self-evaluation and opportunities for staff to reflect together, this should be supported by best practice guidance and current research. This information should be used to influence positive change to outcomes for children and families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the 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 30 April 2025.

Action taken since then

Systems were beginning to be introduced to support quality assurance and self-evaluation, including team meeting and communication books. Current guidance documents were not being effectively used to support self-evaluation and current quality assurance was not yet having an impact on experiences for children.

This area for improvement was not met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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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