Happy Feet Nursery and Out of School Club
Day Care of Children

Rankin Gait Centre
Hamilton Street
Carluke
ML8 4AT

Telephone: 01555 700 700

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 July 2024

Service provided by:
Happy Feet OSC Limited

Service provider number:
SP2010011183

Service no:
CS2017361889

About the service

Happy Feet Nursery and Out of School Club is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 155 children at any one time, aged from birth to primary and secondary school aged under 14 years. The service is provided from purpose-built premises in the Carluke area of South Lanarkshire. The setting is close to shops, parks, transport links and local amenities.

Children receive care within age related playrooms and a sensory room. They have access to an imaginative outdoor play space adjacent to the premises. Children from the three to five playroom also have opportunities to access a forest school programme within the wider community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 29 July 2024 between 08:50 and 16:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. We concluded the inspection on Tuesday 30 July 2024 when we gave inspection feedback. 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 in each of the playrooms and reviewed 11 survey responses on the quality of the setting from parents whose children attend the service
- spoke with some of the management team and staff. We also received eight survey responses from staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children's needs were well supported by effective personal planning. This had ensured staff caring for children had a clear overview of their individual needs and preferences.
- Planning approaches to support children's play based learning were child centred and responsive to children's interests.
- Some areas and resources within the setting would benefit from being refreshed and cleaned.
- The management team had detailed plans in place that supported continued improvement of the setting, and positive outcomes for children and families.
- Staff were flexible and supported each other to work as a team to benefit children.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.
Children experienced warm, nurturing care from responsive staff, which contributed to them feeling secure, safe and loved. Staff knew children and their families very well. They supported families by linking with agencies that provided additional help where needed. Parents comments about sharing information with staff included, "The staff are always very accommodating and make time for a chat each morning/ afternoon- providing a clear overview of my child's day" and "They're really good at keeping you informed with what's going on, development of the child etc". These discussions with parents contributed to meaningful personal planning for children. It ensured staff caring for children had a clear overview of their individual needs and preferences.

There was a clear emphasis on nurture and wellbeing throughout the setting that was extended to staff. Staff participated in individual wellbeing check-ins with management. When staff feel happy and valued, their mood reflects on their interactions with the children they care for, contributing to them feeling settled.

Children were confident and relaxed participating in familiar routines throughout their nursery day. Mealtimes were homely and provided opportunities for children to develop social skills, for example though taking turns to serve food and pouring their own drinks. They enjoyed the lunch and older children told us about their favourites, "I like a roll from Greggs but I like soup and bread in nursery'. After lunch, children were supported by staff to independently carry out hygiene practices including handwashing and tooth brushing. This helped children to learn to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

The management of children's medication was in keeping with good practice, including its storage. We advised that children's emergency medication should be more readily accessible and this was addressed before the end of our inspection. This practice supported children's health and safety.

Children's welfare and wellbeing were safeguarded as staff participated in annual child protection training. Raising awareness of the importance of child protection was part of the induction programme for new staff. We particularly liked that a booklet had recently been created by management and distributed to all staff, to support their understanding of their responsibilities in protecting children. For example, the steps staff should take in the event of any concerns about were simplified in a flow chart, with terminology explained.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.
Staff offered a good balance of adult and child led activities. They encouraged children to be independent and make choices about where they wanted to play. We observed children engaged in play activities of their choice, developing their imagination and problem solving skills. For example in the home corner within each playroom there were real life resources such as family photographs and fresh fruit and vegetables. One of the children explained "we have milk for the babies in here, we are feeding the babies yoghurt".

Numeracy and literacy skills were introduced naturally through play and children's exploration of the world around them. Older children could describe and compare lengths and heights using familiar language as

they played together. There was a range of materials available, both within the playrooms and outdoors, to encourage children's mark making skills. For example babies enjoyed making squiggles in shaving foam and other sensory materials. Staff made very good use of the wider community to extend children's early literacy and numeracy skills. We accompanied a group of toddlers to their local charity shops where they counted the number of items they might need and staff chatted to them about the shape and sizes of their purchases. On their journey staff also took the opportunity to remind children about road safety and drew their attention to environmental print. In this way children were learning new language and about the significance of print.

Parents comments about the range of play and learning experiences included, "There are always sensory activities provided for my child, and different role play areas set up in the room as standard. She is encouraged to learn through play and is often provided with outdoor learning experiences".

The management team carried out focussed monitoring of children's play spaces, informed by their local authority's self evaluation tool. The improved organisation of playrooms had extended children's play and learning experiences and provided more comfortable spaces where they could self regulate their emotions. Senior staff explained their new approach to planning summarised as 'belonging, being and becoming', which had been embraced by both staff and children. It included mind maps to help children think, express their ideas and plan ahead. As a result children felt their ideas were valued and respected by staff. The planning approach also supported staff to reflect on how they offered children challenge, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Staff aimed to observe and record observations of each child's learning and achievements at least three times per month. They shared children's play, learning and development with parents using an online platform. The management team was monitoring the content of children's learning journals to ensure there was consistency across the team and that there was a respectful tone. Parents responding to our survey confirmed that they were welcomed into the service and had the opportunity to discuss their child's care, play and learning. One commented, "We work with nursery to have a learning plan in place. We have had to add goals outside of this and this was no problem to speak to the staff about".

How good is our setting? 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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.
The setting was comfortable, spacious, well ventilated, and furnished to a good standard. This created a welcoming environment where children were valued. The range of safety measures in place helped keep children safe. For example, a secure entry system, risk assessments and appropriate arrangements for maintenance. Management had introduced a new format for risk assessments. Staff reflected on risk assessments with children so that they could develop analytical skills in making safe decisions, therefore taking responsibility for their own safety as well as that of their friends. In addition to registers of children's attendance, staff kept a tally of which children were present within each area throughout the day. Staff had a clear awareness of children's safety and were continually counting them, such as when they moved through the building, to the garden, or out on a walk. This meant they were accounting for children's presence and their welfare.

Any accidents and incidents were recorded and shared with parents. The management team audited patterns in these each month. This helped prevent the recurrence of similar accidents/incidents occurring and kept children and staff safe.

Play spaces took consideration of children's abilities, stage of development and learning. Each playroom offered children a combination of table top and floor based defined areas, with toys and resources easily accessible to children. Some storage boxes were labelled to assist children as they followed their play intentions and found what they were looking for even from a very young age. We observed babies as they enjoyed using their senses to explore the interesting learning opportunities available to them. For example, they explored the physical resources available outdoors with increasing confidence and independence.

In addition to the age and stage defined playrooms, there was a sensory room where children could use the quiet, peaceful environment to regulate their emotions. Children's opportunities for play and learning were further enhanced through strong connections to the wider community. Parents comments about the quality of facilities included, "There is a Montessori type garden set up, where the children have the opportunity to learn though play. They also often go on walks through the town and learning about different topics, such as: people who help us, transport and so on".

While the organisation of playrooms had improved and resources been replenished, we found some areas of the setting to be tired and in need of some attention. There did not appear to be consistency in the cleaning schedules. We acknowledged the commitment of the service provider to to maintain the accommodation but have repeated an earlier area for improvement, to ensure areas used by children are always clean, hygienic and fit for purpose. **(See area for improvement 1.)**

Areas for improvement

1. Children's wellbeing and safety should be supported within an environment where the risk of cross infection is minimised through good hygiene practices, in accordance with 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education' (Health Protection Scotland, March 2024). This should include but not be limited to ensuring all areas used by children are clean, hygienic and fit for purpose.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.
The service was in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and therefore had access to their improvement plan templates and quality improvement officer support. The improvement plan was informed by self evaluation, which aspired to high quality care and support tailored to the needs of children and families. We inspected at the beginning of a new self evaluation cycle but were impressed that the refreshed improvement priorities were building on the setting's attention to everyone's wellbeing. This included supporting children's attachments, or more simply how they formed trusting relationships with staff. Secure attachments at nursery are important as they help children feel safe, which in turn enables them to explore their new world more confidently and lead their learning.

There was a strong sense of community within the setting, where the management team valued the contributions from staff, children and families. Parents responding to our survey mostly agreed that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. Comments included, "We are often asked to share views and participate when nursery looking at values" and "Our views are always taken into account". Involving parents in decisions about the setting contributed to them feeling respected, and made it more likely that any developments were relevant to their families' needs.

Individual staff led in a variety of ways as part of their daily practice, for example through being keyworkers for groups of children. A keyworker is an identified member of staff who takes a special interest in individual children's care and development and monitors their progress. New champion roles gave staff opportunities for leadership so that they were taking more ownership of the service improvement journey. Staff also participated in peer evaluations, which supported them to grow in confidence as practitioners.

Staff had annual appraisals as well as an open door to support from the management team, which meant they were able to discuss their practice and professional development as well as personal issues. The majority of staff responding to our survey agreed that their wellbeing needs were recognised and supported by leaders. A newer initiative that would be further developed as part of the health and wellbeing improvement priority, sought to put in place staff support strategies to strengthen their wellbeing. This would increase staff morale and alleviate any concerns about potential impact of staff absence or holidays on quality of outcomes for children.

The manager was not present during our visit, however other members of the management team and staff engaged well during the inspection process. They provided additional evidence taking on advice and support, which demonstrated their commitment to improvement.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.
Sampling the provider's recruitment procedures gave us reassurance that staff had been safely recruited and there were systems to support their practice. We spoke with the most recent recruits who told us they felt welcomed and very well supported by the team. They particularly liked that the checklist and reading material for their induction had been 'chunked' so that they were not overloaded with new information. We highlighted how the national induction resource can be a beneficial tool both for new staff and the whole team, to affirm good practice. The guidance serves as a reminder of Scottish Government's expectations of national standards for early learning and childcare, and how these contribute to the safety of children, their wellbeing and progression.

During our visit there was the right number of staff with sufficient time and appropriate skills to meet the needs of the children present. We observed that effective staff communication supported children's comfort and wellbeing. Staff moved naturally in response to where children wished to play and signalled to each other where they felt children might need closer supervision to support their safety. Since our last inspection mobile phones had been introduced for use in the outdoor area. Their effectiveness as a communication tool was continually being reviewed by management. This would help ensure that staff working outdoors with children could quickly get assistance, and that children experienced high quality outcomes wherever they played.

Staff had clearly built very positive relationships with children and families. They were warm, caring and nurturing in their interactions with children, which had created a calm, welcoming family atmosphere throughout the setting. Staff were playful, listened attentively to children and were responsive to their ideas. As a result children were settled and felt safe within the setting. Most of the parents who responded to our survey believed they had a strong connection with staff. Their comments included, "Having gone through a lot involving my child this year and what he has went through himself, the staff have always been supportive and non judgemental" and "All staff members are friendly, approachable and caring".

Displays of staff photographs and minibiographies helped families get to know who would be caring for their children. It demonstrated the balance of skills and experience across the team, and how staff were regulated. Staff caring for children were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council, which is the regulatory body responsible for registering the social care workforce. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the professional development of those registered with them.

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

Children should have opportunities for high quality social engagement and learning social skills during meal times. To enable this, management and staff should continue to review meal time arrangements, including staff deployment.

Staff should refer to the SIMOA good practice note 'Keeping children safe: supporting positive mealtime experiences in early learning and childcare' to support their professional reflection on mealtime improvements.

This area for improvement was made on 19 January 2024.

Action taken since then

Mealtimes were a sociable experience for children within all playrooms, where their independence was encouraged. We liked the picnic approach in 3-5 playroom, however staff agreed that providing a blanket or tablecloth would be more aesthetically pleasing and support better infection control.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Children should have access to play and learning experiences that respect their individual interests and are appropriate for their stage of development. This should include but not be limited to: management and staff reviewing the organisation of children's play spaces and enhancing the provision of play resources, according to children's ability and stage of development.

This area for improvement was made on 19 January 2024.

Action taken since then

We recognised the value of the work put in by the leadership team on auditing children's experiences. Staff had been very involved in using different tools to improve the environment and its impact on children's play and learning. The service provider should continue to work with staff to improve the quality of children's resources. We highlighted the need for more diversity in books across each playroom.

Children would also benefit from better sound proofing in the 3-5 playroom, for example through the use of sound clouds.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

Children's wellbeing and safety should be supported within an environment where the risk of cross infection is minimised through good hygiene practices, in accordance with 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings' (Health Protection Scotland, May 2018). This should include but not be limited to:

a) ensuring all areas used by children are clean, hygienic and fit for purpose
b) nappy bins are regularly emptied.

This area for improvement was made on 19 January 2024.

Action taken since then

We acknowledged the immediate action taken to ensure the timely emptying of nappy bins. However, on the day of inspection there were some areas within the setting that raised the risk of cross infection. For example, the tired décor within the 2-3 playroom toilets area making it more difficult to effectively clean. We visited on a Monday and it was evident that some areas hadn't be cleaned on the Friday. There was debris on the tables and floors of three rooms, although no children were using these rooms at the time. We could see that this practice was not in keeping with the usual cleaning schedules for the cleaner. One member of staff had taken the initiative to begin a deep clean of these rooms.

This area for improvement had not been fully met and has been repeated to ensure all areas used by children are clean, hygienic and fit for purpose.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.