Pear Tree Nursery West Road
Day Care of Children

1 West Road
Haddington
EH41 3RD

Telephone: 01620 671 550

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 July 2023

Service provided by:
Pear Tree Nurseries Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2006008293

Service no:
CS2018363682

About the service

Pear Tree Nursery West Road is an early learning and childcare setting situated in a residential area of Haddington, close to transport links, shops and community services. The service provides a day care of children service to a maximum of 96 children at any one time aged from three months to not yet of an age to attend primary school of whom no more than 30 are under two years old.

The setting consists of a large two storey Victorian detached house and a coach house. Children aged three to not yet of an age to attend primary school and up to ten children aged under two years can be cared for in the main house. A maximum of 20 children aged under two years can be cared for in the coach house. There is an enclosed garden to the rear for children to participate in more energetic activities, with a separate area for the younger children.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 30 June 2023 between the times of 09:30 and 15:00 and 03 July 2023 between the times of 09:00 and 14:00. 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with and observed children using the service
- received written feedback from 11 families
- spoke with staff and received written feedback from four staff members
- spoke with the manager
- observed practice and children's routines and experiences
- reviewed documents.

Prior to this inspection we carried out a full inspection on 08 December 2022 and a follow up inspection on 03 February 2023. At the follow up inspection, all previous requirements and areas for improvements had been met.

Key messages

- The setting had made considerable progress since the last inspection, leading to improved outcomes for children.
- Children's wellbeing was being nurtured through positive interactions with staff.
- Significant improvements had been made to the overall environment.
- Children were supported by staff who worked well together to promote a safe environment.
- The garden play spaces were being refurbished and improved.
- Management had worked hard to develop their quality assurance processes to ensure the improved outcomes are sustained.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children's wellbeing was being nurtured through positive interactions with staff who were sensitive to their individual needs. Parents shared with us, "Staff are very attentive and informed on what my child likes and needs" and "The care provided to my child is akin to that of a family member. The staff know them very well, know what they love and find challenging. My child is welcomed with smiles, cuddled when tired/worried/ hurt and developed in a fun and active way". As a result, children were happy, comfortable and had built trusting relationships with staff. To further foster a sense of security, staff need to be careful of the amount of different adult interactions experienced by children who are new to the setting. This will ensure they don't feel overwhelmed and are supported and comfortable during their transition.

All children had a personal plan in place, which took account of the wellbeing indicators and were completed and updated with parents. Staff confidently spoke about individual children's likes, dislikes and stage of development. Parents shared with us, "The staff take time to check care plans with parents, to speak to me about my child's day and to share all of the fun activities that have carefully planned and enjoyed. They have also helped us with advice about stages such as weaning, potty training and positive play with others" and "My child took their first steps at nursery and the staff facilitated it so I got to see them walk in person and they filmed the whole thing, so I have a wonderful memento". This demonstrated effective communication and partnership working with parents to support children to reach their full potential.

Children were supported to be independent as they showed confidence following the snack routine. For example, independently washing their hands, choosing where to sit and self-serving their own snack. As a result, children received praise and encouragement as they enjoyed sociable, unhurried mealtimes. Children had a choice of healthy, nutritional food options that reflected current good practice guidance. One parent told us "The meals the children are getting are great and the encouragement they get is lovely to see". For those who did not eat the main meal option, alternatives were offered. This was confirmed by a child who told us they had a cheese sandwich as they didn't like the pie. This showed that staff catered to and met children's needs and preferences.

Children were able to keep hydrated as they accessed either individual beakers or drinking water dispensers. Staff were encouraging children to have a drink throughout the day and at mealtimes and we saw children independently getting their own drink. However, staff should note that when asked what would make the setting better, one parent shared "Snacks and water stations (full) with cups available all day".

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children's play and learning was supported by a responsive planning approach. Children were leading their own play and learning. As a result, they were happy and confident as they extended their interests and developed their own ideas, for example learning about dinosaurs. When asked what they liked about the setting, a parent shared "The play and learning opportunities - the children have a chance to participate in

varied, stimulating and fun activities every day which provide them with opportunities to grow, interact with other children and teachers and learn in a safe and positive environment".

Regular walks within the local community promoted physical exercise, fostered social interactions and gave children a sense of connection to the setting's surroundings. A parent shared "We love that the children spend lots of time outdoors and increasingly in the community. We also like that the age groups mix in the garden, for mealtimes and on community walks". The reintroduction of forest school experiences within local wooded areas meant children were able to engage in risky play whilst making connections with nature.

Numeracy and literacy was promoted with a good selection of resources available across the setting. Staff made good use of signs, pictures, and numbers in play experiences. This demonstrated an understanding of the importance of including numeracy and literacy in everyday play experiences.

Children had access to a balance of planned and spontaneous activities that offered new play experiences. There was a good variety of experiences for children to support their play and learning. For example, physical play outdoors, sensory play, being creative with clay modelling and problem solving in the 'tinkering' area. As a result, we saw children engaged and having fun in their chosen activity.

Staff took on a variety of roles in playrooms to support and extend children's play experiences. For example, staff were observed being invited into children's play, facilitating play opportunities and extending learning through their conversations. Parents shared with us "My children are very happy and engaged with the activities they are involved in. They are stretching and stimulating from a learning perspective" and "Pear tree is an excellent nursery the staff are very attentive to the children's needs and always put an effort in to arranging interesting and stimulating activities for the kids, they are very kind and approachable". This contributed to the positive, trusting relationships that had been built and supported children to thrive.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Significant improvements had been made to the overall environment. As a result the setting was comfortable, furnished to a high standard and welcoming with plenty of natural light and ventilation. A parent shared "The West Road setting has been improved through re-painting, re-designing the outdoor spaces and the addition of new resources within the rooms. There is a homeliness to the rooms that we can see the children enjoy".

Children had ample space to move about and play, giving a strong message that they mattered. Parents told us their babies "loved" and "enjoyed" the cosy space staff had created under the stairs. Children were encouraged to tidy away resources once they had finished with them and staff re-set areas during the day. This promoted respect and a sense of responsibility as children learnt to take ownership of their environment.

Significant improvements had been made to the sleeping arrangements for children aged two to three years, resulting in a positive impact on the children. The enhanced sleeping conditions created a more comfortable and soothing environment, promoting better sleep quality and overall well-being.

Improvements had been made to infection, prevention and control practices, resulting in a higher standard of cleanliness throughout the setting and play spaces. For example a housekeeper had been employed and were responsible for specific cleaning tasks meaning staff were no longer expected to carry out cleaning tasks throughout the day. Management should continue to have continual oversight of staff practice to ensure the current standards of cleanliness are maintained.

Staff and management demonstrated a commitment to providing a quality outdoor environment with various play opportunities. Children were observed engaging in activities such as riding bikes, imaginary play in the outdoor kitchen, stories in the cosy area, climbing and balancing on play structures and loose parts materials. As a result, most of the older children chose to play outdoors. This meant they were enjoying the freedom, physical activity and sense of well being that staff had created. A parent shared "My child genuinely loves going to nursery and particularly loves playing in the garden". At the time of our inspection, a complete garden refurbishment was being carried out. This and staff's continued efforts will result in an ever improving rich and stimulating outdoor environment to support children's overall development.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

As detailed in our inspection report dated February 2023, in a brief period of time, the manager had successfully led the team to meet the requirements and areas for improvements from October 2022. Since February 2023, the setting had undergone positive changes to the senior management structure. The manager was now positively supported to lead the team to improve care, play and learning experiences and children's overall wellbeing. This resulted in increased morale, better communication, and a team determination to make improvements. The strong ethos towards continued improvement enhanced the delivery of high-quality practice, leading to improved outcomes for all.

The management team engaged well throughout the inspection and showed a commitment to making further improvements. Parents had been kept fully informed of the improvements made in the setting with their suggestions and feedback being welcomed and appreciated by management. Parents shared "The team is always looking for ways to improve the environment and keep the rooms feeling fun and fresh for the children. The team has navigated this improvement programme very well with minimal disruption" and "The staff should be commended on the recent improvements in the setting".

The manager's presence in playrooms benefited both the staff and children. By being engaged, the manager fostered a positive and inclusive environment. As a result, the team felt supported and motivated, leading to children experiencing better enhanced learning and development in a nurturing setting. A staff member shared "there is great team work with supportive management and seniors".

Room seniors were enthusiastic about working with management and supporting the team. They eagerly shared their improvement floor books, showing their commitment to continuous improvement and supporting the team and encouraging parents to be involved. This demonstrated their strong desire to improve and contribute to the setting's improvement plans.

The manager had implemented a number of strategies, including ongoing monitoring and evaluation of staff practice and how this impacted on individual children's care, play and learning. Regular staff training and

development opportunities had improved staff knowledge, leading to better outcomes for children. By working together and staying focused on action plan priorities, the setting now had increased capacity to improve.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff warmth, kindness and compassion enabled children to feel valued, loved and secure. One parent shared with us "The staff really know my child, they are thriving with them, and they have developed so much since starting. The staff are caring, attentive and they create such a nurturing environment". This contributed to the warm atmosphere that children experienced.

Staff had actively contributed to enhancing the care, play and learning experiences for children. A staff member shared "We have worked immensely hard to get this nursery to where it is now. We believe that the children receive the best level of care and have a fantastic time at nursery". As noted in all quality indictors within this report, the positive benefits of these improvements on the children were evident. When inspectors talked with staff, they were enthusiastic and well-informed about the improvements made and were keen to show us their work. Staff felt included and supported by the management team, which helped them feel empowered and motivated to make further improvements. A staff member told us "The leadership team are great, everyone is fair and provides the best for the children and staff".

Parents spoke positively about the staff team. For example, they shared "The staff at West Road are a real strength. The team has overcome enormous pressures and continued to provide great care in very challenging conditions. They deserve nothing but our praise and thanks" and "I have been so impressed with the way the staff have worked to make it the best possible environment. I would recommend the nursery to anyone, they are superb".

The manager made effective use of the differing experience, knowledge, and skills of the staff group. This ensured children's experiences across the day were positive. One staff member told us, "All the staff work so hard every day to ensure the children are getting the best care. There has been huge improvement from our last inspection. Everyone's extremely determined". A parent shared "I've seen a noticeable improvement in retention and engagement levels of nursery staff. This has been fantastic for the children, and it would be great to see this continue".

Management was aware of the importance of effectively deploying staff within the setting. This was particularly in the garden where different age groups mixed. A staff member shared "Staff are a lot better with staff deployment within the garden and they are around the garden taking part in play with the children". Staff informed each other and children as they were about to leave play areas. This supported positive relationships and children were being reassured as to where key members of staff were and when they would return.

The staff team had put in significant effort in enhancing the work environment of the setting. As a result, we observed a positive change in staff's overall happiness and job satisfaction. Staff expressed their contentment with their work and shared that the improvements have had a direct impact on their well-being. A staff member shared "It is a much better place to work, we are all in a better mood and we get on

well as a team". A parent also shared "There is notable pride in the setting from the staff, parents and children attending".

A notable improvement since our last inspection was that staff had engaged in a variety of training opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills and were proactive in sourcing learning to support them in their role. Training had inspired developments within the setting and contributed to positive outcomes for children. A parent shared "We have noticed a marked upskilling amongst the staff, who are skilled practitioners. The staff seem to regularly undertake CPD (continual professional development)".

Complaints

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

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

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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