Wee Mack's
Day Care of Children

71
Constitution Street
EDINBURGH
EH6 7AF

Telephone: 01313786650

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 September 2026

Service provided by:
Wee Mack's Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2021000135

Service no:
CS2021000229

About the service

Wee Mack's is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 62 children not yet attending primary school at any one time, of those 62, no more than 20 are aged under two years.

The service is located in the Leith area of Edinburgh and is close to local shops, schools, parks and public transport links. The garden is accessed from the large playroom and is split into two areas depending on children's ages. In addition, a separate garden is currently being developed at the front of the property and will be designated for use by the youngest children.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 1 September 2026 between 09:15 and 16:00 and Wednesday 2 September 2026 between 09:15 and 16:00. 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:

- spent time with children using the service and spoke with two parents onsite
- received 41 completed online questionnaires from families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

As part of this inspection, we assessed 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

- Staff were kind and caring and had formed positive relationships with children and families.
- Children were motivated and engaged in their play, making effective use of both indoor and outdoor environments to support their wellbeing, learning and development.
- Personal planning processes and positive partnerships with families helped staff understand children as individuals, contributing to meaningful and responsive experiences.
- Children experienced regular outings within their local and wider communities to strengthen their connections and enrich their learning experiences.
- Leadership supported improvement; however, staff confidence and autonomy were not yet sufficiently developed to ensure children experienced consistently effective practice.
- The service should continue to strengthen its quality assurance processes, to ensure these are more fully embedded within the evaluation and improvement of the nursery as a whole.

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	4 - Good
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

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths just outweighed weaknesses.

Leaders had established a clear vision for the service and improved the physical environment, creating a more welcoming setting for children. Staff were positive and committed to providing good care and support; however, the service values were not yet consistently reflected in everyday practice. Leaders provided a high level of oversight and direction to help maintain the quality of practice. While this helped promote consistency for children in some areas, it also demonstrated that staff were not yet working with sufficient confidence or autonomy to consistently apply the service values in their daily practice.

Overall, most families provided positive feedback about the service and the experiences it offered their children. Parents described feeling well supported and valued within the setting. One parent commented, "We are very happy with Wee Mack's and feel very fortunate to be part of the Wee Mack family."

Many staff were either unqualified or newly qualified and were continuing to develop confidence and competence in their roles. Leadership capacity had recently been strengthened to support staff through the appointment of a depute manager. However, leadership responsibilities and management arrangements were still developing, and systems for oversight and quality assurance required further development to support self-evaluation and improvement. As a result, approaches to supporting consistent practice and service delivery were not yet fully embedded across the service.

Leaders had identified relevant priorities for improvement, and the Quality Improvement Plan contained achievable actions informed by self-evaluation activity and inspection findings. Feedback from children, families and staff was routinely gathered and used to inform developments. While there was evidence of improvement planning, there remained scope to strengthen staff involvement in improvement discussions to promote a shared understanding of priorities, progress and impact. Continued development of distributed leadership across the team would help build staff confidence, enhance accountability and support greater consistency in experiences and outcomes for children.

Quality assurance arrangements, including audits, observations and monitoring activities, supported leaders to identify strengths and areas for development. However, these approaches had not yet resulted in sufficiently consistent improvement in outcomes for children. Monitoring of play environments, staff deployment and staff interactions had not always been robust enough to identify and address aspects of practice requiring further development. (See area for improvement 2, in 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Staff were recruited safely, helping to promote children's safety and wellbeing. Newly appointed staff described receiving a warm and supportive welcome to the setting. They told us they were well supported through their induction and valued the guidance provided by an assigned mentor. This support helped them develop confidence in their role, strengthen their understanding of expectations and feel included as valued members of the staff team.

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 engaged in a range of meaningful play and learning experiences that promoted enjoyment, choice and independence. They confidently made decisions about how and where they played, demonstrating increasing ownership of their learning. The play environment was welcoming, organised and supported a variety of play experiences through clearly defined areas. Resources were readily accessible and enabled children to make independent choices and sustain their engagement in play. For example, dressing up materials, including colourful scarves, were positioned between the home and music areas, allowing children to use them flexibly to enhance imaginative role play and musical experiences. As a result, children benefited from an inclusive environment that responded to their interests, encouraged independence and supported their learning and development through play.

Children experienced opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and technology skills through play. Fiction and non-fiction books were available throughout the playroom, encouraging children to explore reading materials and access information independently. Mark-making resources were available across different play areas, including art, drawing and playdough, supporting children's early writing skills. Some children chose to write their names on their artwork, demonstrating emerging literacy skills. Opportunities to choose music and operate a stereo and CD player, including the use of headphones, helped children become familiar with everyday technology.

Children spoke positively about their experiences in the nursery and shared how their interests from home, including playing the guitar, were reflected in their learning. This demonstrated that staff were aware of children's individual interests and sought to incorporate these into play experiences, supporting continuity between home and nursery.

Most staff were actively engaged in children's play, positioning themselves effectively within the learning environment and interacting at children's level. Some staff used open-ended questions, commentary and prompts skilfully to support children's thinking, reasoning and problem-solving. For example, outdoors, children were encouraged to reflect on safety, rules and routines. As a result, children were engaged, confident and developing important skills for learning and life. Some staff were at an earlier stage in developing these approaches. As a result, opportunities to build on children's prior learning and further extend their thinking were not always maximised. Developing greater consistency in high-quality interactions would further enhance children's learning experiences and support continued progress.

Processes for recording, assessing and tracking learning had improved, providing staff with a clearer overview of children's progress and development. Documentation supported the identification of individual learning, developing skills and appropriate next steps. Children's learning journals evidenced a range of experiences and achievements. However, the frequency of observations was not yet consistently established across the service, resulting in some variation in the information available to inform planning. Continued monitoring and support from leaders will help sustain improvements and embed effective assessment and planning approaches across the service.

Overall, parents reported receiving a good level of communication about their child's experiences and progress. However, some parents indicated they would welcome more information about activities and experiences shared through the family app.

Children benefited from regular access to outdoor play and wider learning experiences in the natural environment. They confidently explored the garden, cared for plants, used natural materials and developed independence through everyday routines. Visits to the Croft enriched children's understanding of the natural world and encouraged curiosity and observation. For example, children were observed identifying flowers and discussing seasonal changes. Overall, outdoor experiences supported children's wellbeing, confidence and enjoyment. There remained opportunities to further enhance these experiences through consistent access to appropriate waterproof clothing, and by ensuring all children, including babies, benefit regularly from outdoor learning opportunities.

Children are supported to achieve — 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

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 experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff, which promoted their wellbeing and helped them feel secure, valued and respected. Positive, trusting relationships were evident throughout the setting, and staff demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of supporting children's emotional wellbeing and attachment. As a result, children were generally confident and settled in their environment. To further enhance practice, the service should continue to strengthen consistency in how staff respond to children's individual comfort and attachment needs, ensuring all children experience the same high-quality, responsive support.

Most parents shared that they had positive relationships with staff. Parents described staff as approachable and caring, with comments including, "I feel like staff truly know my children and it's easy for us parents to communicate with them," and "They go above and beyond." A few parents noted that communication at the end of the day, could sometimes be more challenging, due to the busy nature of collection times and staff supporting several families at once.

Personal plans were effective in supporting children's health, wellbeing and development. They contained relevant information about children's preferences, routines, health needs and the support required to ensure care was responsive to individual circumstances. Staff knew children well and used information from personal plans effectively to help children settle, build secure relationships and experience continuity in their care. A small number of personal plans did not fully reflect recent changes in children's circumstances. The service should ensure that all personal plans are consistently reviewed and updated to reflect the most current information.

Children requiring additional support benefited from clear Additional Support Plans (ASPs) that identified strengths, needs and support strategies, with regular reviews helping to ensure support remained responsive and inclusive. To further improve practice, the service should strengthen the evaluation of interventions through more outcome-focused recording and observations, review approaches to supporting dysregulated children, to ensure they are consistently trauma-informed and nurturing, and improve recording systems to provide clearer chronologies, action monitoring and effective multi-agency collaboration.

Personal care was carried out in a warm and sensitive manner. Most staff involved children in these routines, offering reassurance and talking them through the experience. As a result, personal care was largely child-centred and supported children's wellbeing and dignity.

Medication was stored safely and securely, helping to promote children's health, wellbeing and safety. Appropriate information was available to support the safe administration of medication and the effective management of children's healthcare needs. Records included details of symptoms and guidance for administering medication, supporting staff to provide consistent care for children. Documentation was largely effective; however, we identified a small number of records where potential signs and symptoms of allergic reactions, such as rashes, itching or swelling, had not been fully detailed. Strengthening this information would further support staff to recognise and respond consistently to changing healthcare needs, helping to minimise the risk of variation in practice and enhance children's safety and wellbeing.

Mealtimes supported children's health, wellbeing and developing independence. Most children were familiar with routines and enjoyed balanced, nutritious meals within a calm and nurturing environment. Staff promoted choice and encouraged independence by providing opportunities for children to make decisions and participate in mealtime routines. However, these approaches were not consistently implemented across the staff team, resulting in some variation in children's experiences. A more consistent approach to supporting participation and independence would help ensure all children benefit from a positive and nurturing mealtime experience.

Interactions between staff and families at the beginning and end of the day were warm, positive and relaxed. Staff shared relevant information about children's experiences, wellbeing and care needs, helping parents and carers to feel informed, reassured and involved in their child's care and learning. Communication was further strengthened through the family app, which provided regular updates about children's experiences and supported ongoing engagement between families and the service. As a result, families were well informed about their child's day and felt connected to the life of the setting.

The service had recently established a parent committee with representatives from each playroom. This provided a valuable forum for gathering the views of families and strengthening meaningful partnership working. Committee members had supported the service to seek feedback from the wider parent community, about the type and frequency of information they would like to receive regarding their child's learning and development. The service was using this feedback to review and refine its approaches to observations and communication with families. This demonstrated a strong commitment to listening to families, valuing their views and using their feedback to drive continuous improvement.

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 children's wellbeing, the provider should ensure mealtime experiences are further developed and improved.

This would include but not be limited to:

- ensuring mealtimes are organised, relaxed and social experiences where staff consistently sit with the children to promote social connections
- ensure the delivery and preparation of food aligns with good practice guidance
- monitoring the quality of mealtimes to ensure they are safe, social and improved.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: "I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible" (HSCS, 1.35); and

"My meals and snacks meet my cultural and dietary needs, beliefs and preferences." (HSCS, 1.37).

This area for improvement was made on 1 September 2025.

Action taken since then

Since the previous inspection, the service had made positive progress in improving mealtime experiences. Children were familiar with routines and enjoyed balanced, nutritious meals in a calm and nurturing environment. Staff supported children's safety, wellbeing and social interactions by sitting with them during meals. Opportunities for choice and independence were promoted through children's involvement in mealtime routines. While the service should continue to embed consistency across all rooms, sufficient progress had been made.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To further develop the quality of the service and enhance outcomes for children, the provider should ensure that quality assurance processes continue to be developed and embedded.

This should include but not be limited to:

- ensuring current best practice guidance and national frameworks are used to guide practice, assess the quality of the service and inform improvements
- improving the ongoing quality assurance practices of staff
- embedding planned monitoring to ensure gaps in practice, processes and procedures are identified and addressed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: "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 1 September 2025.

Action taken since then

Quality assurance arrangements, including audits, observations and monitoring activities had been improved to support leaders to identify strengths and areas for development. However, these approaches had not yet resulted in sufficiently consistent improvement in outcomes for children. Monitoring of play environments, staff deployment and staff interactions had not always been robust enough to identify and address aspects of practice requiring further development.

This area for improvement has not been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support the quality of children's play and learning experiences, improved approaches to planning for play and learning should be developed and implemented.

This would include but not be limited to:

- embedding consistent planning processes and improving the recording of children's learning.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: "I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me" (HSCS 1.27); and

"I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 1 July 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had improved processes for recording, assessing and tracking learning, providing staff with a clearer overview of children's progress and development. Documentation supported the identification of individual learning, developing skills and appropriate next steps, and children's learning journals evidenced a range of experiences and achievements. The service recognised the need to continue developing practice to ensure observations consistently capture the depth and quality of children's learning, and that assessment information is used effectively to further strengthen planning for individual children and groups.

Continued monitoring and support from leaders will help sustain improvements and embed effective assessment and planning approaches across the service.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

The provider should ensure planning for staff deployment consistently promotes positive outcomes.

This should include but not be limited to:

- ensuring all times of the day are planned with an outcome-focused approach and ensuring staff are supported to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in effectively and sensitively meeting the needs of all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14); and

"My needs are met by the right number of people." (HSCS 3.15).

This area for improvement was made on 1 July 2024.

Action taken since then

Planning for staff deployment was more effective, and contributed to positive experiences and outcomes for children throughout the day. Staff demonstrated an increased awareness of how their deployment and interactions supported children's wellbeing, learning and engagement. Staff had benefited from support to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in responding to children's individual needs. While there remains scope to further embed and strengthen practice, particularly in ensuring greater consistency across all parts of the day, the improvements made, demonstrated progress has been made.

This area of improvement has been met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.scot) 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

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - 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.scot

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.gov.scot

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.