First Adventures Nursery
Day Care of Children

53 High Street
Linlithgow
EH49 7ED

Telephone: 01506844344

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 October 2026

Service provided by:
First Adventures Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2024000260

Service no:
CS2024000378

About the service

First Adventures Nursery is in Linlithgow, West Lothian. They are registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 106 children not yet attending primary school. Of whom, no more than 30 are under two years.

Children have access to a designated playroom for their age. There are three playrooms in two buildings, extensive outdoor spaces and lodge, dining area and toilet facilities. The service is close to schools, nurseries, local amenities and can be reached by public transport links. At the time of inspection 124 children were registered.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5-6 October 2026 between 09:00 and 17:30. This inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:
- spoke to and spent time with children using the service and eight family members
- received 12 completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with staff and the management team
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- 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 and families benefited from the welcoming and inclusive ethos that promoted positive connections and partnership working.

• Significant investment and ongoing maintenance in the service gave a strong message that children and staff mattered.

• Effective self-evaluation and quality assurance promoted continued improvements to deliver high-quality experiences.

• Children and families experienced continuity of care from a team that had been recruited safely, retained over time and demonstrated they were committed to their role.

• Children benefited from extensive outdoor spaces to support their connection with nature, learning and wellbeing.

• Mealtimes offered children nutritious foods that met their needs and preferences.

• Storage of medication needs reviewed to ensure quick access to meet healthcare needs.

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	5 - Very Good
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
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 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service had established clear vision, values and aims that had been reviewed with children, families and staff. These reflected a strong commitment to achieving positive outcomes and were evident in the nurturing, respectful and inclusive ethos across the setting. Children experienced a strong sense of belonging because they were welcomed, valued and supported to develop at their own pace in an environment that promoted their safety and security. The values of family, achievement and nurture were evident in practice and influenced the quality of care and learning.

There was a positive culture of continuous improvement across the service. Staff told us they felt listened to, valued and empowered to contribute to change. Distributed leadership roles were established, with staff taking responsibility for specific areas to support improvement priorities. For example, promoting Froebelian principles and science, technology, engineering, maths (STEM) learning. As a result, staff had ownership of developments and worked collaboratively to enhance outcomes for children. They spoke positively about the support, guidance and professional development opportunities provided by the service. This enabled them to develop their confidence, knowledge and skills. Training, professional learning and opportunities to reflect on practice supported staff to respond to children's needs and offer a range of experiences.

Self-evaluation was embedded and used effectively to identify strengths and areas for improvement. National and local guidance was used to help shape improvement priorities. Staff, children and families contributed through questionnaires, consultations and professional dialogue. Families told us "Feedback is appreciated and acted on if needed", "Parents are consulted regularly and always asked for feedback after events" and "We can give feedback and there is a parents forum". For example, an extensive consultation with families had been carried out and influenced how children received their meals. This meant families views were valued and influenced change.

Quality assurance processes, including audits, observations and monitoring activities, evaluated practice and the impact on children's experiences. To strengthen this further, we encouraged the service to streamline quality assurance to reduce duplication. To support sustained improvement, clearer evidence could be provided to demonstrate how action points were followed up.

The service benefited from a committed and experienced staff team, many of whom had worked within the setting for several years. Effective recruitment, induction and mentoring arrangements contributed to the stability of the staff team. Recruitment processes were undertaken in line with safer staffing guidance, helping to ensure children were cared for by skilled, confident and knowledgeable staff. New staff benefited from a structured induction programme, mentoring arrangements and regular opportunities to reflect on their practice. They told us that the support and guidance they received was tailored to their individual needs. This supported them to develop the knowledge and skills required to provide high-quality care and support. Families' comments included "Biggest compliment is that I trust the staff with our [child's] safety and well-being", "staff are friendly and I can see my [child] trusts them and has formed a bond with them" and "They are professional, caring, diligent and trustworthy." This meant secure, trusting relationships contributed to positive partnership working with children and families.

There was a strong commitment of investing and valuing the staff team through training, career progression, appraisals and tailored support. Staff described feeling valued, respected and able to lead their professional development. There was a positive culture of teamwork, where colleagues recognised and built on each other's strengths and worked collaboratively to improve outcomes. As a result, children benefited from consistent, nurturing and responsive care delivered by a motivated team.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces — 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator: Children experience high-quality spaces

Children and families benefited from a welcoming, nurturing and secure environment that promoted wellbeing and a sense of belonging. The setting was well maintained and offered a balance of indoor and outdoor play. From the completed questionnaires, families strongly agreed their child was cared for in a safe, secure and well-maintained environment. Families told us the most positive aspects of their child's experiences in the service were "The staff and the environment, particularly the gardens are excellent. Good communication throughout, "The knowledgeable and nurturing staff team", "Communication / information given to parents to engage with the learning on famly posts, observations, displays and "Outdoor opportunities." As a result, families had confidence in the service to keep children safe.

Playrooms were divided across the extensive provision, with younger children in Teddy bear house within the grounds. Older children were in designated rooms for their age in the main building. While the layout of the building limited some free-flow access to outdoor areas, staff carefully planned daily routines to ensure children could regularly use the garden. The outdoor environment offered valuable opportunities for physical play, exploration and developing connections with nature. Increasing access to outdoor spaces for longer, uninterrupted periods would further enhance wellbeing, engagement, and learning. This would enable children to lead their play with less disruption. The service had recognised this and had begun to take action to increase the time children spend outdoors.

Effective arrangements were in place to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. Risk assessments and policies were regularly reviewed with staff and reflected current practice and guidance. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe through robust procedures. They used registration systems effectively, carried out regular head counts and deployed themselves to ensure children were effectively supervised in spaces. As a result, children were safe and secure.

Children developed an awareness of risk through play. SIMOA (safe, inspect, monitor, observe, act) was used in daily routines, trips and experiences that enabled children to develop important life skills. Meaningful conversations about safety and wellbeing further supported their understanding with the use of the 'Safe Suzie' character. This meant children's safety and wellbeing was prioritised.

Hygiene routines and infection prevention and control procedures were in place. Children washed their hands at key times and confidently spoke about the importance of handwashing. There were opportunities to strengthen consistency in practice further to ensure the highest standards of hygiene were maintained throughout all routines. For example, the storage of personal, protective equipment (PPE) in personal care spaces and increased handwashing by staff to minimise the overuse of PPE.

The service demonstrated a strong commitment to improving children's experiences through significant investment in both the indoor and outdoor environments. Planned refurbishments, new resources and continued focus on ensuring high-quality spaces will continue to enrich play, learning and development for all children. This gave a strong message that children mattered.

Information was managed safely and securely, supported by effective record-keeping systems and robust procedures. The service demonstrated a strong commitment to data protection, ensuring that digital technology, using applications and devices to communicate with families, share information and maintain records were used responsibly. As a result, personal information was handled sensitively, securely and in line with requirements.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children experienced warm, caring relationships and were supported by staff who knew their needs and preferences. Staff demonstrated some knowledge of child development and used this to provide experiences that supported children's progress. Children benefited from a nurturing approach where they were encouraged to explore, make choices and develop skills through play. We encouraged staff to further strengthen learning experiences by increasing open-ended, natural materials and resources to offer more challenge, engagement and depth across the curriculum. This would support children to be more creative, problem-solve and develop independence.

Some staff were highly skilled at engaging children in meaningful experiences and extending learning through songs, storytelling and imaginative play. As a result, children developed early numeracy, language and communication skills as they explored the provision, using numbers with increasing confidence and expanding their vocabulary through play. Families told us "Teddy bear house has been a great start for my little one, and [their] confidence has grown leaps and bounds. Seeing [them] run in is fabulous", "The nursery is wonderful. My child's learning and development, both academically and socially has come on so much. [They are] absolutely thriving at this nursery and I am thrilled with [their] progress" and it's a "Great nursery, lots of learning opportunities for the children."

Children benefited from access to extensive outdoor spaces which provided opportunities for physical play, exploration and engagement with the natural environment. At times, access to this was reduced due to nursery routines and restricted opportunities for sustained and child-led play. Increasing children's access to outdoor learning for longer periods would enhance engagement, support wellbeing and allow children to develop their interests more fully through deeper and more meaningful learning experiences.

Staff recognised that some aspects of the learning environment and experiences required further development. They should consider how they consistently provide challenge and a breadth of engaging experiences across the continuous provision. Continued development of the indoor and outdoor spaces and resources would help ensure children remained interested and fully engaged in their learning.

Interactions with children were warm, nurturing and respectful, helping them to feel secure and settled. Children sought comfort, reassurance and support from staff, demonstrating trusting relationships and attachments. Some interactions supported children's thinking and learning with the use of effective questioning, conversations and encouragement to extend ideas. There were a number of highly skilled staff who were positive role models. They demonstrated their ability to extend play, sustain children's interests and deepen learning through positive interactions and engagement. Having positive role models and opportunities to learn from each other will support all staff to develop their skills and confidence. Promoting this consistency across the team could further enhance outcomes for children.

Staff understood the importance of outdoor learning and had plans to enhance children's experiences through the development of different areas of the garden. Increasing access to high-quality resources outdoors would further support continuity between indoor and outdoor learning and enable children to lead their interests in nature for sustained periods.

Children benefited from planning approaches that were effective in responding to their interests and stages of development. Staff used observations of children's play to inform daily consultative and intentional planning to support and extend learning. As a result, experiences were informed by children's ideas and curiosities. Documentation of learning was recorded in floor books and on displays. This captured children's voice, their creations, how learning was supported, and enabled children to revisit their learning.

Staff recorded children's progress and identified next steps in learning through the online journals. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's individual needs and used significant observations to track and monitor progress. Families commented on how well this system was used and kept them informed about how their child had spent their day. Comments included "[their] observations show what [they have] been interested in and the skills [they have] developed - which is lovely to see" and "Development witnessed in our [child] via the development plan." As a result, children made progress at a pace that was right for them and this was recognised by families.

Effective systems for monitoring planning enabled the leadership team to identify strengths and gaps across the curriculum. We encouraged the service to develop a more consistent approach to evaluating experiences so that children's learning can be clearly measured. This will support staff to plan experiences that extend learning and ensure breadth and challenge across key aspects of learning and the curriculum.

Children are supported to achieve — 4 - Good

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.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from staff who knew them well and understood their individual needs. Caring and respectful relationships helped children feel safe and secure, supporting their emotional wellbeing. Staff were attentive to children's verbal and non-verbal cues and responded sensitively to provide reassurance and comfort. Families said "The staff are friendly and approachable. Very welcoming and go above and beyond to support my child", we have "good relationships with key workers" and staff are "Friendly and caring". As a result, children experienced positive support and connections with staff.

Transitions into the service and between rooms were well planned and effectively supported, helping children feel safe and secure during periods of change. Detailed transition information enabled staff to understand individual needs and provide consistent support that promoted wellbeing and a sense of belonging. Nearly all families spoke positively about transition arrangements and valued the involvement of familiar staff, which helped maintain continuity and supported positive relationships. To further strengthen practice, we encouraged the service to review transition experiences from the child's perspective, considering how changes in staff and routines are experienced throughout the day. This will help ensure children continue to experience nurturing, secure and consistent relationships across all aspects of the service.

Children's privacy, dignity and rights were respected during personal care routines, helping them feel valued and supported. Opportunities to develop independence and self-help skills at the face-washing area enabled older children to take responsibility for their personal care and wellbeing. To further promote independence and confidence, we encouraged the service to extend these opportunities to younger children, with appropriate support. This will help develop important life skills from an early age.

Mealtimes provided nutritious food that reflected current guidance and met children's individual needs and preferences. Significant investment in the dining experience, including the addition of a kitchen where meals were freshly prepared, enhanced the quality and variety of food available. Staff had a clear understanding of allergies, intolerances and healthcare needs, ensuring these were managed safely so that children could enjoy meals and snacks. To further enhance the experience, we encouraged the service to increase opportunities for meaningful conversations, independence and choice during mealtimes. Supporting children to make choices about their food and participate more in mealtime routines will help develop confidence, decision-making and important skills for life.

Children's healthcare needs were met through effective management of medication records with regular reviews of healthcare information with families. Staff were knowledgeable about individual medical needs and procedures, helping ensure children received safe and responsive care. To further strengthen children's safety and wellbeing, arrangements for storing medication should be reviewed to ensure it is immediately accessible when required (see area for improvement 1.)

Children benefited from personal planning that supported their wellbeing, care and development. Plans were regularly reviewed and updated with children and families. Families' comments included "I am always consulted on their personal plan and this is regular reviewed, along with permissions" , "I believe they have children's best interests in mind" and "my child is treated as an individual and things being tailored to [their] needs." This ensured information was accurate and reflective of individual needs.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's preferences, interests and wellbeing, enabling them to provide responsive support and experiences tailored to each child. Children's views were recorded in their plans, demonstrating their right to be heard was important. As a result, children benefited from approaches that ensured they made progress at a pace that was right for them.

Relationships with families were a strength of the service. Staff knew children and families well and had created a welcoming and inclusive environment. Positive connections were evident during drop off and pick up times. Staff took time to share information and discuss children's experiences, wellbeing and achievements. This ensured families knew how children had spent their day.

Families benefited from effective communication systems which kept them informed about their child's routines throughout the day. They spoke positively about the consistent use of the family communication app and valued the regular updates provided by staff. This helped strengthen continuity of care and promoted strong partnerships between home and the service.

Families had a range of opportunities to contribute to their child's care and development through both informal conversations and meetings. Staff demonstrated flexibility in how they engaged with families, ensuring reviews and discussions could take place in ways that met individual preferences. This inclusive approach supported meaningful connections and helped ensure partnership working.

The service offered regular opportunities for families to become involved in the wider life of the setting. Family forums, consultation and family learning events helped strengthen relationships, build community connections and support shared understanding of children's learning and development. Families and staff spoke positively about the benefits of stay and play sessions and Grandparents Day, and how these promoted connection with the wider family.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's healthcare needs can be met effectively, the service should review the storage and accessibility of medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards(HSCS) which state:' My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event' (HSCS 4.14)

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children experience high quality spaces	5 - Very Good

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

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