

Cairns Early Childhood Centre Day Care of Children

Kilmarnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 July 2024

Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000142

Service no:
CS2003014091

About the service

Cairns Early Childhood Centre is a daycare for children service situated in Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire. The service is provided by East Ayrshire Council. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 154 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

No more than a maximum of 145 children aged two years to those not yet attending primary school: of whom no more than a maximum of 25 children are aged two to under three years: no more than nine are aged under two years. On the day of inspection, the service had 139 registered 29 children were present, all between the ages of 0 and to not yet attending primary school.

The service has sole use of the premises and outdoor play area. Children can freely move between indoors and a secure outdoor area. The centre within walking distance of local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate on Tuesday, 2 July 2024 between 09:30 and 17:00 and Wednesday, 3 July 2024 between 09:00 and 17:00.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about the service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed practice and daily life;
- spoke with five children using the service;
- reviewed documents;
- spoke with the manager and staff; and
- seven completed questionnaires were received from parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

Key messages

- Children experienced kind and caring relationship with staff.
- Children needed more toys and resources to play and learn with to support their full development and keep them engaged.
- Children had access to outdoor spaces to enjoy energetic play and learning.
- Management and staff worked well together and had a plan for improvements.
- Strong relationships had been built between the service, children and families.

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?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated different parts of this key question as adequate and good, with an overall grade of adequate. where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children received warm and nurturing care from staff who understood their needs and preferences. Important information had been collected about the children before they started at the service, and each child was assigned a key worker who took the time to learn about their likes, dislikes, and daily care needs. One parent told us, "The key worker system works well and my child has built up a strong relationship with them". As a result, children were happy and settled.

Staff were kind and caring in their interactions when supporting children with personal care. We observed that children's permission was sought before personal care was carried out. This meant that children's privacy was respected and it supported their health and wellbeing.

Children ate their lunch together in the playrooms, which contained appropriately sized tables and chairs. This ensured children's comfort and helped keep children safe. Children and staff sat together, which provided an unhurried, relaxed atmosphere, and ensured a caring and positive social experience. For children who needed help with eating this was carried out in a supportive way. Children were encouraged to serve their own foods and drinks which helped develop their independence.

On the first day of inspection, children did not have access to drinking water. The water station was empty and cups had not been provided. We raised this with the service and water was provided during the second day of inspection. We discussed with the manager the importance of children having access to water throughout the day to ensure they remain hydrated.

Staff knew children well, and this was supported by information contained in personal care plans, such as their likes and dislikes. However, plans did not always clearly indicate targets that were individual to the children or how children would be supported. We suggested that plans be further developed to identify clearer strategies that show how children's needs will be met. These should be developed with the parents. This would ensure that staff have all the information they need to support children's individual care needs. We made an area for improvement about this at the last inspection. This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Children were kept safe and well. Medication was stored securely, and children's medication records were accurately completed. Accidents and incidents were recorded and appropriately shared with parents. These processes supported children's overall wellbeing.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children could move freely between indoor and outdoor spaces. This supported their health and wellbeing. The daily routine was planned to minimise disruption to their play. This supported children to choose when and where they wanted to play.

Children had limited opportunities to develop early literacy and numeracy skills through play. While there was some basic toys and materials available to support this, further resources were needed to engage children's interests. Staff should consider how they could develop children's literacy and numeracy through high quality resources and interactions. This would support children to make progress in their learning.

There were times when children aged two to five years were not engaged in play. Toys and resources on offer did not sufficiently stimulate children's interests, imagination or curiosity. As a result, they were not engaged in learning experiences. For example, there was no mud in the mud kitchen, a limited amount of play dough and very few craft activities. Management and staff should ensure that children consistently experience high quality play and learning opportunities that are fun, exciting, and stimulate their interests. We made an area for improvement about this at the last inspection. This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 2).

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.

Children were cared for in a welcoming and well-ventilated environment. Furniture was child-sized, and some soft furnishings provided comfortable areas for children to rest. A secure entry system and a sign-in system for visitors attending the service ensured that children were kept safe and secure.

Babies were engaged in a variety of play experiences that supported their interests and needs. We saw them having fun as they played with a variety of sensory materials and staff supported them to develop their curiosity by offering further resources.

Children were able to access some open-ended materials outdoors to support their curiosity and imagination. For example, they enjoyed rolling balls down the plastic tubes provided. We suggested how this could be enhanced to further support children's problem solving skills.

During the inspection, children were prevented from accessing the slide and climbing frame situated in the garden. This limited their opportunities to assess and take acceptable risks. Staff should encourage children to manage risks safely. This would allow them to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Children were able to rest, relax or sleep in the cosy spaces provided. This also allowed children to participate in quieter activities, reflect and regulate their emotions. It also helped children manage their emotions and sleep.

Overall, staff demonstrated good practice in infection prevention and control. For example, they modelled good hand hygiene. Children were regularly reminded to wash hands at appropriate times, such as before and after eating which encouraged them to develop healthy habits. This minimised the risk of cross infection, keeping children and staff safe and healthy.

How good is our leadership?

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 - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Throughout the inspection the management team and staff were open and honest. The team had taken time to reflect, and had identified some of the improvements required for the service to move forward positively. These focussed on delivering the best outcomes for children and families. This told us that the service were well placed to develop the service.

Management and staff had developed positive relationships and effective communication with parents. For example, parents were welcomed into the cloakroom at drop-off and collection times. To further support these relationships, we asked that parents be given access to the playrooms.

Parents were invited to 'Stay and play' sessions, and the 'Cairns Bairns' parent group provided them with advice from link agencies. The management team communicated regularly with families through newsletters and the service's online learning journals. Parents told us: "Questionnaires are sent out regularly. We're informed about what is going on within the nursery in monthly newsletters", and "There's always questionnaires or general chats on how to make everyone's time better (at the service)." As a result, parents felt valued and included in the service.

The service had developed an improvement plan and monitoring calendar that identified key priorities to support its ongoing development. For example, it supported the improvement of the 'nurture principles approach'. This supported wellbeing for children and families.

Whilst some informal monitoring of practice had been carried out, the quality of this was inconsistent. For example, the environment had been developed, monitoring had not identified the need for more stimulating and engaging play experiences for children.

Staff and management had recently introduced East Ayrshire's planning processes and developmental trackers to monitor children's progress over time and inform their support for children's play and learning. However, this was in the early stages of implementation. We encouraged the management team to continue to integrate and review the recent changes, and staff to reflect on their practice. This would support positive outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

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 - 4.3 Staff deployment.

Staff were warm, welcoming, and caring, and the nursery had a positive ethos. Staff were suitably deployed throughout the day to meet children's needs. Throughout the service, there was a focus on the children as individuals, ensuring that children felt respected and valued.

Staff worked well together as a team, and their different skills and knowledge complimented each other. Parents told us, "The staff at Cairns do a wonderful job", and "Love the staff, so warm and welcoming". Overall, staff were responsive to children's requests, for example, when children wanted to access outdoor

play and needed support. This resulted in positive interactions with the children.

Overall staff positioned themselves appropriately to ensure maximum supervision both indoors and outdoors. Staff communicated well with each other, transitions were planned, and children were familiar with the daily routine. Staff shared with us, "Cairns has a great staff team and everyone is willing to help in all rooms when needed. The strength of the team, the way in which we support each other". This supported children's safety, health and wellbeing.

The manager supported staff by spending regular time on the nursery floor. This helped build positive working relationships. Staff were happy, engaged, and shared tasks through working as a team. Staff lunches were organised to minimise disruption, ensuring the day ran smoothly. This supported the children's play, care, and learning.

Staff meetings were held regularly to discuss children's needs, identify what was working well and what needed to improve. This resulted in a staff team that worked well together to meet the needs of the children in their care.

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

The senior management and staff should review children's personal plans to ensure they identify children's next steps in learning and outline how the service plans to meet individual children's health welfare and safety needs. Plans should be reviewed with children and parents within a six-month period, or sooner if required.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement has not been met.

This area for improvement was made on 1 December 2022.

Action taken since then

We found that, whilst all of the children we sampled had a personal plan in place, these did not consistently identify their individual needs. The next steps were not individual or how these were going to be supported.

Previous area for improvement 2

Children should have access to a range of rich stimulating play resources to support their development. The manager and staff should ensure that areas within the playrooms are developmentally appropriate and resourced to meet the individual needs of children.

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 1 December 2022.

Action taken since then

Limited progress had been made towards achieving this area for improvement. Children did not have access to enough rich, stimulating play resources to support their development.

This area for improvement has not been met.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.1 Quality of the setting for care, play and learning	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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