

# Barr Early Years Centre Day Care of Children

Changue Road  
Barr  
Girvan  
KA26 9TT

Telephone: 01465 716 804

**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
7 May 2026

**Service provided by:**  
South Ayrshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003269

**Service no:**  
CS2003017389

## About the service

Barr Early Years Centre is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 14 children aged two years to those not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. The service is provided by South Ayrshire Council and is located within the village of Barr near Girvan.

The service operates from a classroom within Barr Primary School. The service has direct access to an outdoor area, which is fenced off from the secure school playground. The service is close to local village amenities, green spaces, parks, and transport links.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 May 2026 between 09:00 and 17:30. This inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 and spent time with children using the service.
- Spoke with two staff and the management team.
- 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 experienced a nurturing, inclusive environment where strong values supported their wellbeing and sense of belonging.
- Positive, consistent relationships helped children feel safe, confident and respected.
- Children were highly engaged in play and learning, developing curiosity, creativity and problem-solving skills.
- Skilled staff interactions supported children's thinking, communication and social development.
- Strong partnerships with families and the community enriched children's experiences.
- Leaders showed commitment to improvement, though self-evaluation should better evidence impact on children's outcomes.
- Further development of planning will support consistent challenge and progression for all 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

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

## Leadership 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in leadership, which resulted in positive and sustained outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Leaders had developed a clear vision, values and aims which were meaningful and reflected in practice. The focus on kindness, respect, inclusion and teamwork was consistently demonstrated by staff. As a result, children experienced an inclusive, nurturing environment where they felt valued and respected. The service aimed to promote wellbeing and high-quality learning through enjoyment, which was evident in children's positive experiences.

The vision supported improvement and aligned to national expectations. Children's rights were beginning to be promoted, for example through visible references to UNCRC, supporting children to develop an awareness of identity and voice.

There was some effective self-evaluation activity, including the use of floor books and reflective questions from leaders which encouraged staff to consider practice. This supported ongoing reflection and contributed to improvements in children's experiences.

However, self-evaluation was not yet fully embedded or consistently outcome focused. While staff were beginning to engage in reflection, processes did not yet clearly demonstrate how improvements, such as training (for example PEEP or creativity), had impacted on outcomes for children. The service should now develop a more robust and systematic approach to self-evaluation, ensuring staff confidently contribute and that improvement actions are clearly linked to children's progress.

Leadership roles were emerging, though responsibility remained largely with senior staff. There was scope to further empower all staff to lead aspects of improvement, strengthening ownership and sustainability of change.

Recruitment and induction processes followed local authority procedures, ensuring safe and appropriate staffing, which contributed to children experiencing continuity and security.

## Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in play and learning, which resulted in high-quality experiences for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children were highly engaged, curious and imaginative in their play. They led their learning confidently, for example through role play scenarios where they developed ideas, solved problems and collaborated. Staff supported this effectively, extending thinking through open-ended questions such as how to overcome challenges in play. This supported children to develop problem-solving skills, creativity and confidence.

Children demonstrated developing skills across key areas, including communication, early numeracy and social development. For example, children counted during play and engaged in meaningful conversations. These experiences supported their language, thinking and early mathematical development.

Staff interactions were skilled and responsive. They worked at children's level, recognised children's ideas and extended learning appropriately. As a result, children felt heard, respected and motivated in their learning.

Children benefited from opportunities to play both indoors and outdoors, including creating and constructing environments. This supported independence, collaboration and physical development.

Staff had begun to develop their knowledge of digital learning, with recent training leading to the introduction of simple technologies. This enhanced children's engagement and supported early digital skills.

Planning processes were developing. There was evidence of reflection within floor books; however, this was not yet consistently used to track progress or inform next steps. The service should now strengthen child-centred planning, ensuring children's achievements and next steps are clearly identified and used to provide consistent challenge and progression.

## Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in nurturing care and support, which had a positive impact on children's wellbeing, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Staff were warm, caring and highly responsive. They consistently used children's names, engaged at their level and supported them with encouragement and praise. As a result, children were happy, confident and emotionally secure.

Children were supported sensitively to develop independence and resilience. For example, staff encouraged perseverance during play, celebrating success and promoting peer support. This supported children to develop confidence, self-esteem and positive relationships.

Care practices were responsive and based on children's needs. Staff adapted support based on observations and interactions, ensuring children received appropriate care and attention. This supported children to feel safe, understood and valued.

Children's individual needs were recognised. For example, targeted support was provided where children had limited access to resources at home, enabling them to experience books and stories. This helped to reduce inequality and support learning and wellbeing.

Relationships with families were strong, inclusive and collaborative. Parents engaged in the life of the nursery through feedback, contributions and participation. Initiatives such as PEEP sessions, newsletters and QR feedback supported meaningful communication. This strengthened consistency between home and nursery, improving outcomes for children.

Children experienced positive transitions, supported by the size of the service and strong relationships. This helped children feel secure when moving between experiences.

Children also benefited from rich connections with their community, for example through shared projects and family contributions. These experiences helped children develop a sense of belonging and understanding of the wider world.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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Dundee  
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