

Newton Early Years Centre Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 June 2024

Service provided by:
South Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003269

Service no:
CS2003017402

About the service

The service is provided by South Ayrshire Council and managed by the head teacher of Newton Primary School. The deputy head teacher assumes day-to-day responsibility for the work of the service and liaises with the head teacher over management decisions.

Newton Early years Centre is registered to provide care to a maximum of 35 children aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 15 are under three years. The nursery is based within Newton Primary School, Ayr. It is close to shops, parks and other amenities.

Children are cared for within one playroom and have access to an outdoor play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 June 2024 between 09:15 and 16:50 and 11 June 2024 between 08:50 and 16:50. 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:

- gained feedback from six people using the service through Microsoft form questionnaires
- gained feedback from six staff through Microsoft form questionnaires
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing interactions from staff.
- Children were progressing well as they had fun and engaged in play.
- Lunchtime routines should be reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of all children.
- The setting was safe and welcoming for children.
- Quality assurance processes could be further developed to support continuous improvement for children and families.
- Communication between staff supported meeting children's needs.
- Staff could develop the way they use floor books to involve children in planning and reviewing their learning.
- Children were consulted and listened to which contributed to them feeling valued and respected.

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 evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were warm, kind and caring. They responded to children's needs using nurturing approaches, ensuring children felt emotionally safe and secure.

Children were consulted and listened to throughout the day, for example, during play, and before personal care. Overall, interactions with children were positive. This contributed to children feeling valued and that their views mattered.

Effective personal plans supported children's wellbeing, ensuring staff caring for children had a clear overview of children's individual needs and preferences. These were created in partnership with parents, which helped to promote continuity of care for children. Relevant information was included in the plans to enable staff to meet children's individual needs. Children who required additional support had appropriate plans to support them, and positive partnerships with other agencies ensured they received the right support at the right time. Staff told us, "Families are fully involved in their child's care and through termly care plan meetings targets are agreed together and all adults help children achieve."

Families were well connected to the staff caring for their children. The service worked with them to support meeting children's needs. There were opportunities for families to participate in parents groups. These were helpful in providing parents and carers with ideas about how to support their child's play, learning and development at home.

Almost all children enjoyed a positive lunchtime experience. Menu's were varied and took account of children's individual dietary requirements. Children could choose to self-serve their food and pour their drinks and they were encouraged to tidy up after lunch. Staff sat with children whilst they were eating, ensuring their safety and read a story during lunchtime. Whilst this was a nice touch for a short period of time, it impacted on opportunities for children to chat freely and engage in a sociable eating experience. While the overall experience was positive, lunchtime was within the school dining hall, which was at times too overwhelming for some younger children. We observed them losing interest, leaving the table, and running around the gym hall while waiting for others to finish. We discussed with the service the importance of evaluating this to ensure the lunchtime experience supports the individual needs of all children.

Staff supported children in expressing themselves as they spoke about feelings and emotions. They offered appropriate praise and encouragement. For example, staff redirected a child who was upset and engaged them in a play experience that supported their wellbeing. As a result, children were happy and engaged.

Medication was stored safely in accordance with good practice guidance, and permission forms were completed by parents. Staff reviewed children's medical needs regularly, but we asked that the service ensure they involve parents in the review process. This would ensure they had accurate, up-to-date medical information that supports staff to meet children's needs and administer medication to them safely.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were happy and engaged in their play, they were having fun as they explored resources. Play areas were stimulating for children, and they could self-select toys and materials of interest to them. As a result, children were progressing well.

Staff supported and developed children's literacy and numeracy skills through a variety of opportunities and interactions, such as discussions with children about emotions, storytelling, matching games, singing, and technology experiences. This included taking into account children's ideas, comments, and learning during their experiences. As a result, children were engaged and focused during their play.

Some children could access experiences that promoted choice and independence. However, this was inconsistent for all children. For example, children had asked to engage in outdoor water play, which was not actioned. This resulted in missed opportunities for some children to deeply engage in play and learning opportunities. Staff should work together to support children to develop their ideas and interests through consultations and play experiences.

Some staff were skilled at extending children's thinking, widening their skills, and consolidating their learning through play experiences. They used creative approaches successfully to engage children's imaginations and enriched their play and learning. For example, some children were supported to share their ideas and creations during block play. Other staff were still developing their approach to supporting children's learning. This meant that there were some missed opportunities to extend children's ideas. Providing consistency in staff approaches would enable staff to recognise and enhance children's progress and achievements.

Staff encouraged children to use problem-solving skills as they explored learning experiences. For example, we observed children using loose parts, such as a ladder and cable reels to move across the outdoor area. Staff supported children enabling them to develop a broad range of lifelong learning skills.

Staff took account of children's current interests to plan play and learning experiences. Staff completed planned learning experiences relating to the outcomes from 'A Curriculum for Excellence'. They supported the development of children's spontaneous experiences and recorded learning through observations of children and within floor books. Staff should continue to build on children's spontaneous experiences and capture these within floor books to support them to develop these further.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting was comfortable and welcoming, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had ample space to meet their needs and benefited from cosy rest areas which supported their wellbeing.

A secure, controlled entry system enabled staff to see who they were answering the door to. Internal doors were accessed through use of 'fobs' which prevented unauthorised people from entering children's spaces. Staff removed risks to children within the environment, and children were encouraged to manage risk.

A children's safety group has been formed. The role of the group was to identify and remove hazards in the environment. This supported children to assess and respond to risks, maximising their ability to stay safe. Resources were safe and accessible for children and risk assessments supported staff to implement mitigations to reduce risks to children. This kept children safe. Staff told us, "The setting is very secure and safe."

Staff completed accurate registers of children attending, detailing who had dropped them off and who was picking them up. Visual displays, such as whiteboards, supported staff in knowing how many children were present at any given time. This ensured all children were safe and accounted for.

Some children had access to free-flow outdoor play experiences, however, the outdoor area was occasionally closed. This meant that children's play was regularly interrupted, and movement between outdoors and indoors was restricted.

Some children were encouraged to wash their hands before eating, after messy experiences, and after wiping their noses. However, there were inconsistencies in this, and we asked that the service provide a consistent approach to effective handwashing. This would support staff in reducing the potential spread of infection.

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.

3.1 Quality Assurance and improvements are led well

The service developed a shared vision in consultation with families. This ensured that the service met their needs. Changes had been made to service delivery as a result of parents and carers views. For example, a football club and swimming lessons had been introduced in line with feedback from parents. The service used a 'you said, we did' board to share these improvements with parents.

Children were asked their views during experiences, such as lunchtime and feedback from play experiences. Staff provided opportunities for children to use gestures, such as 'thumbs up, thumbs down,' to express their opinions. This enabled staff to plan effectively to meet the individual needs of children.

A parent's committee was established within the service. They worked together to implement events and fundraising to improve aspects of the service. This enhanced opportunities for children.

The service used different ways to evaluate aspects of provision, and working groups, including children, focused on specific aspects of practice. This enabled them to highlight where they were at and any improvements to be made. Staff had started to use the Care Inspectorate's self-evaluation tool 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to support them in making informed improvements to practice. This was beginning to support staff to identify where improvements were needed to improve outcomes for children.

Some monitoring processes had contributed to positive outcomes for children. For example, children were being supported to transition from the nursery to lunch hall following reflections on this. The manager and staff should continue strengthening their approach to reflecting on and auditing practice. This would help them to identify and respond to other improvements needed.

Children benefitted from the effective implementation of the service improvement plan priorities, and these were evident in practice. They had identified to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing, and we observed evidence of this through staff practice and experiences for children. This enabled children to reach their potential.

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.

4.3 Staff Deployment

Staff worked well together, they communicated respectfully and supported each other when necessary. This created a warm, friendly atmosphere for children.

Regular staff meetings provided a consistent approach to communication. This provided opportunities for staff to come together and discuss aspects of the service, share important information on how to meet children's needs and plan for a breadth of experiences. This ensured all staff received communication updates and clearly understood developments within the service and important information to support a consistent approach to meeting children's needs. As a result, children and families experienced continuity of care and support.

The staff communicated effectively with each other throughout the day. They communicated when any tasks took them away from regular responsibilities, enabling others to keep a closer eye on the children if needed. This helped to keep children safe.

Staff were mostly deployed well to supervise and respond to children's needs. However, at times more staff were needed at points of transitions, such as during staff lunches, at children's lunchtime and when children had to be changed. A few children were not changed into dry clothes following water play before lunch and younger children would have benefited from more support within the dining hall. Reviewing staff deployment would enable the service to fully meet children's needs at these busier times of day.

Staff had completed training relevant to their role, such as floor book training. Staff should continue to build on their skills in using floor books to effectively record and develop children's ideas and interests through spontaneous play experiences.

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?	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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