

# Newmains Family Learning Centre Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
19 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
North Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000237

**Service no:**  
CS2003015398

## About the service

Newmains Family Learning Centre is registered to provide care for 92 children not yet attending primary school. Of those, no more than 20 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

Care is provided from a purpose built single storey property located in Newmains, North Lanarkshire. The centre is based within Newmains and St Brigid's community hub close to parks, shops and other local amenities.

Children were cared for in bright and welcoming playrooms, which opened directly onto a large natural garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 March 2024. We provided feedback to the service on Tuesday 19 March 2024. 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:

- spoke with children using the service
- reviewed feedback from 10 families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

## Key messages

- Staff knew children very well and responded to their individual needs and wishes.
- Strong relationships had been established with families, which resulted in positive outcomes for children.
- Children were supported to lead their own play and have fun.
- The nursery environment was safe, clean, homely and well-maintained.
- Management and staff had a clear vision for the development of the service and were passionate and committed to drive forward improvement.
- Staff worked together as a team and communicated well to ensure children's need were met.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

## How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were happy, settled and secure. They were confident in their interactions with staff and each other. Staff used meaningful praise, chatting and singing with children as they supported them. This helped children feel valued and loved. One parent told us "the service is amazing. The care, education, support the children receive is second to none. The nursery setting is fantastic and the staff go above and beyond for the kids."

Staff took time to get to know children and their families. For example, settling in visits and home visits for children under the age of three. As a result they knew children well and provided responsive care, which supported children's wellbeing. Parents told us "all staff have knowledge of all children and I feel this enhances their sense of security, confidence and ability to learn through their activities" and "I'm extremely happy my child is in this child centred environment and is developing in all aspects of her development."

Children's emotional wellbeing and resilience was supported through positive, nurturing and trusting relationships with staff. They were encouraged to share how they were feeling throughout the day. Children used the 'colour monster' resource, which helped them to express emotions, such as sad or happy. They confidently told us about which emotion each colour represented and why they felt that way. This helped to ensure children's needs were being met, as their wellbeing was supported. Children told us staff "help us when we're sad... they give us cuddles" and shared "at nursery I feel loved."

Children's needs were supported by effective personal plans which ensured staff caring for children had a clear overview of their individual needs and preferences. Regular consultations and reviews with parents had taken place which enabled them to be fully involved in their child's care. 'All about me' information outlined children's needs, likes, dislikes and interest. We discussed with the service how approaches could be further developed to review this information regularly to ensure it reflected children's most current needs.

Staff worked well with other agencies, such as Speech and Language Therapists and Education Psychologists, to ensure children got the support they needed to reach their full potential. Information was shared effectively between children, families and staff to ensure everyone had a very good understanding of children's individual needs. This enabled children to thrive. Visiting professionals told us "staff are receptive to ideas and suggestions and confident to engage to adapt these suggestions to make them more appropriate to the situation" and "there is a sense of genuine partnership at all levels. Joint working and information sharing allows us to provide the best outcomes we can for the families in our care."

Children were provided with opportunities to eat in an unhurried, relaxed atmosphere which meant they benefitted from a calm environment. Staff sat together with children to engage in meaningful discussions which contributed to language development and social skills. Opportunities for self serving were available. However, we discussed with the service how these could be further enhanced to ensure children can develop their independence and skills for life. For example, providing jugs and water on each table for children to independently pour their own drinks.

Suitable procedures were in place to ensure safe administration of medication. Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs and had undertaken training to support their knowledge of complex medical conditions. We discussed how the storage of some medication could be improved. The service agreed to address this.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had fun while at nursery, where their play and learning was supported by having access to a range of play spaces. They had opportunities to use their imagination and explore their natural curiosity. Life skills and independence were promoted, as staff encouraged children to try for themselves, for example, when getting dressed for outside play. Children told us "look, I can put my wellies on all by myself" and "I like the house corner, I like making sandwiches. Sometimes we make sandwiches in the cooking area and then eat them in the house."

Staff provided a mixture of spontaneous and planned experiences to support children's learning through play. A rolling snack and free-flow approach to play meant children's play was not unnecessarily interrupted. Children were actively involved in leading their play and could choose what to play with and where. Parents told us "play is planned on children's ideas and interests. They are actively involved in planning, so it will always be fun learning for them" and "everything is laid out with easy access for the children to be fully involved and had a nice flow."

Skilled interactions from staff helped extend children's problem-solving skills and imagination. We observed opportunities where play experiences developed children's skills in language, literacy, and numeracy. For example, when making playdough staff used units of measurement and mathematical language such as more and less.

Planning approaches were child centred, following children's interest, staff observations and children's voice. Floor books were used to record children's experiences and allowed them to revisit their learning. Regular observations were used to highlight children's progress, achievements and to identify next steps. As a result, children were engaged in play and were progressing well in their overall development. We observed children engage in play experiences for prolonged periods of time showing high levels of engagement, excitement, wonder and awe. For example, children were exploring schemas (repeating patterns of behaviour) when exploring the water feature outside.

Children's opportunities to play and learning were enhanced through strong connections within the community. The service had made good use of local space, using local parks, supermarkets and library to support children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Strong connections had been made with the school the setting shared the hub with, offering children a range of spaces to enhance their learning. For example, the use of science room to explore on a larger scale.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children and families benefitted from a setting that was well furnished, stimulating and inviting. The entrance area displayed photographs and information about staff which supported a welcoming environment. Each child had access to their own space to store their personal items, which helped promote a sense of belonging. Parents described the setting as "warm and inviting" and "nice and bright."

Playrooms were clean, tidy and uncluttered. The inclusion of soft lightening, furnishings and natural materials, created a warm and nurturing space where children could feel safe and ensured children had spaces to rest and relax. We discussed with the setting how this could be further enhanced. For example, enhancing cosy spaces within window seats.

The service was currently reviewing their play spaces to support the needs of children. Careful consideration had been given to the layout of the rooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interest and develop their ideas. Children had access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem solving. For example, block play and loose parts (resources that can be moved, taken apart and put together) were available, which encouraged children to use creative thinking and problem solving strategies as they developed their ideas through play. For example, children outdoors were using blocks of wood and tyres to create a bus.

Health and wellbeing was promoted through outdoor play experiences. The garden provided a range of spaces for the development of physical skills and exploration. For example, different levels of surfaces outdoors provided opportunities for running, climbing and sliding. Children were highly engaged in water play outdoors, providing opportunities for schematic play, physical development and problem solving.

Most children could move freely between indoor and outdoor areas with a staff member based in the outdoor area throughout the day. This enabled children to choose where they would like to play and supported their wellbeing, as they had regular access to fresh air. The use of the boot room for storage of clothing, supported children with the transition to outdoors and allowed them space to develop independence and self-help skills whilst getting dressed for outdoor play. We asked the service consider how younger children freely access outdoors.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to ensure children did not come to harm. This included secure entry systems, clear boundary fencing, secure gates as well as regular headcounts and communication between staff.

The setting also had clear risk assessments in place, with staff regularly checking and completing risk assessments to support a safe environment for children. Individual risk assessments were in place for children who needed more support. This meant everyone knew how to ensure children were kept safe. One parent told us "all staff have knowledge of all children and I feel this enhances their sense of security, confidence and ability to learn through their activities."

Accidents and incidents were managed well to support children's health and wellbeing. Accident forms were completed and appropriate first aid administered when needed. Regular audits of accidents led to action which prevented repetition and contributed to keeping children safe. We discussed with the service how some accident forms could have provided further details.

**How good is our leadership?****5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

**Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

Since the last inspection, there had been changes to the management within the service. Management and staff had fostered good relationships and worked together to ensure a positive ethos within the setting. Staff told us "I consider myself privileged to be working with a fantastic team who look out for each other. Who are there to provide support when needed. We have all worked well together since we moved to our hub."

The vision for creating a nurturing, loving and respectful environment was reflective in practice. Leaders had taken an inclusive approach to developing the settings vision and values by consulting with staff, children and families about what was important to them. This supported staff to provide the care and support children needed to flourish.

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm, and inclusive environment. Effective methods of communication, such as newsletters, surveys and parent feedback supported parents to be included in evaluating aspects of the service and driving improvement. One parent told us "I like how I'm kept up to date with everything and the support for home being there" and "the manager is amazing. [They] are approachable about anything and everything. If there's any issues, [they] are always more than happy to help." A couple of parents commented they would like more information about their child's day and we shared this with the manager.

The management team were committed to making improvements and worked closely with staff. They had regular meetings to discuss progress and reflect on practice. Leaders supported staff within playrooms by role modelling good practice and guiding staff. This supported staff to develop their practice and ensure positive outcomes for children. Staff told us "our management team are always available to listen to me. They value all staff's input to weekly meetings and are often out on the floor working with the children." We discussed with management how the reintroduction of champion roles for staff would continue to enhance their skills and knowledge, promoting leadership at all levels.

Management had a good overview of the service strengths and areas for improvement. Quality assurance processes, such as tracking children's progress and observing the quality of their play contributed to the delivery of high quality care and support. Improvements that had been identified were well planned and considered in the context of good practice guidance.

The service had a wealth of policies to inform their practice. Management shared that they were currently reviewing policies with staff and parents as part of their quality assurance procedures. We discussed with the manager how child protection and medication policies should be reviewed to ensure they reflected current practice and guidance.

Staff accessed training to support their developmental needs. We discussed with the service how they could develop their approaches to record how training impacts on positive outcomes for children.

The service shared they were in the process of developing a training evaluation floor book and we agreed this would continue to support the high quality practice.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a nurturing, caring and dedicated staff team, that were focused on the needs of the individual needs of children attending the setting. Staff were warm, welcoming and engaged positively in the inspection process. It was evident through discussions they were committed and enthusiastic professionals. One parent told us "I couldn't have asked for a better team. They know their job but much more importantly they know our children and have empathy and compassion for every child's situation. I have no worries about their knowledge of the curriculum, safety or children's rights. They all care for the children and have an amazing relationship with them." As a result, children received high quality care, play and learning experiences.

The staff team had a wide range of skills and different levels of experience of working in a child care setting. They worked well as a team and demonstrated a commitment to provide a high quality service. Staff told us "we are a very strong staff team and support each other in any way we can to meet the needs of the children" and "Newmains Family Learning Centre is very responsive to children's needs and constantly strive to improve areas to extend play and learning opportunities."

Staff understood that continuity of care was important for children and communicated well with each other when tasks took them away from their responsibilities. Staff worked well to ensure children were supervised throughout the day and there was minimal disruption to their play. For example, staff breaks and rotas were planned to maximise children's experiences. As a result, children experienced a very calm, nurturing experience.

Staff told us they felt supported by their peers and management. Staff commented "I feel my confidence and personal development has grown from the support I receive from the management team and my early years colleagues" and "I have been fully supported by management."

New staff had benefitted from completion of an induction and were using 'The National Induction Resource' to reflect on their learning and evaluate their practice. Regular one-to-one meetings supported staff to reach their full potential. This contributed to a positive staff ethos, further supporting children to be settled and happy.

## 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

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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