

Wellington School (Ayr) Ltd

Day Care of Children

Drumley House
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 June 2024

Service provided by:
Wellington School (Ayr) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003003252

Service no:
CS2003014016

About the service

Wellington Nursery is an independent service, located within Wellington School campus in the town of Ayr, South Ayrshire. The service is registered to provide care and education for a maximum of 80 children aged from three years until school age. Twenty-three children attended the service on the first day of inspection and 25 on the second day. The service is in partnership with South Ayrshire Council.

The main accommodation comprises of large playroom, a fully enclosed outdoor play area and the school playground. Children regularly make use of the school gym and other resources within the school. The service also provides an outdoor nursery within an extensive area of privately owned woods and grassland. There is access to the school sports pavilion and a wooden cabin for shelter.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 and 26 June 2024 between 9:30 and 17:00. The 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 22 children using the service and eight of their families
- spoke with nine staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed and sampled documents
- reviewed questionnaires from families.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and secure
- Staff were kind, caring and nurturing
- Children were actively engaged in their learning
- Children had access to a rich learning environment
- Outdoor learning provided a range of play experiences
- Family involvement was central to the service
- Staff were skilled and committed
- The service was well led.

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: Nurture care and support

Children experienced high quality responsive, nurturing care and support. It was evident through observations that the principles of nurture were embedded in practice as staff consistently ensured children were well supported. Staff interacted with children in a warm, sensitive and meaningful way. Children responded to staff by seeking reassurance and comfort when needed. They were happy, safe and secure. This sent a strong message to children that they mattered.

Staff had formed positive, trusting relationships with children and knew them very well. They spent quality time with individual children to play games and snuggled up to read together. Children were happy and confident as they interacted with staff who positioned themselves at their level and actively listened to what they had to say. Children were supported to express themselves and encouraged to talk about their emotions in an inclusive manner which respected their rights. This helped children feel secure in the service.

There was a strong focus on children's rights. This was embedded in practice and staff consistently asked children for permission to help and support them, whilst respecting their choices and preferences. Staff spoke with children about their rights to privacy and had developed a 'rights' book to ensure they focussed on different articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Staff spoke about the importance of respectful relationships between them and the children. We observed staff speaking with children in a calm and respectful manner and children mirroring their responses. This resulted in a caring and respectful ethos.

Personal plans were up-to-date and reflected children's individual needs, including their interests and stages of development. Staff were skilled in using the information within the plans to ensure children were well supported. This meant that children's nurture, care and support was responsive and reflected their individual needs.

Effective transition to school arrangements were in place. Children were allocated a buddy and given a tour of the school and introduced to their teachers. Receiving schools were invited to the service to meet the children in their nursery environment and share information. Staff spoke with the children and read stories to reassure them and explore some emotions that children could experience as they transitioned to school. This helped children understand their emotions.

Lunch time was a relaxed, unhurried sociable experience for children. Meals were nutritious and prepared in the school kitchen. Children's preferences and dietary requirements were known and the service had made provision by offering children alternative choices. Staff sat with the children and enjoyed the opportunity to talk with the children about their day and encouraged them to finish their lunch. We asked the service to further develop the lunchtime routine by considering two sittings. This would allow more space between tables and enable children to move freely when leaving the table, for example when clearing their plates.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The service had created a rich learning environment for children. The playroom was well equipped and designed to provide children with a range of play equipment and resources to support and extend their learning experiences. There was a strong focus on outdoor learning and children had access to a broad range of opportunities within the service and the local community. As a result, children experienced high quality play and learning experiences.

Children were actively engaged in their play and learning. They were leading their own play and making choices about how they wanted to spend their time. Children moved freely around the playroom, and outdoor area, taking ownership of their learning and following their interests, for example searching for different kinds of bugs. This enabled children to direct their own play.

Children were using and developing their imaginative and creative skills. They were painting small rocks, drawing and colouring in at the mark making table, and making play dough. The home area had been extended in response to children's play and interest to include an 'ice cream parlour'. Children were learning about different musical instruments, rhythm and beat. For example, they were using drum sticks to drum and playing interactive musical games. This meant that children were having fun and learning through a range of play experiences.

Children's learning was extended through a trip to the park. Staff encouraged children to participate in a local initiative, which was to join 'Sammy the snake' trail. Children took their painted rocks and placed them along the edge of the path. They were looking at other people's rocks and talking about the shapes, sizes and colours. The model boat club were sailing their boats in the pond. This presented an opportunity for children to watch and talk about the different kinds of boats. They were having fun talking about the speed, water marks and how the boats were turning and reversing. The trip to the park was a rich learning experience which helped develop children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy.

Staff tracked children's progress and learning over time. There was rich and extended opportunities and experience for children to play and learn. Staff planned for children's learning which incorporated seasonal, festival and cultural events as well as children's interests. As a result, children were progressing well.

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.

The playroom was warm and welcoming with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Play areas were spacious and well designed to provide children with defined spaces to play and learn. Learning areas had been well thought out and extended when needed to support children's interest. This meant that children could access different areas and chose where they wanted to play.

A spacious quiet room provided a relaxing, cosy space for children to access when they wanted to spend time away from the main play areas. The room was furnished with soft lights, cushions, comfortable chairs and drapes that helped create a calm and inviting space. This enabled children to rest and relax in a cosy, comfortable space.

Access to the outdoor play area provided some opportunities for risky play, a digging hole, a timber teepee and a real lifeboat. There were a range of interesting and stimulating open-ended resources to encourage children to discover and explore. They were having fun outdoors and were excited about the new mud kitchen. Children had access to the school playground which provided them with opportunities to participate in energetic play. They were, jumping, climbing, balancing and running around with 'Harry Potter broomsticks'. This supported children's emotional and physical wellbeing.

The service transported children by school bus to the outdoor nursery. The outdoor space provided children with a natural learning environment which helped them develop their knowledge and understanding of nature. For example, they had collected frogspawn and put it into water until it hatched into tadpoles. Staff encouraged children to find natural open-ended resources such as logs and other loose parts to spark their interests and curiosity. They played in the mud kitchen, built dens and cooked with the fire pit. This supported children to develop their curiosity and problem solving skills.

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

The management team led the service well. There was a strong commitment to embed nurture principles into daily practice and promote children's rights. Relationships with families was a strength of the service. Children and families were valued and included in regular events such as prize giving. This contributed to a positive ethos of inclusion.

The service historically, had a shared vision, values and aims with the school. These had been revised to reflect the aspirations of the children and families. The vision was to create a happy, safe, secure and stimulating environment to meet the needs of every child. The values and aims were set out to promote children's confidence and potential, and to care and respect each other. We observed this in practice - during the inspection we saw that children experienced a safe and stimulating environment where staff cared about the children and respected them. This sent a strong message that children mattered

Families were actively encouraged to participate in the life of the service through ongoing feedback strategies. This included coffee and chat sessions to gather their views and opinions on a range of important matters, such as the on-line journals. This meant that families were meaningfully involved and contributed to the quality of the service.

The management team and staff were committed to providing a high-quality service for children and families. Quality assurance systems were well established and included an improvement plan and self-evaluation processes to monitor and review the quality of the service. This was evident during our conversations. Staff spoke about how they wanted to continuously improve the service and how their contribution, for example, taking on leadership roles helped improve the service. This resulted in positive outcomes for children.

We made some suggestions to the management team to further develop their self-evaluation process to include reflective questions. To support this we signposted them to the care inspectorate self-evaluation toolkit.

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

All staff had a kind, caring and nurturing approach. Their skilled interactions and understanding of children's individual needs was evident during the inspection. They were committed to supporting families and had embedded a calm, warm and inclusive environment that welcomed children and ensured their wellbeing needs were met. This meant that children felt valued, safe and secure in the care of a committed team.

There was a strong ethos and culture of teamwork and a shared commitment to the overall quality of the service. The team worked well together and were flexible to ensure continuity of care and smooth transition times throughout the day, including lunchtime. They communicated well and supported each other to work as a team. Staff complimented each other and acknowledged each other's skills, knowledge and strengths. As a result, children were well cared for and making good progress.

Staff positioned themselves well to support children's play which enabled them to respond to children's thoughts and ideas. They extended children's learning through skilful interactions and open-ended questions. As a result, children were problem solving and thinking about solutions.

Professional review and development opportunities were scheduled throughout the year. Staff were encouraged to reflect on their practice and received feedback from the manager. Training needs were identified and agreed, ensuring staff were well trained and knowledgeable about child development. They had leaderships roles to continuously develop the quality of the service and other staff were deployed in the outdoor nursery. This worked well and matched their interest and their skill sets.

Staff were familiar with child protection protocols and were confident about reporting any concerns. This helped keep children safe.

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?	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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