

# Soroba Young Family Centre Day Care of Children

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Soroba  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
1 November 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Soroba Young Family Group  
Committee

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000652

**Service no:**  
CS2003003138

## About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011. The service provider is Soroba Young Family Group Committee.

Soroba Young Family Centre is a daycare of children service that operates from designated spaces within the family centre, located in a residential area of Oban. Children also have access to their own enclosed outdoor space to the front of the building. The service operates during school term times.

1. To provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 40 children not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. No more than 10 are aged two to under three and; No more than 40 are aged three to those not yet of an age to attend primary school.

2. Adult:Child ratios will be:

Under two's - 1:3, two to under three's - 1:5, three and over - 1:8, if the children attend more than four hours per day, or 1:10 if the children attend for less than four hours per day.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 30 and 31 October 2024. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with management and staff.
- Sent online questionnaires to parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

## Key messages

- Staff were developing warm, caring relationships with children to nurture, support their wellbeing and help them feel valued, safe and secure.
- Children enjoyed being outside and had free flow access to outdoors, as well as a range of resources that promoted discovery play, role play, problem solving and risky play.
- Management and staff communicated and engaged well with families.
- They were a dedicated staff team, developing strong working relationships and communicating well with each other throughout the day.
- A positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect was promoting a happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families.
- Management and staff were committed to the ongoing improvement and development of service.
- To support a relaxed nurturing meal time experience management and staff should review the arrangements they have in place over the lunchtime period.
- Personal plans should be further developed and consolidated with a stronger focus on children's support strategies and next steps linked to clearer progression pathways for their play and learning.
- Planning approaches should be more child led and holistic to support children to lead on their play and learning.
- Management and staff should review and evaluate children's play spaces with full consideration being given to the age range, needs and stages of development of the children.
- To ensure positive outcomes for children management should monitor and review the deployment of staff in general and over key times.

## 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

We could see staff engaged sensitively with children and were developing warm, caring relationships with them to nurture, support their wellbeing and help them feel valued, safe and secure. Most children were happy, settled and confident about approaching staff for help, reassurance and to support them with their play. Parents commented; "I love that the staff are very helpful and caring, they care about my [child] just as much as I do. My wee [child] thinks the world of them" and "[Staff] have known my child since a very young age. They work hard to ensure close relationships are formed with families."

On the first day we inspected, we observed children had limited access to quiet areas suitable for them to sleep or rest. The manager confirmed they would review this as a matter of priority to ensure children's wellbeing and emotional security was better protected.

Meal times were an opportunity for children to develop self-help skills and independence. For example, pouring their own drinks and practicing their fine motor skills with utensils and cutlery to self-serve and eat their lunch. Although staff were supportive, considerate of children's needs and sat alongside them during lunch, we discussed how children would benefit from a more relaxed nurturing experience with less noise, through traffic and clutter around them. The manager and staff agreed children's lunchtime experiences needed to be improved to support a calmer more relaxed and homely atmosphere that nurtured and encouraged friendly social interactions and developing conversations to support children's communication and language skills. We also directed the service to the newly updated Scottish Government guidance 'Setting the Table'. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

Personal plans and all about me profiles contained core information about children's individual needs and preferences gathered through working in partnership parents. Staff were recording information to support children's health, welfare and safety needs. To ensure a more consistent approach to documenting how children's needs will be met, staff recognised their recording methods and formats needed to be further developed and consolidated, with a stronger focus on children's support strategies and next steps linked to clearer progression pathways for their play and learning. **(See Area for Improvement 2)**

Staff were communicating with parents through an online application. These profiles were providing a link with home, giving parents some information on children's experiences and time at the nursery. We discussed how this could be developed further to include more detailed observations of learning and next steps.

We sampled administration of medication forms and storage of medication and found medication was being monitored and audited in line with current best practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services'.

Accident and incidents were being recorded and shared with parents. The manager was implementing a monthly audit to track any recurring incidents and identify any areas of action.

## Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Most children were confidently access all areas within the nursery. They had free flow access to outdoors and opportunities to independently practise putting on and off their outdoor clothing. Staff had developed some areas of interest to engage children's imagination and develop their language, literacy, numeracy and wellbeing. Children could choose to engage in planned activities on offer such as arts and crafts or use their imagination in the home corner, story area or water play.

Although we observed nurturing approaches by staff supporting children's wellbeing and right to play. We found play and learning needed to be developed further inside and outside to include more opportunities to actively involve children in their play. Management and staff should look at creating a richer learning environment that is more reflective of children's age, needs and stages of development. To inspire children's imagination and deepen their learning there should be a stronger focus on child centred and child led natural and open-ended resources. This would support and develop children's natural curiosity, sense of wonder and fun through promoting independence and offering choice and challenge. **(See Area of Improvement under Quality Indicator 2.2 of this report)**

Individual learning logs were being used to capture children's experiences and some of their achievements, thoughts and ideas. However, when sampling the planning processes that were in place, along with children's individual learning logs, we found it was difficult to identify the progression and next steps in children's play and learning. We discussed with management and staff how there needed to be a more holistic approach to tracking children's progress, with planning more individualised and responsive, based on children's interests and reflecting their choices. To support and enable children to have fun and learn through more purposeful, high quality play experiences, strands of learning should be developed from and linked to their ideas and interests. Staff should continue to build as team on their experience and expertise to fully meet children's needs through high quality interactions and observations, this includes extending children's thinking and widening their skills to support them in developing their interests and leading on their play and learning. **(See Area for Improvement 3)**

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children enjoy a relaxed, nurturing meal time experience management and staff should monitor and review the arrangements they have in place over the lunchtime period.

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

'I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

2. To support children's wellbeing, development needs and progress, personal plans should be further developed and consolidated with a focus on children's support strategies and next steps linked to clearer progression pathways for their play and learning.

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

'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).

And

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

3. To support children's play and learning and enable them achieve their potential, management and staff should:

- Review and further develop their approaches to child-led planning, by ensuring appropriate levels of challenge and depth in play and learning that supports children's curiosity and creativity and enables them to lead on their play and learning.

- Consideration should be given to how individualisation is captured within planning. In addition, planning should be closely linked to observations in children's profiles where meaningful next steps should be recorded. These should be monitored to ensure consistent quality of written observations.

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 to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

And

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

## How good is our setting?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

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

The nursery was warm, welcoming and well ventilated. There was a secure door entry and visitors were required to sign in on arrival. Furniture was child sized and there were some areas with soft furnishings for relaxation and comfort. Main exits were secured and there was an expectation that visitors signed in and out of the service.

Children enjoyed being outdoors and were observed accessing free flow play outside, as well as indoors with a range of resources that promoted discovery play, role play, problem solving and risky play. Parents said; "My child loves the outdoor space and has access to it at all times and in all weathers, being provided with the correct clothing [when] it's wet" and "We get lots of pictures each day which consist of role play, water play, exploring outside, making soups and potions with various different ingredients, lots of stories, painting and drawing, number and letter recognition through play." Staff were involving children in the development of their outdoor space encouraging them to develop risk assessments for the outdoor environment.

However, we observed at times due to the use of space indoors and the layout of resources, staff were not always able to fully meet children's play and learning needs, which was limiting their nurturing experiences and outcomes.

Although we recognised the challenges presented for staff, management and staff now need to review and evaluate children's indoor play spaces to ensure they meet the play, learning and development needs for all the children. We discussed how there should be a dedicated quiet area for rest and relaxation and also directed the service to our 'Space to Grow and Thrive' guidance. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

Risk assessments were in place to support a safe environment for children when inside and outside the service. These should continue to be updated and reviewed regularly or when any changes occurred supporting staff to keep children safe.

Staff and children were practicing appropriate infection prevention and control practice. We would ask that children are encouraged to wash their hands on returning from outdoors and staff monitor this to reduce spreading infection.

We would also ask that management and staff review the whole environment with regards to reducing clutter to create more nurturing and inviting play spaces.

## Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes and improve children's play experiences management and staff should:

- Review the layout of children's play spaces indoors with a view to creating an environment with better areas and opportunities for children to play and learn, choose resources based on their interests, and be inspired and creative. Full consideration should also be given to cosy quiet spaces where children are able to relax away from the main play spaces.

This is to ensure care, play and learning is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

## How good is our leadership?

**3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The service's aims and objective statement set out a clear vision for the setting. Their current improvement plan identified appropriate priorities for improvement. For example, family learning, children's rights, outdoor play and nurture.

We recognised that they were on a journey of improvement following a challenging period where the movement of staff within the ELC sector had impacted on their staff team. We found the manager and the staff team engaged well during the inspection process, taking on advice and support, demonstrating a commitment and capacity for improvement. A parent commented; "We are always welcome to give ideas and can have open discussions on things we would like to see improved on."



The management team acknowledged that they were on a journey of improvement which would involve staff, families and children. Specific areas of performance such as supporting and facilitating high quality play experiences would need to improve in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and their families.

Management and staff communicated and engaged well with families. Parents told us: "Staff are always so informative and keep me up to date on my child and information regarding the nursery. They are always very welcoming and always happy to answer any questions" and "[There is] continuous family engagement on ways in which we think improvements could be made and what would help our child."

The staff team were enthusiastic and committed to their continued professional development. Training and good practice guidance was helping them to develop in their roles.

Management and staff were establishing processes for self-evaluation to critically reflect on their work, through floor books, staff meetings and day to day discussions. Going forward this should have a positive impact on outcomes for children and families, with staff considering the child's voice through planning and the development of the service.

The manager had begun to implement procedures to monitor and evaluate the service. For example, questionnaires for parents and a monitoring calendar. Quality assurance, including monitoring and self-evaluation should now be more firmly embedded into the process of evaluating and improving the nursery as a whole. We would encourage the service to use the feedback following inspection, in conjunction with the Care Inspectorate: A quality framework for day care of children, childminding, and school aged childcare, as a tool for further development of self-evaluation and improvement, with high quality play placed at the heart of their improvement planning. To further support and sustain continuous improvement the manager should continue to develop and embed systematic procedures to monitor and evaluate all aspects of their service delivery. **(See area for improvement 1)**

## Areas for improvement

1. To support and sustain continuous improvement throughout the service, management and staff should embed robust systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of their service delivery and place high quality play at the heart of their improvement planning.

This is to ensure management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

And

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

## How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff engaged well in the inspection process and were very open and honest about their improvement journey. We could see that they were a committed staff team, developing strong working relationships and communicating well with each other throughout the day. The management team recognised that staff leadership roles and responsibilities needed to be further developed and were giving careful consideration to recent staff changes, and recruitment to support and develop a good skills mix within the staff team.

Staff were all registered (or in the process of registering) with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and undertaking qualifications where necessary to meet their conditions of registration. Regular team meetings were being established to enable staff to talk about their work and discuss children's learning and progress. Annual appraisals would provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their role and discuss plans for future learning. Plans were also underway to further develop staff skills and knowledge through the implementation the Scottish Government's National Induction Resource.

Staff felt well supported by the management team. A positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect was promoting a happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families. Parents told us; "My children feel like they are with family, they have the professionalism of nursery staff, but the warmth and love of family, encouraging supporting and caring for children, I have never dropped my child there and ever felt worried, I trust the staff fully with my children and that's something that makes Soroba what it is" and "It has a lovely welcoming feel. Families are made to feel welcome and involved in the nursery life. My [child] is extremely happy and settled here."

Although staffing ratios were being met on the day we inspected more account needed to be taken of the age range, needs of children and the layout of the setting. At times, staff were not always able to help, effectively supervise or support and facilitate children's play experiences when needed. For example, when free flowing outside, washing their hands or getting ready for lunch. This was also impacting on opportunities for staff to extend children's play and learning outcomes. To enable staff to supervise and fully support children's play experiences, health and wellbeing the management team should monitor and review the deployment of staff in general and over key times, for example at lunchtime. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

To support staff wellbeing, we suggested staff would benefit from individual support and supervision sessions. The manager was in full agreement with this and how it could support plans to further develop staff roles and responsibilities.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure positive outcomes for children the management team should monitor and review the deployment of staff in general and over key times.

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

'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

And

'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

## 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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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