

Carlogie Early Learning and Child Care Day Care of Children

Caesar Avenue
Carnoustie
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Telephone: 01241 465 379

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 December 2024

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Service no:
CS2003016848

About the service

Carlogie Early Learning and Child Care is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is based in a residential area of Carnoustie and is close to local shops, parks, and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 2 and 3 December 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed the children at play
- received questionnaire feedback from seven families and eight staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident in the setting.
- Children experienced caring interactions from staff which helped them feel safe and secure.
- Children were fully engaged in various play experiences and activities and were effectively supported by responsive staff where appropriate.
- Quality assurance processes were now leading to improved outcomes for children and families.

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?	4 - 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 experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff which supported their wellbeing. They were happy and relaxed in the company of staff and they approached them with confidence. This demonstrated that positive attachments had been formed. Staff were consistently down at the children's level and gave them their full attention. Children were encouraged to share information and learning from home. For example, a child shared his home link book with staff, and they discussed what he liked and didn't like about his library book. This ensured children felt valued, respected and listened to.

Children's 'My World' documents were in-depth and accurate, which enabled staff to have a very good knowledge of each child's needs. These documents included information relating to children's care and wellbeing which families were involved in completing. Regular reviews took place with families which enabled staff to have the most current information to provide individualised care. Where children required any additional support, strategies had been identified by staff and outside agencies to support a consistent approach. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) were in place for some children which identified appropriate long-term and short-term targets to support progression and achievement.

Systems and processes were in place to support the safe management of medication. Staff were responsive to discussions in relation to creating a more in-depth audit. This would further enhance the procedures already in place.

Nappy changing respected children's privacy and dignity. This was a relaxed, happy and social routine which provided valuable opportunities for positive interactions between staff and children. It also supported opportunities to develop independence and confidence. For example, one child was encouraged to climb onto the changing plinth independently, take their shoes off and then they were supported with undressing and dressing. This was a positive experience which developed independence and life skills.

The mealtime experience had recently been reviewed and developed by the staff team. Snack and lunch choices were healthy and reflected current guidance. Allergies, intolerances and preferences were managed well. There were opportunities for children to help prepare snacks and for children to self-serve their food, which helped promote their life skills and independence. Makaton was used to support communication and choice making with some children. As a result, mealtimes were a quality social experience for children with learning opportunities throughout.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun and were engaged in their play and learning. They were leading their own play through a good balance of spontaneous and planned experiences. Children had opportunities throughout their play to develop their imaginations, creativity and problem-solving skills. For example, children developed their imaginations when they created a doctor's surgery. They took turns to bandage each other's arms and legs, and they invited staff members to join their play. Staff extended this experience by adding further resources to this area which resulted in children taking x-rays of each other and creating and

mixing medicines. Children spent extended periods of time taking part in this play which supported them to work together, turn take, share and develop their imaginations.

Children had opportunities for free flow play to the garden for most of the session. They were supported to develop their imaginations, creativity and gross motor skills in the well-resourced outdoor play area. The numeracy and literacy rich area further enhanced and developed play and learning opportunities outdoors. Children had fun exploring their outdoor environment where a wide range of learning experiences were available for them to access. For example, children especially enjoyed rolling the balls down through the pipes and had fun exploring the dinosaurs and fossils.

Literacy and numeracy were evident through play and within the environment. Children and staff made effective use of books and print, and singing was incorporated naturally into play. A parent commented, 'Weekly library books coming home has been great as this encourages both of my children to enjoy stories at bedtime. They give us a little jotter to fill in about our likes/dislikes of the story.' Children took part in quality key group sessions prior to lunchtime. These groups offered varied opportunities for children to mark make, copy words, identify numbers and letters, count and discuss money. One group walked through the school and used the word of the week 'forward' which promoted the children's understanding of language and direction. There was effective use of questioning by staff to support and extend children's learning when appropriate. Group times were purposeful and supported group and individual learning.

Staff regularly observed the children to identify their needs and interests. Observations were mainly recorded in the moment and used to support the next set of planning. This supported staff to be responsive to the children's interests and developmental needs, as well as incorporating intended learning linked to the curriculum. The majority of observations clearly identified children's skills and learning. Children's targets and next steps were threaded through the planning to support progression and achievement. A parent shared with us 'Seesaw observations and updates showing photos are lovely. We look at them together as a family.'

Floorbooks were in the early stages of development and had been used to document play experiences and learning. The service should continue to develop these with children and support them to revisit their play experiences to further support depth and breadth of learning.

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 service provided a welcoming ethos to children and families. In the reception area each child had their own peg with their photograph and name to store their bags and jackets which supported a sense of belonging. Photographs of staff and important information was shared on noticeboards for families. This helped ensure they were included in the daily life of the nursery.

The service was furnished to a high standard with plenty of natural light and ventilation. The indoor and outdoor areas were sensitively structured and took account of children's age and stage of development. Resources were easily accessible and at child height. A wide variety of loose parts and real-life resources promoted opportunities for children to develop their imaginations and creativity and spark their interests and curiosities. For example, bricks had been added to the outdoor construction area and the home area

had been developed to include a variety of real-life resources. A parent commented, 'Lovely nursery room and super garden.'

Family photographs and the addition of soft furnishings had helped to create spaces for children to relax and feel safe. Some softer lighting throughout the nursery had also contributed to a more homely environment. There was still scope for the service to further enhance and soften the environment to create cosier and quieter areas.

A safe and secure environment was provided for children and staff. Risk assessments had been developed which identified possible hazards and the mitigations that were in place. Children were involved in assessing risks within the indoor and outdoor environments and had recently been asked to identify possible risks in the recently developed home area. A range of surfaces outdoors meant that children explored their own risks during play, which included how to safely navigate back down the hill in the garden. These opportunities encouraged children to develop an understanding of and assess possible risks around them.

The service was clean and well maintained. Staff and children routinely washed their hands throughout the session at appropriate times. The toilets and nappy changing area were clean; however, we did remind management that the nappy changing area should be used for that purpose only and other items should not be stored within this area. The service was responsive, and this had been resolved on the second day of inspection.

Children had good links with their local community. They had opportunities to visit the forest within the school grounds and regularly visited local shops. A grandparent regularly helped in the garden which supported children to grow and harvest fruit and vegetables. The service was planning to re-develop links with a local care home. These opportunities supported children to develop inter-generational links and gain an understanding of what was available within their local community.

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.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A vision, values, and aims were in place which was reflected across the service. Management, staff, children and families had been included and involved in a recent review to support a shared approach.

There were some opportunities for families to be involved in the development of the setting. Stay and play sessions were offered and feedback was gathered and shared from these experiences. A parent shared, 'I really enjoyed a recent stay and play session. Staff explained to me why different activities were set up for the children.' The service planned to continue to involve parents in the review of some policies. This approach supported families to feel informed and included.

Children were involved and included in making changes and improvements within the service. They had been asked to share their ideas and suggestions during the review of specific areas within the nursery regarding what they liked or did not like. These opportunities ensured that children felt valued, respected and listened to.

The service had developed their approach to quality assurance. An improvement plan was in place and staff

confidently discussed the main improvement priorities from the plan. Staff had taken ownership of these priorities and worked in groups to support change and improvement. It would be beneficial to ensure the improvement plan is evaluated regularly and identify and highlight the impact of changes and improvements. This would support ongoing development.

Self-evaluation of the service had been developed using key documents. Monitoring of practice, environments and interactions had taken place which highlighted key strengths, areas for development, next steps and the impact. Peer monitoring was in the early stages of being developed which would support further professional discussions between staff. It would be beneficial for management to follow up on any areas for development that had been identified and evaluate any progress made.

A detailed quality assurance calendar highlighted tasks to be undertaken throughout the year. This included the review of personal plans, learning journeys, medication systems and accidents and incidents. This supported the service to continue to develop and implement change to improve outcomes and experiences for children and families.

Staff were supported through regular wellbeing meetings and one-to-one meetings which supported their professional development. The staff team felt supported and valued by an approachable management team who were leading them through their journey to develop and make improvements.

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

Staff warmly welcomed children and families into the service which supported positive transitions and communication. Staff were available to chat to parents during drop off and pick up times which provided valuable opportunities for sharing information. Staff also used the Seesaw app to communicate with families and share information. These opportunities ensured that parents were fully involved in the service and effective communication was taking place.

Staff promoted a happy environment for children where they were valued and respected. A stable and consistent team was in place, who were enthusiastic and committed to their roles. Staff were respectful towards each other and worked well together to ensure children's needs were fully met. As a result, children benefitted from a committed team, who were focussed on creating positive outcomes for children. A staff member commented, 'I think we have created a strong, hardworking team who work well together to create a positive ethos and make the nursery experience great for children and families.'

Regular planning and team meetings provided opportunities for staff to come together to discuss future planning and discuss children as individuals. This supported the development of a strong and motivated team.

There was a good mix of skills, knowledge and experience within the staff team. Staff spoke confidently and passionately about recent learning, its impact on their practice and the plans for future training to further develop their skills. Staff discussed their champion roles with us and how this supported improvement. Staff were enthusiastic about providing high quality care and improving outcomes and experiences for children.

Appropriate staff to child ratios were maintained at all times. Staff were aware of how many children were in the service and took regular head counts when leaving different spaces. Ratios and the needs of children were considered on outings which supported children's safety.

Staff spoke positively about the induction process that was in place. Checklists from the National Induction Resource were used to ensure staff had a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. We discussed that it could be beneficial to further develop the induction process through the use of reflective questions to support newer staff with engaging in ongoing professional dialogue and reflection.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure children's health care needs are supported safely and effectively, staff should review procedures for the management of medication.

This should include, but is not limited to,

- ensuring regular audits are completed and capture the required information
- detailing signs and symptoms when medication may be required
- gathering accurate information to meet children's medical needs in the event of lifesaving medication being required
- ensuring administration of medication forms are signed by parents and carers as well as staff.

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

'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This area for improvement was made on 22 December 2023.

Action taken since then

Improvements had been made to medication procedures. Systems and processes were in place to support the safe management of medication. Staff were responsive to discussions in relation to creating a more in-depth audit. This would further enhance the procedures already in place.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children experience mealtimes which are responsive and meet their needs, staff should review their current procedures to promote independence, self-help skills and promote opportunities to develop social skills.

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

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

This area for improvement was made on 22 December 2023.

Action taken since then

The mealtime experience had recently been reviewed and developed by the staff team. The structure of the day had been reviewed to support children with additional support needs over the lunchtime period. There were opportunities for children to help prepare snacks and for children to self-serve their food, which helped promote their life skills and independence. Makaton was used to support communication and choice making with some children. There was still some room for improvement around ensuring staff are consistently sitting with children at lunchtimes which the service had recognised.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure improved outcomes for children, the service should implement effective quality assurance systems. This should include but is not limited to;

- developing a clear and effective improvement plan that addresses the priorities within the service
- embed regular and effective support and monitoring for all staff
- create a robust quality assurance calendar to monitor all areas of practice and improve outcomes for children.

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

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

This area for improvement was made on 22 December 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had developed their approach to quality assurance. An improvement plan was in place and relevant improvement priorities had been identified. It would be beneficial to ensure the improvement plan is evaluated regularly and identify and highlight the impact of changes and improvements. This would support ongoing development.

Self-evaluation of the service had been developed using key documents. Monitoring of practice, environments and interactions had taken place which highlighted key strengths, areas for development, next steps and the impact. Peer monitoring was in the early stages of being developed which would support further professional discussions between staff. It would be beneficial for management to follow up on any areas for development that had been identified and evaluate any progress made.

A detailed quality assurance calendar highlighted tasks to be undertaken throughout the year. This included the review of personal plans, learning journeys, medication systems and accidents and incidents. This supported the service to continue to develop and implement change to improve outcomes and experiences for children and families.

Staff were supported through regular wellbeing meetings and one-to-one meetings which supported their professional development. The staff team felt supported and valued by an approachable management team who were leading them through their journey to develop and make improvements.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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