

RAF Lossiemouth Childcare Centre Day Care of Children

Muirton Road
Lossiemouth
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 February 2025

Service provided by:
D.M.P.B. Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004005268

Service no:
CS2003051186

About the service

RAF Lossiemouth Childcare Centre is a day care of children service, registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 147 children aged from three months up to 12 years of whom no more than 24 children are aged under two years. The service is provided by D.M.P.B. Ltd.

The service operates from purpose built premises that are on one level, with all rooms having direct access to secure outdoor play areas. The premises are owned by the Military of Defence (MOD) and located close to a military base. The service is within walking distance of beaches, schools and other local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 and 6 February 2025. The inspection was carried out by three 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 received from 16 families;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children across all playrooms experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches, which supported them to feel safe and secure.
- Staff knew children and their families well, which meant that children received the care and support they needed at the right time.
- Approaches to planning were being further developed to ensure all children were supported to reach their potential.
- Children of all ages had access to warm and welcoming playrooms, with access to the outdoors. This contributed to them feeling valued.
- Continuous improvement was supported by self-evaluation and effective quality assurance systems.

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?	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?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children across all playrooms experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their wellbeing. Staff cuddled and comforted babies and younger children and were quick to respond if a child became upset. They followed cues from children and recognised when children needed support. This resulted in positive relationships between children and staff, and supported children to feel safe and secure.

Effective use of personal planning information meant that staff were able to anticipate children's individual needs and give them the right support, at the right time. Staff spoke knowledgeably about each child, recognising them as individuals who were listened to and valued. Personal plans were developed with families to ensure that children received consistency of care. Staff were skilled at building children and families' resilience, offering support when required. This meant that children received appropriate care from staff who were able to respond quickly. Parents' comments included:

"They have helped my (child) come so far from speech to helping potty training and they are so loving and easy to speak to if my kids have any issues or struggles."

"Feels like a big family. Very approachable and friendly and supportive staff that know my child well and are supportive for me."

Staff supported children to achieve their potential by working closely with children, their families and other professionals. Early intervention was made possible by the setting having in place a senior staff member, who specialised in supporting children with any additional support needs. They worked closely with staff, and reviewed the effectiveness of strategies developed and put in place regularly, to ensure that they were continuing to meet the needs of children. This meant that any interventions used supported positive outcomes.

Children of all ages enjoyed relaxed and calm mealtimes. They had some opportunities to develop independence skills, such as serving their own food, pouring drinks and clearing up. Food choices were nutritious, and alternatives were offered to cater for individual preferences. Parents were welcomed into the setting when they were breastfeeding, and babies were supported with weaning, with staff offering appropriate levels of support. Children attending after school enjoyed sharing a light meal together, chatting with staff about their day. This meant children benefited from positive, social experiences.

Children were supported to rest and relax when they needed to, which supported their emotional security. Staff followed family preferences, and were responsive to individual children's needs throughout the day, promoting good habits around sleep.

Effective procedures were in place to safeguard children. Staff were confident in discussing the processes and procedures they would follow should they have any concerns about a child's health and wellbeing. This contributed to children being protected from possible harm.

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were engaged in their play and were having fun with other children. They participated in a variety of play experiences which stimulated their natural curiosity, learning and creativity. Children were able to make choices about where they played most of the time. This supported their developing independence.

Children were supported to develop their skills in language and literacy, and consolidate their learning through play. Some staff scaffolded their learning experiences, for example, whilst children were playing in the sand tray, staff repeated words for younger children supporting their developing vocabulary. Younger children experienced singing throughout the day which created a joyful, positive atmosphere and supported their language development. Opportunities for numeracy were naturally woven into children's play and learning. Children explored counting, size and shape through everyday experiences. Older children were able to choose from a wide range of experiences that supported them to take part in risky play, rest, relax and have fun with their friends. As a result, children were happy, confident and making progress.

Planning approaches were being further developed to ensure a good balance of responsive and forward planning. Staff recognised where gaps in learning opportunities may exist, and planned experiences to bridge these. There were some inconsistencies in interactions to support learning, and the quality of observations, with some not detailing the learning. This meant not all children were being appropriately challenged to meet their potential through relevant next steps. The management team had identified this, and were working with the staff team to make improvements.

Children had developed strong links within their local community. A number of opportunities were created for children to engage with local residents, and to visit local places of interest and shops. One parent told us their child enjoyed "(The) beach, park, seeing horses, seeing RAF rescue dogs, fire engines, library outings, day out on bus to Elgin, the play area and activities at nursery itself." These opportunities enhanced children's play and learning, and supported them to make connections with their wider world

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Children benefited from a service that was safe and secure. Spaces were welcoming and nurturing for children and families. Playrooms were comfortable and well ventilated. Homely touches, natural resources and child centred displays helped children to feel welcomed and included. This created an ethos that children mattered.

Children had access to resources that were well-organised, and encouraged exploration, enquiry and fun. The enabling environment indoors and outdoors had been well considered to include age and stage appropriate resources, and interesting, open ended and natural resources had been introduced across all playrooms. As a result, children were enabled to explore opportunities which promoted and challenged their curiosity and imagination.

Younger children experienced a nurturing, warm and inviting environment. They had ample space to develop gross motor skills, develop curiosities and be creative. High quality resources were appropriate for the children's age and stage of development and provided an array of exciting opportunities to support play and learning. Children attending school aged childcare had access to areas to rest and relax in, engage in physical activity, play games and explore loose parts. This meant they felt valued within the setting.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with daily opportunities for free flow access between the indoor and outdoor nursery areas. This enabled children to be independent, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. Each playroom had direct access to an outdoor area where children had opportunities to develop gross motor skills, develop their natural curiosities and problem solving skills.

Arrangements for nappy changing in some rooms did not follow best practice guidance, with some children being changed on a changing mat on the floor. The management team had identified this, and recognised that it could compromise children's safety. They had begun to make plans to address this, but had not made any progress. We have made an area for improvement around this (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that nappy changing arrangements follow best practice guidance. This should include, but is not limited to, providing appropriate changing facilities.

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

'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes.' (HSCS 5.18).

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children, families, and staff benefited from a passionate and motivated leadership team. They promoted high aspirations for children and families through shared aims. This created a happy and welcoming ethos in the service contributing to a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. A culture of continuous improvement had been established with all managers, and staff, demonstrating a commitment to making positive changes for children and families.

Families were meaningfully involved in developing the service. Regular feedback from families took place through a variety of methods such as face to face discussions, questionnaires and feedback requests. Parents were invited to join the "Parents Voice Group", which allowed parents to feedback directly to the management team any issues and concerns gathered from wider discussion with families of the setting. All families were invited to join room specific, online, parent only, forums. Parents told us they found this helpful and that it supported them with a wide range of issues. This supported families to influence change within the setting.

Continuous improvement was supported by self-evaluation and effective quality assurance systems. An improvement plan was in place, with identified priorities to support the service's improvement agenda, based on best practice guidance, and external and internal evaluations. Staff were involved in self-evaluation and reflected together which enabled them to bring about positive change. Effective use of audits, and formal and informal monitoring, supported the development of staff practice and improvements to the environment. As a result, children experienced quality care and support.

The service had made positive links with professionals and other childcare establishments to share good practice. These opportunities had been used well to evaluate the service and improve opportunities available for children and their families.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Staff interactions were compassionate, warm and caring. The management team and staff had high aspirations for all children, and this was evident in the care and support they received. Parents commented:

"All staff are welcoming and supportive in helping my kids with their learning and care."

"Friendly personnel with care to details. Deliver great early child development."

"The staff are amazing. They are so knowledgeable and helpful and have great communication."

The setting was effectively staffed to meet the needs of all children. There was a very good mix of skills and experiences among the staff team. Staff who worked in breakfast club, or afterschool care, worked across the setting, ensuring that all staff received appropriate breaks, and that staff had time to work with children on a one to one basis. Busier times of the day, such as lunchtime, were well staffed, which contributed to keeping children safe. As a result, children benefited from continuity of care, from staff who knew them well.

Staff spoke respectfully to each other, modelling kind interactions for the children. This contributed to the atmosphere being purposeful and relaxed throughout the day. Staff shared relevant information with each other, to ensure feedback to families was relevant and meaningful. This ensured children received consistent care between home and the setting.

The management team recognised the importance of supporting staff, both in their professional development, and with their overall wellbeing. Staff told us "I feel like my wellbeing is important to them and as a staff member I feel very supported" and "Our management team are the best at listening to anyone and everyone, always taking our needs into consideration in any situation." This had contributed to staff feeling valued and respected, resulting in a positive ethos of attendance within the setting.

New staff were well supported when they joined the setting. The management team had developed the setting's own induction procedures, incorporating elements of the National Induction Resource. More experienced staff were appointed as mentors, which ensured new staff had the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge they needed to support children.

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	5 - Very 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?	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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