

Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre Day Care of Children

Pitskelly Park
Carnoustie
DD7 7BF

Telephone: 01241 467400

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 March 2025

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Service no:
CS2020379180

About the service

Carnoustie Early Learning and Childcare Centre is a day care of children service provided by Angus Council. The nursery is situated within a purpose built building with access to their own enclosed outdoor space and small forest area. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 70 children not yet attending primary school at any one time of whom; no more than 42 are aged two years to under three years.

The service is situated in Carnoustie and is close to local amenities such as, shops, parks and is on a main bus route. Children are cared for in a designated space, they have access to a spacious outside area with a small forest area they can access as they wish, sensory room, their own toilet facilities and areas to have their meals.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors, which took place on Monday 03 March 2025 between 09:15 and 15:45. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received feedback from five families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and engaged in their play and learning.
- Children experienced daily access to outdoor play and fresh air.
- Children were cared for by a staff team who were engaged in continual professional development.
- Children benefited from a staff team who know them well and helped them to thrive.
- Children's play and learning experiences were enhanced through careful planning and layouts of resources that inspired children to be curious.
- Children experienced kind and caring interactions by a passionate staff team.

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 experience kind, warm and nurturing interactions from staff. Staff were down at children's level engaging in conversations and play. Staff were genuinely interested in children's lives, for example they chatted with children about what they had done at the weekend. Comfort was freely given to children if they needed or asked for it. This helped children to feel reassured and loved.

Children benefitted from effective personal planning that supported children to thrive at a pace that was right for them. 'All about me' forms were used to gather children's interests, likes, dislikes, medical and dietary requirements. These were reviewed with parents in line with current legislation. A parent told us, "I work together with the staff on doing what's best for my child". Strategies identified were seen to be used in practice, for example using signs and symbols to help children with transitions.

Mealtimes were a relaxed, unhurried and sociable experience for children. Staff sat with children at the table and engaged in conversations with the children such as, what foods they like to eat or what they had for breakfast. Children had opportunities to build their independence skills through self-serving their side dishes, pouring their own drinks, collecting their cups and clearing their space away. Careful consideration was given to ensure children could still make independent choices with their main meal. For example, the dinner lady asked children what food items they would like and children's wishes were respected.

Nappy changing took place in a separate space which provided children with dignity and respect. Children were asked sensitively if they wanted to be changed. The changing process followed current best practice and personal protective clothing was used appropriately. Staff chatted with children throughout the process, sang songs and explained what was happening next, for example "I am going to take your nappy off now". This helped to reassure children while they experienced intimate care.

Medication was stored appropriately within the service. Information was mostly gathered prior to administering medication. We discussed with the service ways to strengthen these processes, for example more information detailed 'in an emergency' section. The service were proactive and additional information was added before the end of the inspection. As a result, children would be kept safe if they required medication while they attended the service.

There were areas for children to rest, relax and sleep if they needed to. Resources such as beanbags, cushions, child size sofa's and blankets were available for children to use. Staff knew children well and ensured certain areas were available for children to use, such as a sensory space to help them regulate their emotions.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun and were happy and relaxed while they engaged in their play and learning. They experienced a balance of spontaneous and planned activities. These opportunities provided challenge to children's thinking and extend their interests.

A range of resources were available, including loose parts such as, shells, crates, planks and junk modelling. As a result, children had opportunities to develop their curiosity and imagination.

Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were available to help children make sense of the world around them. Signs and symbols were skilfully displayed throughout the service. This supported children to understand where resources belonged, how to find out information and to follow simple routines. Books were threaded throughout the indoor and outdoor environment play areas. For example, some books were displayed alongside tuff tray activities with props. These opportunities helped children to retell stories in their own way.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interests. Regular planning meetings took place between staff where they shared what children's current interests in different areas were. This helped staff to transfer children's interests into different areas. For example, children who were interested in building in the large block area were encouraged to use these skills with large loose parts outside. As a result, children were continually developing their skills through their interests.

High quality observations which detailed children's learning were captured on an online platform and shared with parents. Regular observations were recorded. Next steps were identified, they were appropriate and achievable. These could be seen throughout the environments with planned activities to help children achieve and thrive.

Floorbooks were used as learning journeys detailing what children had been learning. For example a 'Rights Respecting Nursery' floorbook promoted rights language and helped children to begin to understand their rights. These were kept low where children could access them as they wished. As a result, children had ownership of their learning and achievements.

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 were welcomed into a bright, comfortable and welcoming environment. The play spaces were clean and free from clutter. The layout of the environment provided children with cosy and comfy areas to take part in quieter play. There was ample space for children to extend their play ideas and interests. There were pictures of children taking part in activities and their art work was displayed around the environment. This gave the children the message that they mattered.

Children benefitted from direct access to a well-resourced outside space with free flow access. The outside play area provided a mixture of surfaces and play opportunities using loose parts and fixed equipment. A parent told us, "Children have access to the garden at all times". Another parent shared, "My child loves playing on the pallets". As a result, children were able to develop their imagination and problem solving skills in different environments and through their play.

Children were kept safe while they explored their environments. Risks were assessed and documented and these were reviewed regularly. We discussed with the service ways some of these assessments could be developed further to ensure they reflect current practice and environments. The service was proactive and these were updated immediately.

This further supported staff to ensure children were kept safe and protected while they attended the service.

Children's wellbeing was well supported through effective infection prevention control measures. Cleaning schedules were in place that helped staff to monitor cleaning procedures of the environment and resources. Environments were clean and well presented. Children and staff washed their hands at appropriate times of the day, for example before eating or after using the toilet. This ensured the likelihood of the spread of infection was reduced.

Children were supported to recognise risks within their environment. Children carried out risk assessments that were meaningful to them daily. For example, they checked if they had soap and paper towels in the bathrooms and if the floor was slippery or wet. This helped children to understand different ways to keep themselves safe. Risky play opportunities for children were threaded throughout the indoor and outdoor environments. Children were supported by skilled staff who understood when to step in and when to stand back and allow children time to problem solve. As a result, children were beginning to become aware how they can develop their play ideas safely.

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

Children, families and staff were involved in refreshing their vision, values and aims. These were currently being reviewed. The management team were keen to ensure the values of the nursery were meaningful to everyone who uses the service. As a result, this shared vision and approach helped to develop meaningful relationships with children and their families.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in the service. Parents were welcomed into the service daily at drop off and pickup times. Daily chats took place and regular communications over the online platform helped keep parents informed of the life within nursery. Additional opportunities for parents to attend the nursery were provided. For example, stay and plays, parent breakfast and bookbug sessions were available for families to join. Topics of focus at stay and play sessions were chosen by families. This helped to develop a shared understanding of the importance of different ways children can learn within nursery and beyond. This allowed families to be part of their children's learning journeys and for children to develop a love of learning.

Quality assurance systems were in place that supported the management team with the running of the nursery. Tasks required were broken down into manageable timeframes with actions and who is responsible to complete each task. For example, audits and care plan reviews. Termly reviews with the staff team ensured actions were completed.

A meaningful improvement plan was developed and used as a working document. The staff team were aware of targets and contributed to ensure areas identified were developed. For example, one target identified was 'to create an inspiring place to learn where children are respected'. Children were encouraged to follow their interests and explore their environments in a respectful way. For example, putting items away when they were finished playing with them or sharing resources with their peers. As a result, children were beginning to develop an understanding of how you can be respectful in different ways.

Self-evaluation processes were embedded throughout staff practice. Staff revisited action plans and mind maps within floorbooks with children regularly. Termly reviews took place which included the use of challenge questions to extend staff's knowledge and to reflect on their practice. As a result, children's experiences were enhanced.

Staff were keen to develop their knowledge and practice further. Champion roles were developed. Staff identified an area to focus on and implement changes within the service. Staff visited other services to share good practice and take part in professional discussions. This developed a support network between services to ensure they were getting it right for the children and families within their care.

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 were kind and nurturing towards children. Staff knew all children well, not only their key children. A parent told us, "I feel really comfortable talking to them and I trust them with my child's life". A staff member shared "it is important to know all children and what they are working towards, as this helps children to achieve". This helped to build trusting relationships with children throughout the nursery. As a result, children were supported to thrive and achieve.

Staff worked well together as a team and communicated well and respectfully with each other. For example, staff shared where they were going or areas they were going to cover. They told us, that they felt positive coming into their work and that the team worked well together. The team had a mix of knowledge, skills and experiences and this helped them to deliver positive outcomes for children.

Staff deployed themselves well in areas of the service to support quality experiences for children. There was enough staff to meet the needs of the children and to extend their learning and interests. Busier times of the day such as staff breaks did not negatively impact on children's experiences, for example additional staff came in to cover staff breaks. This ensured areas in the playroom stayed open, such as the outside and children could continue with their free flow choices.

Staff undertook regular training as a team and individually. Training was relevant to identified improvements or individual staff development. Staff used reflection logs and action points to help staff identify how training would improve practices and outcomes for children. Staff shared that training opportunities were meaningful and helped them to provide the best experiences for children while they are at nursery.

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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.