

## Airlie Pre School Class Day Care of Children

Airlie Primary School  
Airlie  
Kirriemuir  
DD8 5NP

Telephone: 01575 526 149

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
21 May 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Angus Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000043

**Service no:**  
CS2003015777

## About the service

Airlie Pre School Class provides a daycare of children service in Airlie in Angus. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 10 children at any one time. The age range of the children will be from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school. The manager is also the manager of Newtyle Pre School Class.

The service is located within a rural location in Angus. The nursery consists of one main playroom which leads out into a small enclosed outdoor play area and a larger outdoor play space to the side of the nursery building.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 May 2025 between 08:45 and 15:45. Feedback was shared with the service on 21 May 2025.

The inspection was carried out by an inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included 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;
- received two completed questionnaires from parents;
- spoke with staff and the management team;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning.

This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment;
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors;
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met;
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

## Key messages

- Staff knew children well and interactions with children were warm, kind and caring.
- Positive attachments had been formed between staff and children.
- The service were keen to involve families in the life of the service.
- Children were engaged in quality play experiences throughout their day.
- The service could further develop their approach to quality assurance.

## 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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - 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

Interactions between staff and children were warm, kind and caring and it was evident that positive attachments had been formed with children. Staff sat with them during play and learning and were mostly down at child level during interactions. Staff knew children well and had nice discussions with them about their homelife. Cuddles and reassurance were offered when required or when requested. Children were well cared for and were confident during play and interactions. A parent commented 'the staff are warm, friendly, fun and the nursery feels like a welcoming and safe place for my child.'

Personal care was carried out respectfully. Quality interactions between the staff member and children took place and they were supported and encouraged to develop their independence. Infection control measures were in place and followed throughout including children washing their hands after their nappy had been changed. This helped to minimise any possible risk of spread of infection.

Personal plans were in place for each child which included detailed information to support staff to fully meet children's needs. The plans had all been reviewed with parents at least every six months and all reviews were clearly recorded and dated to show up-to-date information. Management shared that chronologies would be added to personal plans if required. These documents ensured that children's needs could be fully met while in the care of the service.

There were currently no long-term medications held within the service. The processes for short term medication were well managed to support children's health and wellbeing needs.

Staff were confident with all child protection processes in place including how to record information and who to contact if required. Annual child protection training took place, and some staff had undertaken further training to develop their knowledge and skills. This supported the staff team to recognise and identify possible signs of abuse and to keep children safe from harm.

Mealtimes were a valuable social experience for children. Staff sat with children and interacted with them throughout and took part in quality discussions. Children helped to lay the table and set up for mealtimes. They developed independence and life skills through pouring drinks, self-serving at snack time, clearing waste food away and placing their dishes into the dishwasher. Allergies and intolerances were well managed. Parents shared that there could be 'more choices available at mealtimes.' The service had reflected on the mealtime experiences and were mindful that children's independence could be further developed.

Children had access to comfortable and cosy spaces throughout their day for quieter play experiences or to rest and relax.

### Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and Learning

Quality play experiences took place throughout the day. Children moved freely between indoors and outdoors to support and extend their play and learning. Mathematical language, which included 'higher and lower' was developed during a play experience where children built and designed ramps for moving and transporting cars. A meaningful group time developed children's knowledge of shape recognition and supported quality discussions. One parent commented 'Relaxed, attentive learning. My child loves the weekly show and tell.'

A current interest in castles, dragons and knights was a main focus indoors as well as outdoors. A group of children spent an extended period of time adding water to the outdoor sand tray to create moats, islands, and rivers. The knights were brought outdoors and were used to assess the depth of the water in the tray. Staff supported this play appropriately through the use of effective questioning to extend and develop children's problem solving, creativity and imaginations. A parent shared 'the nursery have a great structure for learning and exploring but you can tell this is influenced by the children too which makes it even better and means they are not only engaged, but really excited by the opportunities.'

Children were highly involved in the design and creation of a sensory path. They used spades to dig into the mud, they asked for forks to further support them to dig into the earth and they swept up at the end of their experience. This play opportunity prompted quality discussions about digging, fence building and occupations of parents. Children's independence and life skills were developed throughout this experience.

Children took part in a music session with two visiting professionals who had created a song about the community of Airlie. The song incorporated aspects of the service's values and effective questioning supported children to understand the meaning of some of these words. This session encouraged children's creative skills and supported them to work well together as a group.

Planning had recently been developed which included responsive and intentional learning. Staff observed and recorded current interests of children and supported these through extending children's play experiences. Staff identified if children needed further support within a specific area and were mindful of intentional learning and took this forward to support further play, learning and progression. Learning intentions were linked to the values of the service.

Observations of children's learning were recorded and shared with families on the Seesaw app. Observations identified specific learning and some included a future possibility to support progression. Future possibilities were discussed during planning meetings and were recorded and tracked on an overview sheet. This supported children to progress and achieve.

Language, literacy and numeracy were supported within the learning environments. Books were incorporated into most areas and a numeracy area supported counting, number recognition, and measuring. Mark making was encouraged both indoors and outdoors. The service could further develop these learning opportunities for children during mealtimes and outdoor experiences.

## How good is our setting?

## 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 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The service was well furnished, comfortable and homely. Flowers on the snack and lunch table provided a homely feel. Children's artwork was displayed along with photographs of their play and learning experiences. This provided a sense of belonging for children. Photographs of children's families and pets were displayed in the reception area of the service which supported children to feel valued.

Children helped to set up the outdoor environment and staff ensured that resources reflected and supported current interests of children. A wide range of resources which included construction, creative materials, books, natural resources and loose parts supported children to explore, develop their curiosity, imaginations and creativity.

The indoor environment was safe and secure, and the nursery entrance was manned by a member of staff during drop off and pick up times. The outdoor play area was surrounded by perimeter fencing of different heights. The service should be mindful of how they supervise and monitor the lower fencing and gates to ensure children don't have the opportunity to climb over and leave the service. They should also be mindful regarding the positioning of some resources next to the fence. The staff member outdoors was vigilant during our inspection and supervised and monitored children well to ensure their safety.

Risk assessments were in place for the indoor and outdoor environments and included specific activities including mealtimes and baking. These had all been recently reviewed and updated.

Infection control measures were in place. Handwashing took place at appropriate times by staff and children. Surfaces were cleaned before and after use. These measures minimised the risk of spread of infection.

The service visited their local community when possible and would access public transport to visit local landmarks. The nursery were regularly included in organised whole school trips. The mobile library visited frequently which encouraged children to choose books and take part in story sharing. The service invited visitors in from their local community to talk to children and develop their knowledge of what happens within their local community. One parent commented 'ELC mixes with the primary school. Go on trips. Take part in sports day and any initiatives that the primary school are doing.'

**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**

The service had a vision and values in place which was meaningful and reflected the daily life of the service. Parents, staff and children had been included and involved in a recent review of these.

Parents were involved in the life of the service through stay and play sessions and other nursery events. They shared feedback following on from attending specific events. Parents had supported ongoing developments within the outdoor play space. Parental feedback was taken forward by the service when possible and this was shared with them via the Seesaw app. A parent shared 'They often take feedback at family events they put on for us and we are involved and included daily and weekly via the seesaw app.' The child's voice was evident within the service through a range of approaches which included mind maps. Nursery children were also included in groups with school aged children which supported reading, digital technology and sustainability. This encouraged children to collaborate with others and ensured that they were included in ongoing changes and improvement within the service.

The service had an improvement plan in place. This identified focused priorities for the service. Progress was updated on the plan throughout the year.

Quality assurance was supported by a calendar which was broken down into months and identified specific tasks to be completed. Self-evaluation within the service was supported by relevant benchmarking tools and included learning walks, monitoring and audits. Good practice and strengths were identified along with areas for development. The service could further develop their approach to quality assurance by evaluating all progress made and identifying further next steps. The impact that improvements had on staff practice and outcomes and experiences for children should be recorded.

Newly recruited staff were supported by an induction checklist which included a range of tasks that were completed over a period of a month. The national induction resource was used when appropriate to further support the ongoing professional development of staff.

Staff had the opportunity to attend a range of inhouse and local authority training. Staff were keen to share the impact of recent training they had undertaken and how they would develop their new skills within the service.

Staff were supported by regular wellbeing check-ins with the senior or principal teacher. Annual appraisals also took place to support ongoing professional development.

## How good is our staff team?

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 4.3 Staff deployment

The service was appropriately staffed throughout the day which ensured children's needs were met. We discussed the effective deployment of staff both indoors and outdoors to maintain supervision of children at all times. It was agreed that the service would also develop an effective form of communication between nursery staff and the school. This would ensure that the service was appropriately supported over busier periods of the day which included staff breaks. These measures would ensure children's needs continued to be met and would support the wellbeing of the staff team.

Staff had a good knowledge of children and had developed positive relationships with families. Consistent staffing provided continuity for children and supported effective sharing of information with parents.

Staff worked well together, were flexible and adaptable and ensured quality interactions and engagement with children. Staff were respectful of each other and felt well supported within their roles by the management team.

## 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?	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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

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