

# Play Alloa Children's Play Service Day Care of Children

19 Broad Street  
Alloa  
FK10 1AN

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 May 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Play Alloa

**Service provider number:**  
SP2014012270

**Service no:**  
CS2014324607

## About the service

Play Alloa Children's Play Service is a daycare of children service registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 46 primary and secondary school aged children at any one time, as follows:

- Main service: 19 Broad Street, Alloa, FK10 1AN, a maximum of 30 children
- Satellite service: Dumyat Centre, Main Street East, Menstrie, FK11 7BL, a maximum of 16 children.

At the time of inspection, the service was providing afterschool sessions and Saturday sessions from the main service in Alloa only. The service has charitable status and is provided by a voluntary board of directors that includes parent and community representatives. There is a service manager responsible for day-to-day management of the service and a senior session co-ordinator. They are supported by a committed team of staff and volunteers that work in the service. The daycare of children service is just one of a range of services offered by Play Alloa and the only one that comes within a category for registration.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 and 13 May 2025. Feedback was given to the service on 16 May 2025. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 in the service
- reviewed Microsoft Forms responses from five families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and interactions with children
- 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

- Children benefitted from staff that knew them very well as individuals.
- Supports were tailored to children's individual needs and interests.
- Children had fun as they engaged in interesting play experiences.
- A robust approach to reflecting on practice as a staff team ensured sustained positive outcomes for children.
- Passionate committed leadership was leading to improved experiences for children in the service.
- The service should further develop their procedures to ensure that medication is audited regularly and any inconsistencies are identified.

## 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?	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?

## 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good where several strengths impacted positively on children's outcomes and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing care and support from staff who knew them very well as individuals. One parent shared: "The staff are all great and take time with every individual need, and I trust all staff looking after my child when they are at Play Alloa." Staff spent time with children in their play, they interacted with them and had fun together. Where appropriate, children received cuddles, reassurance and were given time to explore at a pace that was right for them. This showed children were respected and valued as individuals.

Effective personal planning was in place which supported staff to enhance experiences for children and young people. The service referred to these documents as registration forms. They contained key information such as children's likes, dislikes and individual interests. Staff used this knowledge to plan experiences for children. For example, one child had an interest in sensory play and exploring play dough. These activities were on offer for both sessions. This meant children received tailored, individualised care which met their needs.

Mealtime experiences had been developed to ensure they met children's individual needs. Staff sat with children and interacted with them in a calm, nurturing manner. Children chose when they wanted to eat and this meant that they were able to enjoy their food at a relaxed pace. The menu was adapted to ensure children's likes were accounted for. As a result, children were developing a positive relationship with food and mealtimes.

Children's emotional wellbeing was well-considered. Quiet spaces were available for them to rest and take time away. Staff were aware that some children had just finished school and wanted time to relax. This was done sensitively and respectfully. As a result, children's emotional wellbeing was promoted.

Appropriate policies were in place to support the safe administration of medication. Some procedures should be further developed to ensure that children's medication is reviewed at least every three months with families and that medication is labelled appropriately. To ensure children's medical needs are met, the service should further develop their medication procedures and audits (see area for improvement 1).

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had fun and were engaged in meaningful play experiences during the sessions. Resources were available to children that linked closely to their interests and their own development. Some children had shown an interest in painting and this was available to them to explore. One parent shared: "My child's learning different things there and meeting people. I know they are well looked after and safe at Play Alloa." Staff respected children's decisions of where they wanted to play and what they wanted to play with.

Children showed excitement as they arrived at the club. Some children took off their shoes to explore the garden and the feeling of grass on their feet while others went inside to have dinner. This relaxed approach supported children to feel at home and secure. Staff facilitated experiences for children very well. Almost all staff were confident of when to interact and when to step back to allow children to explore. This allowed children to play and learn at the pace that was right for them.

Robust approaches to planning and regular reflections ensured children remained engaged in interesting play. Staff spent time every day before the session to plan for experiences and any individual supports for children. They then met again at the end of the session as a team to evaluate the experiences on offer. As a result, experiences and activities linked closely to children's interests and developmental needs.

Children told us that they liked coming to Play Alloa and were happy there. We suggested the service further consider how children are able to reflect on their time at the service. They had previously used a floor book to share children's learning. We encouraged the service to develop approaches to allow children to reflect on and share their experiences with their peers and families.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's individual health and wellbeing needs are met, the provider should review their medication procedures to ensure they reflect current guidance. This should include but is not limited to ensuring any medication held on the premises is reviewed every three months or termly with families and is labelled appropriately.

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).

### How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

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

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

Children benefitted from spaces that had plenty of natural light and were well-ventilated. They had access to two large playrooms in different buildings with a fully enclosed garden area between them. Inside there was a sensory room, areas with books to explore, block play and spaces to eat. This range of opportunities enhanced their time at the service.

The service had worked hard to develop their environment since the previous inspection. They had focused on making spaces more homely and nurturing. Rooms had been recently redecorated, the addition of sofas in spaces made them more relaxing for children. This supported children to rest and promoted their emotional wellbeing. The service recognised that there was still some work to ensure that all spaces were just as nurturing and homely. We suggested they continue to build on the strengths of some of these spaces as they continue to develop their environment. This would further support children's individual needs and overall wellbeing.

The variety of resources on offer reflected children's current interests and supported them to remain happy and engaged in their environment. For example, a new climbing frame and swing had been recently added. Children had fun and laughed with staff as they enjoyed this time together.

Mostly effective policies and procedures were in place to ensure effective infection prevention control. Staff ensured areas were cleaned regularly before and after different groups used the space. Recent updates to the environment, for example recently redecorated rooms and updated resources, ensured that areas were easily cleaned and well-maintained. Some children were not prompted to wash their hands before dinner. We asked the service to further consider this. A previous area for improvement will remain in place to ensure that children are supported to wash their hands before meal times (see area for improvement 2 under What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection?) This would further ensure that children's health is promoted and the risk to infection is minimised.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

### Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Passionate leadership, which put children and young people at the heart, was leading to improved outcomes. The service is part of a larger charitable organisation that supports children, young people and adults. One parent shared: "My child has been going to Play Alloa for a long time. If this service wasn't available, I don't know what I would do. All of the helpers are amazing, caring and very professional. The place is fantastic." This showed that families valued the experiences for children in this service.

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm and inclusive ethos that valued them. The service had organised times where parents and families could come in. Children arrived at the service and went home by bus. This limited the opportunities that parents were able to come into the service. The leadership team recognised this and maintained regular communication with families and had organised opportunities for them to visit the service. One parent shared that they would like more opportunities to come into the setting. The leadership team had recognised the benefit of families visiting the service regularly and had plans to further develop this. This showed that families' opinions and voices were respected and mattered.

Management and staff promoted a shared vision for the setting that provided a caring, supportive and inclusive environment that put children at the heart. This ensured positive outcomes for children were central to daily practice. Staff shared they felt well-supported in their roles by leaders within the service. Staff spoke confidently about the impact their training and experiences in the service had on children and their own practice.

As part of the larger organisation, the service had a strategic improvement plan in place which had not been recently updated. This meant there was the potential to miss key developments in the service and strengths. The service had taken on many aspects of improvement work that were not in this plan, such as the development of the environment. We suggested the service consider reviewing its improvement plan to ensure it is revisited regularly and specific to the individual part of the service. This would further ensure that children who attend the service continue to experience improvements which are linked to their own individual needs and interests.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were in place and mostly effective. Children's records were reviewed regularly, staff took part in reviews yearly and reflected regularly on practice. Some aspects of quality assurance could be further developed, for example the medication audits. This would further ensure children continue to experience high quality 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 passionate about their role, supporting children in the different spaces of the service. They had a very good understanding of child development and understood the importance of connections with children and families. One parent told us: "Staff are so friendly and caring and fun." Staff's kind and nurturing approaches ensured that children felt safe and secure.

The leadership team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed. This ensured children and young people's needs were met and their experiences enhanced. Staff were proactive during busier times to ensure good supervision and high-quality interactions. Staff worked closely together and communicated effectively when a task took them away from the playroom to ensure all children received quality interactions. This meant that children experienced continuity of care as daily tasks were completed.

Staff were respectful and very supportive of each other. They were warm, caring and sensitive in their approach and demonstrated positive team working. Staff met daily to reflect on practice, celebrate successes and highlight any areas to further consider. This promoted a happy, loving and secure environment for children.

There was a positive ethos developed in the team. Staff reflected on their own practice regularly in meaningful discussions together. The team was encouraged to contribute to ongoing improvements. As a result, children consistently benefitted from quality care and support.

There was a range of regular opportunities for training and staff enhanced their own knowledge through training and reflection. Staff spoke confidently and passionately about their recent training or learning and how this impacted on children's experiences. The service took a robust approach to the induction of staff to ensure shared knowledge and understanding of their role and how they support children. This meant children benefitted from a knowledgeable and skilled staff.

## 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 support a safe and secure environment, the service should ensure maintenance and repairs are monitored and carried out promptly.

This is to ensure I experience a high quality environment and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My environment is secure and safe" (HSCS 5.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 27 July 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had worked hard to ensure the environment was safe and secure. Robust plans were in place to monitor any maintenance issues and repairs. The service had been recently re-decorated and new resources had been added. This meant children experienced a quality environment.

**This area for improvement has been met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To promote children's health and wellbeing in line with best practice guidance, the service should ensure children are supported to wash their hands at key times.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

**This area for improvement was made on 27 July 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had improved the toilet facilities to ensure that soap dispensers were readily available to children. Children were encouraged to wash their hands when they arrived at the service. Some children were not prompted to wash their hands before mealtimes. This increased the risk of infection to children. We shared this with the management team and they took action to address this.

**This area for improvement has not 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](http://www.careinspectorate.com)



## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - 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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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