Bellfield Before & After School Care
Day Care of Children

c/o Whatrigg Primary School
Bellfield
Kilmarnock
KA1 3SZ

Telephone: 01563 572 238

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 December 2025

Service provided by:
Bellfield After School Care Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003000715

Service no:
CS2003003487

About the service

Bellfield Before & After School Care is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 32 primary or secondary school children at any one time. During the summer school holidays, children who are due to start primary school in August but are not yet four and a half may attend the service.

The service is situated within Whatrigg Primary School which is close to shops, local amenities and public transport routes. Children are cared for in the community playroom and gym hall. Children also have access to an enclosed playground and football pitch.

At the time of our inspection there were 58 children registered with the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11 and 12 December 2025 between 15:00 and 18:00. 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:

- observed and spoke with children using the service
- received electronic questionnaires from 14 of their families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

During the inspection, there were 21 children using the service on the first day, and 15 children using the service on the second day.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within leadership.

During this inspection we 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

• It was clear that the service valued children, families and the positive contribution they made in the community.

• Quality assurance processes required further development to identify inconsistencies in personal planning and medication records.

• Children's right to play was recognised and promoted by staff who knew and valued children's interests. All children were happy and having fun during our visit.

• Children experienced warm, nurturing care through kind and caring interactions that supported their wellbeing.

• The service has created a warm and welcoming ethos, where families felt valued and included.

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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The manager had given some thought to the vision, values and aims of the service. It was clear that they valued children, families and the positive contribution their service made in the community. All families spoke very positively of the service. One parent told us, "The staff have become a big part of mine and my [child's] life, they are really welcoming and accommodating. They fully understand each individual situation and always try to accommodate everything while adhering to their rules and regulations." We discussed including the children, families and staff in developing a shared vision, values and aims for their service. This would create a meaningful approach that reflects the views and aspirations of everyone in the service.

Staff felt personally and professionally supported. They benefited from regular opportunities to chat informally together and reflect on what went well each day. We discussed the benefits of formalising team meetings to keep a record of reflections and challenges. This would help them to develop clear actions and keep a record of their progress. We also suggested using an evaluative framework such as the 'Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors.' This would guide and structure their self-evaluation to ensure outcome for children and families are at the heart. Whilst children were regularly consulted and some parents had provided some positive general feedback; it was not always clear if all suggestions were responded to. We discussed considering ways to respond to children and families' suggestions and meaningfully using their views to inform improvement priorities. This would help the service to ensure that changes reflected what mattered most to people using the service.

Due to recent staffing challenges, the manager told us they had spent more time caring for children which had impacted on service development time since the last inspection. We made an area for improvement at a previous inspection around quality assurance processes whilst progress had been made, further development was required **(see outstanding area for improvement 1).** The manager was committed to improving the service and had plans in place. Improvement plans and processes required some further development. For example, whilst auditing a monitoring process had been implemented. These did not always identify inconsistencies as we found gaps in medication records and personal plans. We suggested using best practice documents and legislation to guide their processes. This would ensure records contain full and accurate information to meet children's needs. We identified some potential risks at school drop off and collection times around appropriate supervision and open gates within the playground. We asked the manager to create a clear procedure and risk assessment to ensure children's safety **(see area for improvement 1).**

Recruitment processes were in line with safer staffing guidance. This supported children's safety and wellbeing. We discussed the benefits of including children and families in the recruitment process. This would increase collaboration and help to ensure new staff reflect the values of the service. Newly recruited and trainee staff received an informal induction and some mentoring support. We suggested developing a clear induction and mentoring process. This would further support staff in their professional development and enhance positive outcomes for children and families.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's safety, the service should develop and implement clear drop off and collection procedures. This should include but not be limited to, a clear policy, risk assessment and written permission from parents/carers for children to leave the service early and go to school independently. Individual children's needs and stages of development should also be considered.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS, 5.19).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Playing, learning and developing

Children's right to play was recognised and promoted by staff who knew and valued children's interests. One child told us, "I like drawing. I like the people who look after me, they are kind and helpful." A parent told us that their child enjoyed, "socialising with others, games and outdoor play as well as creative arts and crafts." During our visit, we observed children laughing and having fun making Christmas decorations, doing arts and crafts and playing with playdough. As a result, children were happy and settled.

There was a balance of planned and responsive approaches to support children's play. Staff were sensitive to children's life experiences. For example, we observed some children who required support with emotional regulation when they arrived at the service. Staff skilfully supporting their wellbeing through responsively developing a meaningful play experience. As a result, children were quickly comforted and knew that they mattered.

Children could freely access plenty of resources suited to their interests. Staff had thoughtfully developed play spaces with children's preferences in mind. For example, some children excitedly showed us their own personalised books that had been made for them. They also enjoyed playing with a dolls house that was purchased after they saw it in a shop window during an outing. As a result, children felt an ownership of their environment and were confident and happy. We suggested developing some cosier, comfortable spaces for children to have space to play alone should they choose to. This would further enhance children's experiences.

Staff interactions were kind and caring. They recognised children's individual needs and supported them to make choices and be kind to each other. Children experienced a nurturing and supportive approach where staff's effective use of tone and language promoted confidence and active participation. As a result, children were able to share their ideas freely, extend their thinking, and practice new skills in meaningful ways. Staff recognition and encouragement of individual successes fostered a strong sense of achievement, contributing to children's overall wellbeing, motivation, and positive outcomes.

Children were actively involved in choosing outings and experiences during school holidays. This ensured children were at the centre of planning. We discussed developing opportunities for children to plan experiences during term time. This would ensure a consistent approach for children's involvement. Some children told us they enjoyed playing outside and liked playing football. They did not have opportunities to play outdoors during the inspection as staff felt it was too dark. We discussed considering ways to ensure

children can access daily outdoor play all year round, in all weathers. This would support their health, wellbeing, and enjoyment. We also discussed how introducing more opportunities to use digital technology could add depth to children's play and learning. This would enrich their experiences and support them to develop important skills for the future.

Families felt included in their children's day and were kept up to date through a private social media group. We discussed the importance of ensuring families are also included in the development of clear next steps for children. This would strengthen partnerships, ensure continuity between home and the service, and help staff to monitor children's progress. This would ensure that all children were supported to achieve their full potential.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing care through kind interactions that supported their wellbeing. This helped children to feel safe and secure. One parent told us, "The staff are friendly, approachable and supportive, and I feel comfortable speaking to them about anything they need to know in relation to my [child]. From my experience, I would say the staff listen to and take on board my views when I share information with them, and they have always been responsive to my [child's] individual needs." Staff had built strong, respectful relationships with children and responded sensitively to their individual needs. This helped children to form strong, positive attachments. Staff had recently completed training in children's rights and planned to support children to recognise their rights in everyday experiences. This would further enhance the respectful, inclusive ethos of the service.

Children benefitted from sociable and unhurried mealtimes. Food choices were plentiful and reflected individual children's dietary requirements. Fresh water was independently available throughout the day. This supported children to stay healthy and hydrated. Children were supported to self serve, pour their own drinks and clear their own plates. This encouraged independence and the development of life skills. Children were consulted on snack choices. As a result, children felt valued and included.

Staff were supported to meet children's needs through personal planning. We made an area for improvement around personal planning at a previous inspection. Staff had made progress in developing personal plans that were individualised and included children's voices. Whilst staff knew all children very well, some plans had not been developed or reviewed within the required timescales. They also required more detailed information on how the service would meet individual children's needs. We discussed the importance of robust monitoring of personal plans. This would promote a consistent approach to children's care and support. This area for improvement was not met in full and was repeated at this inspection **(see outstanding area for improvement 1).**

Children experienced consistent care and support from a small, committed staff team. This meant they were always cared for by familiar staff and gave them a strong sense of security. One parent stated, "They always go above and beyond for your children." Older children were encouraged to help and support younger children; this helped them to develop positive relationships and leadership skills. As a result, children were cared for in a nurturing and supportive environment.

The service had created a warm and welcoming ethos, where families felt included and valued. Some families came into playrooms during our visit and enjoyed sharing children's achievements with them, chatting informally with staff. One parent told us, "They are really accommodating and supportive, not only with my child but also when I need to talk about my own feelings." This supported a sense of partnership and helped families know they matter. The service was considering ways to increase engagement with all families. This would further support the development of meaningful connections within the service.

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

Personal plans should to be more focused to accurately reflect how the service will meet individual children's needs. They should be fully completed including signatures and dates.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 31 August 2018.

Action taken since then

The service had made progress in the development of their personal plans. Plans had been completed with children and were more individualised. We discussed including strategies that are more specific and clearly detail how the service will meet the needs of individual children. Some plans had not been created or reviewed within the required timescales. Whilst progress had been made, further development was required to meet this area for improvement in full.

This area for improvement was not met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The manager should develop a quality assurance process that includes a monitoring plan, staff appraisal and training plan involvement of children and parents/carers and an overall improvement plan for the service.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state "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 31 August 2018.

Action taken since then

The service was in the early stages of developing quality assurance processes to improve outcomes for children and families. Auditing and monitoring processes had been implemented. These required further development as they did not always identify inconsistencies in medication records and personal plans. An

improvement plan was in place, further development was required to ensure improvement priorities were influenced by self-evaluation processes and the views of children and families. A process for staff appraisal was in place, these had not been carried out with all staff yet. The service had made improvements since the last inspection. Further development was required to meet the area for improvement in full.

This area for improvement was not 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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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