

Dunbeth Family Learning Centre

Day Care of Children

80 Coats Street
Coatbridge
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Telephone: 01236 632 079

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 July 2022

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2003015331

About the service

Dunbeth Family Learning Centre is registered to provide care for 61 children not yet attending primary school. Of those, no more than 15 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

Care is provided from a detached, single storey building located in Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire. The service is located within a residential area of Coatbridge and is situated close to parks, shops, transport links and other amenities.

Children are accommodated within three separate playrooms, all of which have direct access to an enclosed secure garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 19 July 2022 between 09:00 - 15:30. Further inspection activity was carried out remotely with feedback provided to the manager and provider on 22 July 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. A team manager was also present as part of the Care Inspectorate's quality assurance process.

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 and eight of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were kind, caring and nurturing. They knew children well and were committed to their care.
- Children were engaged in play and confident within their environment.
- Children were developing their curiosity, imagination and problem solving through play experiences.
- Good use was made of the local community.
- The service should continue to develop the outdoor environment to promote children's independence and choice.
- An ethos of continuous improvement was evident within the service where quality assurance and improvement was a key focus.
- Consideration should be given to the deployment of staff to ensure the balance of skilled and experienced staff.

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?	5 - Very 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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were happy, settled and secure in the service and confident in their interactions with staff. They were made to feel included by staff who were calm, respectful and skilled in building relationships. Staff and children chatted and laughed together and this contributed to children feeling valued and having a sense of belonging.

Staff knew the care and support needs of individual children well. This was supported with warm, caring and nurturing approaches to both their personal care needs and their learning needs. For example, one parent told us "The quality of care is perfect, they make sure my child's specific needs are met."

Children were safe and protected from harm with clear policies and procedures in place relating to child protection. Staff clearly understood the role they played in this and had all undertaken annual child protection training. The head of centre acted as the child protection officer, ensuring a robust system was in place. Therefore, we are confident that any child protection matters would be responded to appropriately.

Effective personal plans were in place for all children. Targets were agreed with parents, with clear strategies implemented to ensure children's needs were met. One parent told us, "my child has a personal plan, this was discussed with me at both his introduction and his recent parent's consultation phone call. I was involved in creating his plan, which was lovely as a parent, to be involved in this process. I know in future if my child requires support with anything else then this can also be added to their plan."

Personal plans were frequently reviewed and next steps agreed with parents. As a result, children were progressing well in their learning and wellbeing. The service should enhance personal plans, providing opportunities for children to set their own targets.

Transitions to nursery or within the nursery were carefully planned. This ensured staff knew children's individual needs, as well as providing an opportunity to develop warm, nurturing relationships at a pace that suited children. One parent told us, "My little one took a long time to settle in as they hadn't been away from myself or my partner. The nursery were very helpful, they allowed us to remain in the parents room whilst she was in for a short while this time was gradually increased until our girl was confident in leaving us. Being able to be within the nursery during this time was helpful as I was extremely anxious, but the staff were so understanding and helpful."

Staff worked closely with other professionals to ensure children with complex needs were well supported. Expertise gained from services such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists helped develop 'getting it right for me' plans.

Mealtimes were calm, relaxed and unhurried experiences for children. The service had just introduced rolling lunches. Children could choose when they wanted lunch and this ensured their play wasn't interrupted. Children were independent, self-serving their meals and pouring their water. One parent told us, "The children are learning how to clear plates, set tables, basic life skills which is transferable at home."

Medication which may be required by children whilst at nursery was managed in line with guidance.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were leading their own play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous activities. They had choice and independence of where they wanted to play and how they would lead their play both indoors and outdoors. A play based approach was firmly embedded within the service.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interest. Children were actively involved in planning and leading their own learning. Floorbooks effectively captured children's thoughts, ideas and discussions. Staff spoke confidentially about how their observations of children, along with individual targets and children's views informed their planning approaches. As a result of this, children were engaged in play and were progressing well in their overall development.

We observed children engage in play experience for prolonged periods of time showing high levels of engagement, excitement, wonder and awe. For example, children spent a considerable amount of time rolling balls down guttering, exploring the effects of gravity.

Staff were responsive to children through skilled observations, responding appropriately to support learning, through skilful questioning. This extending children's thinking and learning.

Play experiences developed children's skills in language, literacy, and numeracy. For example, children were exploring wooden tiles with letters of the alphabet, identifying and sorting wooden discs into alphabetically order.

We discussed with the service the importance of ensuring interactions supported, enhanced and challenged the high level of literacy skills within the nursery. As part of the service's development plan, they have identified training to support and enhance these emerging skills, to ensure progression and challenge in children's learning.

Children's opportunities to play and learn were enhanced through strong connections to the community. The service made good use of local space, using the local parks as part of their community walks and their forest school approach.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a clean, bright and welcoming nursery. The playrooms were comfortable and homely with plenty of natural light and good ventilation.

The main playrooms had underwent a 'curious environment' audit and we could see the positive impact this had on the playroom. The playroom was warm, inviting and benefitted from a well resourced and carefully set out indoor play space. This gave a real sense that children mattered and were valued.

The playroom offered a range of spaces for children to make choices, support interest and develop ideas. Children were able to independently select resources of their choice and lead their own play. We discussed with the manager about enhancing these opportunities within the outdoor play spaces. Management recognised this needed developed and there were plans in place to develop the outdoor play space.

The house corner area had a range of real life and open-ended resources, creating a homely feel. The environment encouraged children to develop their curiosity and imagination.

Quiet spaces were available across the playroom to support children's wellbeing. For example, each room had a tepee and a quiet sitting area. These spaces helped children to relax, self-regulate and feel safe. We discussed with the manager how this could be extended to include a nurturing space within the garden.

The management should review the additional support needs (ASN) unit to ensure they offer children an environment that supports their individual needs. This includes developing further sensory experiences and the use of visuals to support communication.

Children experienced free flow access between indoors and outdoors. This enabled them to be independent, whilst also supporting them to be active and healthy.

Health and wellbeing was promoted through outdoor play experiences. The garden provided a range of spaces for the development of physical skills and exploration. Opportunities for risky play were provided with children assessing their own risks. For example, children jumping from the cable reels to the tyres. Children made good use of this and were confident when using all areas of the outdoor space.

Children benefitted from a safe and secure setting with a range of safety measures in place to ensure children didn't come to harm. This included secure entry systems, clear boundary fencing, secure gates, as well as regular headcounts and communication between staff. Staff were aware of the Care Inspectorate's 'Keeping Children Safe - Look, Think, Act' campaign and agreed to further explore our practice notes.

There was systems in place to monitor the maintenance and repair of equipment.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection, supporting a safe environment for children.

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.

3.1 Quality assurances and improvement are well led and managed.

Leaders promoted a clear vision that helped staff understand the aspirations of children and their families. The nursery's vision had recently been developed in consultation with staff and families to help shape the service in a way that met children's needs.

Children and families benefitted from a culture of continuous improvement. The views of children and families were sought to support the development of the service.

Families were consulted on a range of different aspects to support the service delivery and their views impacted on positive additions to the service. For example, feedback from a parent highlighted that they would like more communication and involvement within the nursery. To improve communication, the service introduced 'Big blether Wednesdays.' This provided opportunities for parents to attend outdoor play sessions every Wednesday.

Change was welcome within the nursery and self-evaluation was at the heart of their approach. The head of centre had a comprehensive understanding of the importance of using the views of children and families to inform their planning and development of the service.

A range of different communication tools were used to gather parents' thoughts and views, including Microsoft teams and a 'have your say' wall. One parent told us, "we are asked frequently for feedback and there are opportunities to leave anonymous feedback within the nursery centre."

Quality assurance processes were in place, which included a clear improvement plan with realistic targets to support children's literacy and numeracy skills. This was shared with parents. Staff were involved in reflecting on the progression within their identified areas for improvement.

A programme of training was in place that ensured staff were supported to develop as practitioners. Staff were involved in initiating well informed changes by being part of working groups. Staff spoke enthusiastically about how training had influenced their practice and positive experiences for children. For example, the benefits of risky play and encouraging children to assess risks whilst playing outdoors. The reintroduction of champion roles within the service will develop this further.

Self-evaluation was underpinned by current best practice documents and supported the delivery of high-quality care and support. Professional dialogue and environment audits had helped to develop children's play spaces, ensuring they progressed in their learning and wellbeing. Staff should continue to develop their knowledge of best practice guidance, to build knowledge and aid future reflections.

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.

4.3 Staff Deployment

The service had ample staff to meet the needs of children. Staff had time to listen, respond and care for children, helping them feel valued and loved.

Staff communicated well with each other when a task took them away from their responsibilities, which ensured children continued to be effectively supported. Staff worked well to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day. As a result, there were minimal interruptions to staff engagement with children.

However, consideration should be given to the deployment of staff, to ensure the effective use of differing levels of knowledge and skills within playrooms. This would provide opportunities for good role modelling and mentoring of less experienced staff to continue to enhance positive outcomes for children and staff development.

Staff told us they felt supported by the leadership team. Regular communication enabled staff to feel included and valued towards the development of the service.

Staff were warm and caring in their approach and worked well as a staff team. They understood the importance of developing nurturing relationships and listened to children's ideas and experiences. This meant that children were valued and respected. One parent told us, "I feel my child has a very strong connection and I can't sing the staffs praises highly enough."

Staff shared with us how well they were supported and mentored, with a good induction system being in place to support new staff. During their induction period staff used the 'Early learning and childcare - The national induction Resource', which as well as the practical elements, gave them an opportunity to work through core training and key policies and procedures. The service should continue to enhance this to ensure robust induction processes are in place.

Parents were informed of changes in staff and who was caring for their child, with changes to staff communicated through newsletters. Staff had established trusting relationships with parents. One parent told us, "I couldn't praise them enough, they have made it so easy for me, I was really anxious about my child starting but they have took their time to settle my child and myself into the nursery."

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

The management team should ensure fresh drinking water is available to children each day.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I can drink fresh water at all times.' (HSCS 1.39)

This area for improvement was made on 7 July 2021.

Action taken since then

The service ensures water is accessible to children indoors and outdoors throughout the day.

Previous area for improvement 2

The management should review systems to ensure all staff are clear about current guidance and that this is implemented.

These should include: 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): early learning and childcare (ELC) services' 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)' 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I experience high quality care based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'. (HSCS 4.11) and 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 7 July 2021.

Action taken since then

Management have revised policies and procedures with staff to ensure they are following current guidelines at all times. The service had developed a robust system to ensure effective management of medication.

Previous area for improvement 3

The manager should ensure that all staff are clear on the care and support needs of all children in their care, particularly over periods of transition.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I experience stability in my care and support from people who know my needs, choices and wishes, even if there are changes in the service or organisation.' (HSCS 4.15)

This area for improvement was made on 7 July 2021.

Action taken since then

The service had developed clear transition policies and procedure to support the individual needs of children, ensuring consistency of care.

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?	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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