Dalrymple Early Childhood Centre
Day Care of Children

Hillview
Dalrymple
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Telephone: 01292 560 368

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 December 2021

Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000142

Service no:
CS2003015814

About the service

Dalrymple Early Childhood Centre is a Daycare of Children service which operates within Dalrymple Primary School in East Ayrshire. The service is provided by East Ayrshire Council and is registered to care for 57 children from two years of age who are not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 10 should be under three years of age.

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. The inspection process comprised of a mix of on site visits and the use of information technology between Monday 22 November 2021 and Wednesday 8 December 2021. We fed back our inspection findings to the manager on 10 December 2021.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information and information submitted by the service.

To inform our evaluation we:

* spoke with children who used the service and four of their parents
* spoke with staff and management
* observed practice and children's daily experiences
*reviewed documents

What people told us

Children told us about their experiences at the service. They said that they had fun with the friends, and the people who looked after them. They told us about their favourite things to do, which included playing outside and making things.

The four parents we spoke with were happy with every aspect of the service provided. They spoke highly of staff and management and gave examples of where they had helped them to access additional support for their children. Parents were very happy with the amount of outdoor play their children accessed, and their involvement in their children's learning through the online learning journals.

Self assessment

We did not ask the service to submit a self-assessment. We considered the service's improvement plan as part of the inspection process.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

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

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff in relation to Covid-19. Staff were familiar with, and implemented, current guidance in relation to Covid-19, for example wearing face coverings when required, supporting children to play outdoors and ensuring appropriate ventilation.

Children were happy, confident and having fun. Almost all children were fully engaged in their play and learning and confidently made choices to lead their own learning in areas that interested them. When children needed extra support to make choices, staff supported them sensitively and effectively.

Staff were consistently warm and nurturing in their interactions with children. They listened to children and gave them ample time and encouragement to respond and share their views. This helped children feel safe, secure and confident in the centre. Staff recognised and celebrated children's progress very well. They did this, for example, by providing lots of praise and encouragement and by displaying children's achievements on the 'wow' wall and within their personal plans. As a result children's self esteem and confidence were developing well.

Staff supported children's well-being through effective personal planning. We discussed how further development of processes would ensure that information about children, and how the service planned to meet their needs and support their development, could be more easily accessible.

Staff were developing approaches to support children to recognise and talk about their emotions. They told us how this was having a positive impact on children's emotional well-being.

The service had further developed the ways it worked in partnership with parents through a range of approaches. Parents told us they were very happy with the information they received, and their opportunities to contribute to their children's online learning journals. The service had also recently introduced new ways of using information technology to consult with parents about service developments. These approaches ensured that parents felt valued and included and supported children's learning and well-being.

Children were protected from harm by staff who had a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Regular and appropriate child protection training meant that they were alert and responsive to potential signs of abuse and neglect.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

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

Children benefitted from a setting that was welcoming, spacious, bright, clean and well maintained.

Staff had carefully considered how to manage the environment, to maximise children's opportunities to lead their own learning and develop their independence. They gave children free access to the two playrooms, and outdoor area, for most of every day. We saw that children moved confidently between these, accessing a wide range of resources and experiences that interested them. Staff told us about their plans to further develop cosy areas for children to relax and rest. We agree that this will be a positive development.

Staff had ensured that playrooms were resourced to offer children opportunities for creativity, curiosity, and inquiry. Each of the playrooms had natural resources and loose parts, and we saw that children made good use of these to extend their play and learning. Staff told us about their plans for further development of resources. We suggested some publications to support this process, such as the 'Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale' (ECERS-3).

Each of the playrooms had direct access to an extensive outdoor play area. We saw that this provided ample space for children and we observed children participate in a range of play and learning experiences. This included risky and adventurous outdoor play, such as practising sliding on the frozen ground, and investigative play, including some experiments with melting ice. These rich and fun learning opportunities were supporting children's well-being and development well.

Children's safety was promoted effectively through a range of effective approaches including regular and effective assessment of risk, staff vigilance and a secure entry to the centre.

Staff regularly checked the hall area, which children could access freely. We discussed the importance of maintaining effective monitoring of children's whereabouts, given the extent of the indoor and outdoor space that they had access to. Staff routinely involved children in developing an understanding of risk through play based approaches. This was helping children to learn about being responsible and keeping themselves safe.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

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

Staff felt valued, included in the team and well supported by management and each other. Staff happily took the lead in service developments, via 'champion roles'. The high level of involvement in service developments resulted in a happy, motivated and enthusiastic staff team.

Management regularly shared information with staff, including Scottish Government guidance updates. Regular meetings provided opportunities for staff to reflect, share and develop their practice. This supported continuous improvement within the service.

Staff were responsive, nurturing and warm in their interactions with children, which supported children's well-being. They skilfully asked questions that supported children's learning whilst promoting their curiosity, inquiry and problem-solving skills.

Staff accessed training that was planned to meet their individual interests, champion roles and professional and personal development. Staff told us about how this had supported their practice and service developments.

Staff spoke positively of the training and self-directed study they had participated in throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and they provided examples of how they had improved their practice. For example implementing some elements of the Froebel approach. Staff learning and development was impacting positively on children's experiences.

Going forward, management should make us of the National Induction Resource, and East Ayrshire Council's FACE Framework. This will support a planned and co-ordinated approach to staff induction and ongoing support and development.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

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

The management team engaged well during the inspection process, demonstrating a commitment to improvement.

The relatively new management team had prioritised building relationships with staff, children and their families, which had resulted in a positive and healthy culture and ethos.

Management supported staff well, through effective informal and planned approaches. Staff valued management's caring and respectful style and felt that their wellbeing was prioritised.

The service improvement plan identified key areas for improvement in line with national improvement priorities and was linked to Education Scotland's practice document, 'How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare.' Staff were familiar with the plan and committed to making the service the best it could be for children and their families. Parents felt that their views were valued and respected, and were happy with their increased opportunities to shape the service. Going forward the service should further develop planned approaches to self evaluation using recognised national frameworks.

Staff were familiar with the service's policies and procedures, and implemented them effectively. During our inspection process we asked management to review and update the service's child protection and medication policies. This was quickly actioned and shared with staff.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

We recommend that the head teacher and staff team continue to develop the format of personal plans to ensure plans clearly identify how to meet the health, wellbeing and safety needs of each child attending the service. The plan should be a working document which is kept up-to-date with significant events and details and reviewed with parents.

This is in order to ensure that the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my 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 recommendation was made on 3 February 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation. We did however suggest ways that information could be more effectively stored for easy access.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the service improves arrangements for managing medication. In particular consideration should be given to:

(i) storage and accessibility of medication and medical supplies and written information about its administration,
(ii) ensuring permission for administration is recorded appropriately and is reviewed at least every three months,
(iii) ensuring sufficient information is recorded in relation to potential triggers for conditions such as asthma, and the symptoms children would display for 'as required' medication,
(iv) recording clear information outlining the steps to be taken if the administration of medication does not have the required outcome, and
(v) developing the written medication policy and procedure and systems to monitor and record compliance with these.

This is to ensure that the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'Any treatment or intervention I receive is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This recommendation was made on 3 February 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation. We have however asked the service to ensure that potential signs and symptoms are always clearly recorded.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the service continues to develop child protection policies and procedures that clearly outline information sharing protocols and recording procedures.

This is to ensure that the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

This recommendation was made on 3 February 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

We recommend that quality assurance processes are reviewed and further developed through:

(i) continued and regular use of 'How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare?' to support self-evaluation,
(ii) reference to the 'Health and Social Care Standards, my support, my life' to become familiar with the expected outcomes for children and to evaluate practice against these,
(iii) further developing auditing processes relating in particular to medication and records relating to safeguarding,
(iv) increased frequency of playroom observations and staff practice, with clearly recorded areas for development and monitoring and recording of progress, and
(v) ensuring all staff are involved in meaningful and systematic evaluation of progress and the effectiveness of the centre's work in promoting positive outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11), and

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This recommendation was made on 3 February 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had taken appropriate action to meet this recommendation.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
4 Dec 2019	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
1 Oct 2018	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 2 - Weak
28 Feb 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed
27 Jan 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
11 Mar 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 3 - Adequate 4 - Good 4 - Good
3 Jun 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed
18 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment	5 - Very good 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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