Annick Primary School and Early Years Class Day Care of Children

Bensley Rise
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Telephone: 01294 211 654

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 March 2024

Service provided by:
North Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003327

Service no:
CS2003016025

About the service

Annick early years class is a day care service for children and is located within the grounds of Annick Primary school. The service is provided from one large playroom with access to an adjoining outdoor space.

The service is located in a residential area in Irvine, North Ayrshire and is close to local schools, shops, parks and other local amenities.

The service is provided by North Ayrshire Council and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 52 children. Of those, no more than 12 are aged 2 to 3 years and no more than 40 are aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 March 2024 between 9:30 and 18:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 nine people using the service and 15 of their families
- spoke with 8 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and engaged in their learning
- Staff had a warm, nurturing and caring approach
- Children experienced high quality facilities that met their needs
- Families were meaningfully involved in the life of the setting
- Staff worked well to ensure children's individual needs were met
- The service was led well by the management team
- The service should continue to further develop self-evaluation processes

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?	5 - Very 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced responsive, nurturing care and support from a committed staff team. It was evident through our observations that nurture principles were embedded in staffs' practice and that children's rights were at the heart of the service. Staff interacted with children in a calm, warm and sensitive way. This meant that children experienced positive relationships.

We observed consistent practice from all staff as they positioned themselves at children's level. Staff interacted with the children in a playful manner and actively listened to them. They effectively supported children to make choices, self-regulate their emotions and they respected children's rights. They asked permission from children before offering support with their personal care. The caring and respectful ethos created by staff resulted in children feeling safe, secure, and confident.

Personal plans were in place for all children which reflected their needs and stages of development. Staff knew all children well and used plans to ensure children were progressing in all aspects of their development. This ensured children's care needs were well supported.

Management and staff effectively supported children when they required additional support. For example, some children required specific support in relation to their language and communication skills. Small focus groups had been established to ensure children received the targeted support they needed. This was carried out in a sensitive and inclusive way, and older children were invited to join the groups as role models. This supported children's needs a sensitive and inclusive way.

Prior to lunch, children met with their key worker to talk about their morning and participate in a story or game. This was a quiet and calm experience which allowed the children to relax in preparation for lunch.

Staff accompanied children to the dining area and sat alongside them. Children were encouraged to self-serve their food and pour their own water. This supported them to develop their independence skills. The lunch experience was unhurried and relaxed which provided a sociable experience for children. When children had finished their meal, they queued to clear their plates which caused some disruption. We discussed this with the management team who told us that they would review this. This would ensure positive outcomes for children.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were actively engaged in their play and learning whilst having fun. They were confident and independent as they accessed a wide range of high quality, stimulating and challenging play and learning experiences.

Children led their own learning and chose where they wanted to play. They could freely access the large outdoor play area and were able to independently organise themselves to change into their outdoor clothes.

This provided children with the opportunity to become more independent.

Learning areas were well planned and resourced to support children's learning. This allowed children to independently access to a wide range of resources that supported their interests and supported them to learn through play.

Learning areas were rich in literacy and numeracy resources which supported children's learning. We observed staff reading with children and using 'iPads' to help children access their own online learning journals. As a result, children were developing their skills in literacy and numeracy.

Children particularly enjoyed the arts and crafts area. They could paint, draw and enjoy messy play. For example, children used their creative skills and imagination to explore their own thoughts and ideas using paint and water. Staff supported children by listening and responding to their conversations. This meant that children experienced positive play and learning opportunities.

The outdoor play area provided children with a wide range of learning experiences. Children were playing with sand, water, 'loose parts' materials, in the mud kitchen and they were having fun with their friends. This allowed them to access fresh air and play imaginatively and energetically.

Staff supported children to participate in risky play. They encouraged children to take small risks while ensuring their safety and praising them for their achievements. This provided children with challenging and exciting opportunities to build their confidence and physical skills.

To ensure children were progressing well, staff effectively used observations to monitor children's learning and development. Trackers were also used to measure children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This resulted in positive outcomes for children.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

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

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

Children could choose where they wanted to play. They could independently access indoor and outdoor play areas safely which allowed them to make choices.

The entrance was warm and welcoming and included a cloak room for children to hang their jackets and bags, giving them a sense of ownership. There was plenty of natural light and ventilation throughout the service. Natural colours were used throughout the setting and displays were well presented using hessian and artificial decorative plants. This created a calm and inviting ethos.

The indoor playroom reflected a broad range of learning opportunities and experiences for all children. Learning areas were well defined and organised with soft furnishings, natural furniture and real-life resources which created a calm space for children to regulate their emotions. This meant that children's emotional wellbeing was well supported.

A climbing frame situated in the playroom meant that children could enjoy physical play indoors. This was well used by the younger children as they participated in active play. This supported children's physical

development.

Children could choose when they wanted to have their snack. They selected their own fruit and portions which helped them develop their self-help skills. A water cooler was available to ensure children were kept hydrated.

Children had the opportunity to play and learn outdoors in all weathers. A rich outdoor play area offered children lots of opportunity for energetic and active play. They had fun running up and down the hill, jumping, climbing, and playing on the swings. As a result, children were developing their physical skills while learning to keep themselves safe.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service was an integral part of the school and shared the same vision, values and aims. There was a strong focus and commitment to embed their values into daily practice, including nurture principles, respectful relationships and children's rights. We observed a warm, caring and nurturing environment in which staff promoted and respected children's rights. As a result children felt included and respected.

The management team and staff were committed to providing a high-quality service for children and families and this was evident during our conversations. Staff spoke about how they wanted to continuously improve the service and how this would impact on positive outcomes for children.

Families were encouraged to participate in the life of the service. Wall displays showed examples of families were involved, for example through 'stay and play' sessions. Families were also asked to comment on the learning environment, and comments were documented and displayed for families to see. Questionnaires were sent out to all families asking about the quality of the children's experience and relationships with staff. Most families responded, and feedback was overall positive. This helped families feel included.

Quality assurance systems were in place for staff to evaluate the service. This included an improvement plan that was shared with the school. Whilst this reflected some priorities for the early years class, we asked the management team to further develop their own self-evaluation processes that reflected the early years class. The management team recognised that the service was in the early stages of developing formal self-evaluation processes for the early years class and had identified plans which would include staff, children, and families. This would support positive outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

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

4.3. Staff deployment

The team worked well together to support the needs of the children in their care. They were committed to the service and ensured children's rights were respected and promoted. They communicated well

throughout the day and exchanged important information about children's wellbeing needs. This meant that children's rights and needs were supported.

Staff breaks were managed well and considered children's needs. For example, staff stayed with the children during the lunchtime experience to ensure continuity of care and to ensure that children were fully supported. This supported children's emotional wellbeing.

Staff were deployed in learning areas according to their skills, knowledge, and experience. They were motivated and committed to ensuring that children made progress through quality learning experiences. Overall, staff were skilled and interacted with children to extend their learning through open ended questions and helping them to problem solve. This supported children to make progress in their learning.

The management team had defined roles and responsibilities. This included supporting staff with their curriculum knowledge and practice. Staff told us that they felt supported, and they valued the direction and guidance offered. There was a culture of continuous improvement and staff were committed to participating in ongoing training and lead developments within the service. These developments were identified and agreed during professional review and development programmes. This meant that children benefited from a team that was committed to improving the quality of the service.

Further training and development opportunities had been identified for the staff team. Staff had different experience, skills, and knowledge, and this was recognised by the management team. We spoke about the benefits of development opportunities and training that would support the staff team to develop their skills and knowledge in early childhood practice. This will help improve outcomes for children.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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