Corsehill Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

Fergushill Road
Kilwinning
KA13 7GW

Telephone: 01294 552 418

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 March 2021

Service provided by:
North Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003327

Service no:
CS2003016033

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

This service has been registered since 2002.

Corsehill Early Years Centre is a daycare service for children provided by North Ayrshire Council. The service operates both a part and full day service during school term time. Located within Corsehill Primary School, the Early Years Centre has its own entrance, toilet facilities and outdoor play area. The head teacher manages the service and supervises the staff.

Corsehill Early Years Centre is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 55 children as follows:

- No more than 15 children aged 0 to 3 years
- 40 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

A full statement of aims is available to people who use the service.

This was a focused inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the Covid-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

During this inspection, we carried out an unannounced visit to the service over three hours on Wednesday 10 March 2021. Following that we used virtual technology to view the environment, and to meet with staff and the management team. We also sought the views of parents and carers through telephone discussion

What people told us

The head teacher provided us with contact details of six parents who were willing to speak with us. We spoke, by telephone, with three parents in total. All were very happy with the service. They felt the service communicated well with them during the Covid-19 pandemic. Information about changes to guidance and practice was shared. Parents also liked that the service provided information and suggestions for learning experiences that they could share with their children at home. They felt that staff had very positive relationships with them and their children, and they liked that there was a consistent staff team. We asked parents about access to outdoor play and learning. All were happy that this happened regularly.

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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good

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

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic? 4 - Good

5.1 Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during Covid-19.

- Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in the early learning and childcare setting.
- Effective communication with families enabling responsive care to support to children through the changing circumstances.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported to a good standard. They benefited from positive relationships with staff, who were kind and caring in their interactions. This helped children to feel safe, secure and confident.

Children were happy and settled. They had fun playing with the available resources within the spaces available to their bubbles. We did however see that some children would benefit from a broader range of toys and equipment. During our inspection, management decided to increase the size of bubbles, which will result in children having access to more space and resources.

Staff were aware of the importance of supporting children's emotional wellbeing during the pandemic. Children were supported to understand the changes to their childcare experiences. They will continue to benefit from further opportunities to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and cope with emotions resulting from the pandemic.

Children were supported to have a positive return to nursery because of effective communication between the service and families during closure. Clear information was shared with parents about changes to nursery operation, and children's routines, prior to re-opening. Parents were able to share this with their children and told us that this helped children to have a positive transition back to nursery. Parents were also asked to provide information about updates to their children's care and learning needs. Staff took account of this information.

Ongoing effective communication with parents helped to maintain positive relationships. The service overcame challenges presented by the need to limit contact by routinely sharing information about children's experiences and learning via social media, individual phone calls and e-mails. Parents told us that they felt confident their children were being well cared for because of these approaches.

Children were protected from harm by staff who understood their roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection. The service had good arrangements to work with other agencies to support children's wellbeing. Regular child protection training and updates ensured staff felt confident about addressing any areas of concern. Staff recognised the additional stresses that the pandemic may place on families. They recognised that some may need additional support because of this. Going forward the service should consider developing the written policy and procedure to reflect this.

5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.

- Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection.

Following the onsite inspection on Wednesday 10 March 2021, we raised concerns with regards to infection prevention and control within Corsehill Early Years Centre, as a result of our discussions with the management team and subsequent follow up virtual site inspection, improvements had been rapidly made and processes put in place to monitor them. Therefore, we agreed that following the onsite inspection the service had good infection prevention and control practices. A range of policies and procedures to reflect Scottish Government guidance: Coronavirus: early learning and childcare services (the guidance) were in place and management had ensured they had been monitored and updated.

Whilst the written policies and procedures relating to operating an early learning and childcare service during Covid-19 contained some good information, they did not always fully reflect the guidance. These should continue to be reviewed and further developed to provide staff with clear and consistent information to support their practice.

The service had introduced different entrance times for each of the areas to limit contact in line with the guidance. Parents spoke highly of this system and the good communication around it. Staff were aware that they should maintain a two-metre physical distance from each other. Careful planning of staff breaks supported this. Parents did not access the premises when children were present. Staff were aware of the enhanced cleaning procedures and protocols to manage the environment safely. The management team should continue to robustly monitor the effectiveness of the enhanced cleaning procedures and protocols.

Children were supported to have good hygiene procedures. Staff should continue to encourage children to wash hands regularly, in order to decrease the risk of the spread of infection.

Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the guidance that should be followed to reduce the risk of infection through discussion and some practice. Good practice was not however consistently evident in their practice. We noted issues in relation to use of sinks for handwashing, the environment being cluttered and storage of facemasks and handwashing frequency. When we raised these concerns with the management team these were effectively and quickly addressed, showing us that there was capacity to make improvements. Management should continue to plan and implement a robust monitoring system to ensure consistency in infection prevention and control practice. This will help keep children safe and reduce the risk of infection. (See area for improvement 1.)

5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during Covid-19.

- Staffing arrangements meet the needs of children and families.
- Staff are well supported and confident.

Good staffing arrangements were in place to meet children's needs. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the service had arranged additional hours for cleaning staff. This freed up time for early learning and childcare staff to focus on children, whilst allowing recommended enhanced cleaning to take place.

Parents spoke very highly of staff and management. They felt that they were always approachable and friendly and shared information with them effectively.

Staff felt well supported by the management team. They told us that they felt able to approach them with any concerns, and that they had been proactive in ensuring their wellbeing throughout the pandemic. Staff worked well together and supported each other. This helped to contribute to a happy atmosphere.

Training had taken place which helped staff develop an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have however highlighted aspects of practice that needed to be improved. A training plan should be devised to address these areas, and robust monitoring procedures should be planned and implemented to evaluate its effectiveness and impact. (See area for improvement 1.)

Areas for improvement

1. A robust monitoring system should continue to be planned and implemented to ensure consistency in practice that will keep children safe and reduce the risk of infection.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.17)

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 service provider should review and update their administration, recording and storage of medication in line with current guidance.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - standard 3: health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 29 June 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement was not assessed at this inspection.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	4 - Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	4 - Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	4 - Good

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