Annbank Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

39 Annbank Road
Mossblown
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Telephone: 01292 612 493

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 October 2024

Service provided by:
South Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003269

Service no:
CS2003016141

About the service

Annbank Early Years Centre is a daycare service for children provided by South Ayrshire Council. The service is located within the grounds of Annbank Primary School.

Annbank Primary School and Early Years Centre serves the villages of Mossblown, Annbank and area beyond which extends to Auchincruive, Gadgirth and Sandyford Toll, and to roughly mid-way between the school and the villages of Stair and Tarbolton.

Staff provide early learning and childcare for up to 93 children, 15 of whom are aged from 2 to 3 years and 78 children from 3 years to under 5 years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 22 October and Wednesday 23 October 2024. 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 children attending the service and their families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents improvement plan, policies and procedures and children's records.

Key messages

- Confident, happy children at the heart of the service.
- A well-organised and well-resourced service.
- Caring staff team, working well together.
- Good links and partnerships with other agencies and the local community.
- Strong leadership team effectively supporting very good outcomes for the children and families of Mossblown and Annbank.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very 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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

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.

Children were being cared for by a warm and nurturing staff team and as a result were confident, secure and developing friendships. Relationships were important within the setting and the staff team had been working to form partnerships with families, one another and the wider community. Parents told us: "I have a great relationship with all staff they are so warm, friendly and approachable. Happy to take time to discuss any concerns".

Staff knew the children in their care well and were sensitive to their needs and preferences and this enabled them to provide support in ways which were appropriate for most children. All children in the setting had a personal plan which was based on information gathered from parents when they first started. The personal planning format had been developed to ensure that children were at the centre, and this meant that parents were involved in their regular reviews and information sharing. Whilst personal plans did contain relevant information about children's health, welfare and safety needs, it was not clear that they were being reviewed when there was a significant change. We have asked the setting to ensure that information, like pastoral notes, is used consistently when planning for individual next steps and that plans are reviewed when there are changes, like a new baby in the family.

Staff engaged with children very well. They praised them and comforted them appropriately. The setting was communication friendly which meant that staff were using a variety of ways of encouraging children to express themselves and this included Makaton. Staff listened to children, sought their opinions and answered questions in an understandable way, which helped create a respectful environment which valued children and their families.

Snack and mealtimes were sociable occasions when staff encouraged children to chat and share their thoughts. Children were involved in planning the snack menu and were encouraged to take responsibility by being helpful. They were well supported to make choices and develop independence. Children's lunchtime experiences were varied, depending on which room they were eating in. We observed times when staff focussed on tasks rather than children and we have asked the setting to monitor this. A mealtime tracking format had been developed, which enabled staff to make sure that children were experiencing balanced and nutritious meals across the week. The setting should continue to develop this and ensure that information is meaningfully and consistently recorded and shared.

Family involvement was an area of focus for the service, and they were providing a variety of opportunities for parents to be included in their child's experience. As well as regular newsletters and daily chats, parents were welcome to join in with play sessions, including a sensory play session which took place during our visit. Parents told us "Staff listen when you approach them and show they are listening and value any queries or questions."

Medication was stored safely and easily available for staff. Policies and procedures were in place, and we have asked the setting to make sure that essential medication always accompanies children and that procedures include checking when staff are not sure that the requested dosage matches stated guidelines.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

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.

Children were having fun as they enjoyed high quality play and learning experiences. We heard laughter and happy chat throughout our visit, as staff supported children to be curious, experiment and try things out for themselves. Parents told us their child "always enjoys learning and the ways they make it fun while developing skills".

Children were offered a wide variety of play and learning opportunities throughout the day. In particular, children had very good opportunities to engage in activities developing their emergent literacy and numeracy skills, and this included outdoors. Children were able to play by themselves or with friends and chose where they wanted to play. Children's creativity and curiosity were well supported through sensory activities like sand, water and different types of dough. We saw children making soup outside in the mud kitchen, where they were experimenting with real ingredients.

Planning approaches were child-centred and followed children's interests. Staff responded very well to children's interests, needs and questions. They had created a variety of activity boxes which supported individual children to settle and feel secure. Children's individual interests were also followed up, for example staff enabled children who were interested in shooting stars to find out more about the milky way using both digital and creative resources. Staff engaged with children throughout the day; however, we observed that questioning tended to be about gathering information rather than extending or challenging children's learning. We have suggested that staff be encouraged to develop their confidence in using more open-ended questions which help children to problem solve and be creative.

Children's learning was celebrated in a variety of ways, including personal learning folders, wall displays and chats with parents. Effective tracking of children's progress enabled staff to plan for their next steps and interests and this information was shared with parents regularly. Helpful planning documents had been developed which supported staff by providing them with the information they needed.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through the settings connections to the local community. These included visits to local parks, the library and extended visits to the nearby woods. Parents told us that the setting "has a wonderful play garden full of different types of toys and play experiences. They also take children to different play areas within the local community".

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

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.

Children were being cared for in a welcoming, spacious and bright environment which provided them with a wide variety of play and learning opportunities. The layout of furnishings, toys and materials enabled children to make choices about their day. The setting was clean with no clutter, resources were all accessible to children and were in good condition. Children could free flow to a range of resources outside and inside for most of the day, except lunchtime. They were able to be active both indoors and out, as well as rest and

take part in quiet activities like listening to stories and looking at books. Parents told us "My child can go outside at any opportunity of the day and enjoys being outside a lot".

The environment was safe and secure for both children and staff. Access to the building was controlled and monitored. Staff completed daily health and safety checks, and used information from their monitoring systems effectively to make changes which would maintain safety. Children were also learning to keep themselves safe, for example they were involved in assessing risk and encouraged to make good choices. Staff had used the Care Inspectorate's SIMOA safety campaign to encourage children to keep themselves safe as well.

Children had access to a wide range of resources which supported them to be curious and have fun both indoors and outside. A variety of open-ended materials were available which supported children to problem solve and be creative. We saw children having fun on a slide they had created outdoors. Children's artwork and comments were on display throughout the setting, showing that their creations were valued and respected.

The environment was clean. Infection control procedures were in place and there were appropriate handwashing facilities available. We observed children following good handwashing practice and that they were reminded to do this before meals and when coming back into the building. We discussed the use of gloves during food preparation with the management team and have asked them to remind staff about good practice guidance for the use of protective equipment and storage of children's possessions in the nappy changing area.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality Assurance and improvement are led well.

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.

The whole team were committed to delivering a high-quality service for children and families. Staff and management were welcoming, approachable and engaged well with the inspection process. A shared vision for the setting had been developed with families which clearly set out their aspirations for all. Children had been included in this, with the creation of Rainbow Promises which set out their expectations. Parents told us, "Annbank EYC is an inclusive and amazing learning space that makes sure children's needs are met".

A meaningful improvement plan was in place, which was based on effective quality assurance processes, like practice audits, feedback from children and families, supervision and professional development reviews and self-evaluation.

Self-evaluation was very well used within the service and had been developed to focus on what staff "see, feel and hear". This meant that staff reflected on their practice in a meaningful way and were encouraged to take on championship roles based on their identified skills, interests and experiences.

The management team work together well and led the process effectively. Discussion showed that they had a very good understanding of what was happening in their service and were committed to ensuring its continuous improvement. A quality assurance calendar was in place and had been shared with parents. Whilst monitoring of staff practice did happen, this would benefit from a greater focus on the impact and

outcomes for children, for example focusing on the impact of behaviour management procedures would show how well children were being listened to.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

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.

Children were being cared for by a caring, committed and professional staff team. Across the team there was a wide mix of skills and experiences, which helped them to work together to meet children's needs effectively. Interactions between staff, children and parents were respectful, friendly and kind. Parents told us: "amazing staff, well organised and I cannot thank the whole team enough".

Staff were deployed appropriately throughout the day and this meant that there were the right number of staff available to meet children's needs. Staff observed what was happening in the setting and moved around to ensure that they were in the right place to support children, for example by playing games and reading stories. Staff responded very well to children's questions and enabled them to explore and be curious. This meant that children were secure, valued and trusted the adults caring for them.

The staff team were keen to learn and develop their practice. Training plans were in place for new members of staff, which were based on the National Induction Resource and this ensured that they had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities for ensuring the wellbeing of children. All members of staff were supported to attend training and learning events which enabled them to follow their interests and meet their professional registration requirements. A reference library of practice documents had been created for staff, using QR codes and this meant that they had easy access to the information they needed.

Management of the setting knew their team well and supported them to develop their skills and interests. Regular support and supervision sessions meant that they had the opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify areas they would like to focus on, for example the development of block play and storytelling. Staff told us that they felt well supported and strongly agreed that they had the resources to help them support children and that there were always enough staff to meet children's needs.

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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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