Muirkirk Early Childhood Centre
Day Care of Children

Muirkirk Primary School and Early Childhood Centre
Burns Avenue
Muirkirk
Cumnock
KA18 3RH

Telephone: 01290 661008

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 September 2018

Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000142

Service no:
CS2003016957

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Muirkirk Early Childhood Centre is registered to provide a day care service to a maximum of 40 children:

- 10 children 2 to under 3 years old.
- 30 children 3 to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is provided by East Ayrshire Council and managed by the head teacher of Murkirk Primary School. The senior early learning and childcare practitioner assumes day-to-day responsibility for the work of the service and liaises with the head teacher over management decisions.

The service is based in the new build primary school in the village of Muirkirk, East Ayrshire. The nursery consists of a large play area which is divided into different play zones, a quiet room, a 2 year old room, an upstairs mezzanine play area, a kitchen and a laundry room. The rooms have their own adjoining toilet facilities and a nappy changing facility is available. There is direct access to a large enclosed outdoor play area. The service also makes good use of other areas within the school and the local community.

A copy of the service aims and objectives are available.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives. We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right for every child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of 'Getting It Right For Every Child'. They are: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

What people told us

Throughout this report, any reference to 'parents' also includes carers and guardians.

During our inspection we spoke with approximately 15 children who were eager to tell us about their time in the centre. The children told us they enjoyed attending and they enjoyed playing with their friends. We observed the children enjoy taking part in a range of very good quality activities.

Prior to inspection, we sent 12 care standards questionnaires to the Head Teacher to distribute to parents using the service. We received 8 completed questionnaires prior to this inspection. Comments made included:

"Staff are friendly and supportive and go out of their way to accommodate the children's needs"

"Murkirk Early Childhood Centre and staff are excellent. I cannot fault it, I am more than happy with my daughters progress and she loves her time there"

"Muirkirk nursery is a great happy place for my child and his friends. Always smiling teachers on arrival and happy kids coming out"

"My daughter thoroughly enjoys attending Muirkirk nursery. The teachers are approachable and very helpful. The nursery and the gardens are fantastic, where the children can really use their imaginations"

"My son loves nursery school the teachers are perfect, nursery is very nice with loads to play with"

"It's lovely to see the teachers and staff connecting with your child and being affectionate with them. Overall I am delighted with the nursery, the service and especially the staff".

During inspection we spoke with six parents who all felt they had good opportunities to be involved in the nursery. They told us they were very happy with the care their child received.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

What the service does well

Management and staff had created a welcoming and friendly ethos, where children appeared happy, settled and relaxed. We found the service to have maintained a very good standard of practice in meeting the children's care and support needs. Staff were caring, nurturing and responsive to the individual needs of children and managed transitions well. This was reflected in observations during inspection, through discussion and feedback from parents. Relationships throughout were very positive and staff spoke highly of the support received from one another and management.

Effective partnerships established with other professionals had led to targeted intervention and support improving outcomes for children within the service. Good links had been established with parents through engaging parents in a high number of activities. Parents spoke very highly of the service.

We found staff had a clear understanding of their role and responsibility in keeping children safe and all staff had recently attended in-house child protection training. The management team were very supportive of staff training needs and a training calendar was in place to support a culture of continuous improvement.

Resources were fun, stimulating and appropriate for the developmental stage of the children and encouraged different types of play, such as creative, imaginative and loose parts play. We found that the free flow access to the outdoor learning environment enriched the opportunities for children on a daily basis. We observed children developing key skills outdoors, through testing out their own ideas, exploring and investigating natural materials. We observed the children to be confident, active and engaged throughout the inspection process, with many children leading their own learning and making choices.

The service's commitment to continuous improvement was an identified strength. The effective leadership encouraged and supported the staff team to be innovative in their approaches to improving outcomes for children. This helped foster a staff team that was motivated, reflective and forward thinking. A range of monitoring systems, that included consultation with everyone involved in the service, ensured consistently positive outcomes for children and their families.

What the service could do better

During our inspection we sampled children's personal learning and care plans. We found that format for personal planning in the 2 year old room did not have a clear area for recording parental inputs. We also discussed methods of recording information including relevant conversations to ensure chronologies are maintained. The management team agreed to review the areas for development we discussed.

Samples of completed children's medication records highlighted that they should be expanded. For example, if a medication has to be given on a 'when required' basis, it is important that staff know the symptoms it has been prescribed for and that these are recorded in the child's care record. Staff must also record their reasons for administering it.

Throughout our inspection we did not observe the children accessing drinking water in the outdoor environment. Staff told us that they had water and milk available for the children at snack time and that children could ask them for a drink if they needed one. We have asked that the staff regularly prompt children to access drinking water. We have also asked the service to make drinking water readily available to children both indoors and outdoors (recommendation 1).

During our inspection visit, we saw that the staff appropriately recorded accidents within the nursery. However, we found that the service did not audit the accident/incident forms to identify patterns of incidents that they could use to identify and implement improvements to prevent reoccurrence. We have asked the service to audit accidents and incidents and where necessary take appropriate steps to reduce future risks.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Muirkirk Early Childhood Centre should have drinking water readily available to children indoors and outdoors.

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

Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
1 Dec 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
10 Oct 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good
3 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 4 - Good
3 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 3 - Adequate

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