Dailly Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

81 Main Street
Dailly
Girvan
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Telephone: 01465 716 807

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 October 2025

Service provided by:
South Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003269

Service no:
CS2003017393

About the service

Dailly Early Years Centre is a day care of children service located in a rural village setting in South Ayrshire. The service is provided by South Ayrshire Council. The service operates from a dedicated space within Dailly Primary School and provides a care service to a maximum of 30 children aged two years to those not attending school.

Children have access to a playroom and a secure outdoor area directly connected to the indoor space. The layout supports free-flow access between indoors and outdoors.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 and 23 October 2025 between 09:00 and 17:30. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke and spent time with children using the service and eight of their friends and family.
- Received 36 completed questionnaires.
- Spoke with eight staff and the management team.
- Received feedback from the inspection volunteer who spoke with six people using the service.
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with two visiting professionals.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

• Children were cared for with warmth, respect and understanding, helping them feel safe, happy and emotionally secure.

• Play was meaningful and supported learning, with children actively engaged in activities that promoted creativity, independence and confidence.

• Staff planned responsively, using observations and children's interests to guide learning, though some planning could be more personalised.

• Children's achievements were celebrated, helping them feel proud and recognised both at nursery and at home.

• Families were welcomed and involved, with strong communication and opportunities to share learning and feedback.

• Leadership was strong and improvement-focused, creating a positive culture where staff felt supported and children's wellbeing was prioritised.

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

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Leadership and Management of Staff and Resources

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Leaders demonstrated a strong commitment to creating a nurturing, inclusive and improvement-focused environment. A clear and shared vision was developed collaboratively with staff, children and families, promoting values such as kindness, honesty, supportiveness and fairness. These values were consistently reflected in daily practice and mirrored in children's respectful interactions, helping children build respectful relationships and feel secure. One parent shared, "The staff are excellent and have invested a lot of time and energy in the nursery setting."

The vision aligned well with national frameworks, including the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), and supported children's rights and emotional wellbeing. Families were actively involved in shaping the vision and values, helping ensure the ethos of the service reflected their experiences and aspirations. Leaders ensured that children felt included and valued, contributing to a strong sense of belonging.

A culture of continuous improvement was evident. Staff engaged in reflective practice using tools such as Clarity Canvas and Rapid Action Plans. These approaches were becoming embedded and supported staff to identify priorities and take ownership of improvement planning. The service improvement plan included targeted actions for the Early Years Centre, recognising the importance of early learning and care. Whilst helping children access richer play and learning opportunities.

Changes were based on evidence and were leading to improved outcomes for children. For example, home learning packs were enhanced following feedback from families, and digital resources were developed to support learning at home. A parent commented, "We have regular meetings to discuss the children's learning and goals." This showed that families were engaged in supporting the progress of their children.

Safe recruitment practices were in place, and staff were appropriately registered with governing bodies. A clear induction process supported new staff, and wellbeing initiatives such as sound baths and book swaps contributed to a confident and stable workforce. Staff told us they felt supported by leadership and valued the positive working environment. As a result children were cared for by a consistent, skilled and confident staff team that supported trusting relationships that promoted children's emotional security.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children benefited from a play-rich environment where their wellbeing, creativity and learning were actively supported. They were engaged in meaningful play both indoors and outdoors, demonstrating confidence, curiosity and enjoyment. We observed children laughing, collaborating and exploring, such as working together on the rocking seesaw, creating playdough cakes, and drawing for the "unusual farm" display. These experiences promoted emotional wellbeing, social skills and creative thinking.

Children had freedom to choose their activities, which supported independence and decision-making. Block play and dinosaur-themed activities encouraged focused engagement and extended conversations. Staff had begun implementing training on provocations to spark curiosity and creativity, in line with the improvement plan. Continued development of provocations will further enhance learning.

Planning was beginning to incorporate a balance of free play, guided play and structured play. Staff were supported by the principal teacher to embed reflective practice and identify next steps in learning. This work was at an early stage, and further development will help ensure planning is flexible and responsive to children's ideas and interests.

Observations were shared with families through e-learning journals, helping to build strong connections between home and nursery. One parent commented, "The nursery implements great communication about each individual child and their learning plan. Everything is well documented and we have regular update meetings with parents." While staff knew children well, some observations lacked depth in identifying individual needs. For example, one child had a target related to writing, although their interests lay elsewhere. Staff should continue to use observations to inform planning that reflects each child's strengths and interests.

Children's achievements were recognised and celebrated meaningfully. The achievement wall highlighted personal milestones, such as sleeping in their own bed, and school assemblies celebrated values-based achievements like 'Pupil of the Week.' A parent shared, "My child is nurtured and treated as an individual... [They] can learn through play and develop their skills and confidence."

Interactions between staff and children were warm and respectful. Staff were observed engaging in play, such as exploring shadows with torches, which supported children's curiosity. Continued focus on guided play and responsive questioning will help children develop deeper understanding and confidence in expressing ideas.

Children are supported to achieve — 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children experienced warm, responsive care that supported their emotional wellbeing and development. Staff consistently treated children with kindness, compassion and respect. This was mirrored in children's interactions, such as calmly sharing water and serving dishes at lunch. One parent shared, "It's a fabulous learning and nurturing environment for the children."
Care routines were tailored to individual needs. Children accessed rest, toileting and meals in ways that suited them, with staff offering support sensitively when needed. For example, children chose to rest quietly after lunch, using blankets in the soft area. Staff should continue to refresh this space to encourage self-regulation and relaxation. A parent commented, "My child is nurtured and treated as an individual... [They] can learn through play and develop their skills and confidence."

Children's emotions and behaviours were well understood and supported. Staff applied nurture principles consistently, helping children feel safe and emotionally secure. We observed confident children who were happy to be in the nursery, forming friendships and engaging positively with staff and peers. Parents shared, "My children love going to nursery," and "My children are always excited and happy to be going to nursery."

Transitions between activities were calm and well-managed, contributing to a settled and predictable environment. Staff supported children effectively during transitions between home and nursery, and between play and mealtimes.

Personal plans were in place for all children and reviewed termly with families. While staff knew children well and daily practice reflected this, written plans did not always fully capture individual interests and needs. Staff should continue to ensure plans are personalised and used meaningfully to guide practice. Children would benefit from being more involved in their own planning. One parent said, "The nursery implements great communication about each individual child and their learning plan. Everything is well documented and we have regular update meetings with parents."

Wellbeing indicators were considered in personal planning. To strengthen this further, staff should ensure these are used meaningfully and not as a checklist. Another parent shared, "We have regular meetings to discuss the children's learning and goals."

Strong partnerships with families enhanced children's care and learning. Families felt welcomed and described positive relationships with staff. Communication was regular and two-way, with newsletters and opportunities for feedback. Staff should continue to explore creative ways to gather views from busy families to ensure engagement remains meaningful and effective.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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