Bradshaw Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

22 Bradshaw Street
Saltcoats
KA21 5HR

Telephone: 01294 471 576

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 November 2025

Service provided by:
Bradshaw Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003000856

Service no:
CS2004076252

About the service

Bradshaw Nursery is a privately owned service, operating out of an ex church building, which is located near the town centre within the coastal town of Saltcoats, North Ayrshire. The service operates Monday to Friday providing sessional and full day care from 8am to 6pm, 50 weeks of the year. A maximum of 65 children aged 0 - 12 years can be accommodated at any one time. Of this number no more than 6 children can be under 2 years of age and no more than 10 children can be aged 2 -3 years. The layout of the building comprised of separate ground floor level playrooms, toilets and an enclosed outdoor space.

There were 75 children registered with the service at the time of the inspection. On day one of the inspection, 47 children were present in the morning session and 33 children were present in the afternoon session. On day two of the inspection 43 children were present in the morning session and 27 children were present in the afternoon session.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11 November 2025 between 09:30 and 17:50 and 12 November 2025 between 09:30 and 17:30. 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:

- gained feedback from 15 parent/carers through Microsoft form questionnaires
- gained feedback from eight staff through Microsoft form questionnaires
- spoke with three people using the service
- spoke with nine staff and management
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with other 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.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children were happy, content, and having fun.
- Staff had developed positive relationships with families, supporting engagement and community involvement.
- Further developing mealtime experiences would support more positive outcomes for children.
- Further embedding monitoring, self-evaluation, and quality assurance more fully would strengthen a reflective culture within the service.
- Personal plans should be used as working documents to support positive outcomes for children.

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	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

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

Leadership 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.

Quality indicator: Leadership of staff and resources

The manager consulted parents on revisions to the service's vision, values, and aims, but there was limited consultation with staff and children, thereby reducing inclusivity. Embedding the vision across the service should support a more reflective culture and provide a clearer measure of how well aims are being achieved.

The manager had begun monitoring processes, but some records lacked detail, consistency, and clear focus, limiting evidence of feedback and outcomes. Emphasising children's experiences and ensuring audits reflect practice would strengthen monitoring and support sustained improvements. Expanding peer observation would also support professional development and shared learning.

Audits had been completed for accidents and incidents and audits were used to assess whether any changes to the environment were required to reduce the likelihood of recurrence. Extending this approach to all incidents, would strengthen the service's ability to identify patterns, address underlying causes, and implement preventative measures. Some accident forms lacked essential detail, for example, sampled records did not confirm whether parents had been contacted or whether follow-up checks were carried out in line with the service's policy and procedures. Strengthening the scope and detail of audits should ensure consistent practice, clearer communication with families, and ensure children's safety and well-being.

Environmental safety was supported through secure entry systems, attendance registers, and clear communication during transitions. Safety concerns identified during inspection, such as loose parts and tyres posing escape and fire risks, were promptly addressed. This demonstrated the service's capacity for improvement, as risks were acted upon quickly and effectively. Sustaining this responsiveness through ongoing monitoring and proactive risk assessments will further strengthen safeguarding and ensure children's safety and well-being.

Risk assessments were in place, and children were involved in assessing play areas. However, although the manager had updated and signed risk assessment they were not consistently dated or signed by staff, limiting evidence of staff awareness and accountability. Some areas of the setting were cluttered, including fire exits and cloakrooms, which posed potential safety risks. High chairs were stored in children's cloakroom areas, and tables were placed near evacuation trolleys and fire doors. We asked that the service improve the storage of equipment to ensure safe and accessible spaces. Strengthening the recording and staff involvement in risk assessments would ensure safer practice, clearer accountability, and improved safeguarding outcomes for children.

Staff were involved in self-evaluation and were developing their reflective skills. Positive, solution-focused language, such as "we do this well, and it would be even better if," was encouraged, which helped staff reflect on practice. An interactive self-evaluation wall was in place, but lacked tools such as pens or post-its to encourage staff contributions. Enhancing accessibility and encouraging participation would strengthen reflective practice and support a more inclusive evaluation culture.

Parent's views were gathered through methods such as voting jars and questions of the month. This supported parental involvement in the evaluation of the service, and parents we spoke with told us they felt involved in service development. Parents commented: "There are regular questions in the foyer," and "There are monthly questions regarding the service provided for the parents to answer."

Recruitment followed national guidance and safe checks, but documentation gaps and unclear induction records limited transparency. Strengthening record keeping would ensure safer practice, stronger accountability, and improved outcomes for children's safety, well-being, and staff development.

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.

Quality indicator: Play, learning and developing

Children were engaged in play across the setting and actively involved staff in their play. For example, we observed children role-playing with staff as they styled each other's hair. This demonstrated positive relationships, mutual trust, and a sense of belonging between children and adults. Staff demonstrated an understanding of individual children's needs, preferences, and interests, which enabled them to provide responsive and meaningful support. When children were less engaged, such as during transitions after lunch, staff effectively redirected them into purposeful experiences, for example, by reading stories to regain their attention and promote calm transitions. Parents commented: "My child loves attending nursery and has a great relationship with the staff" and "All staff are very involved with my child and they all have beautiful relationships with them, you can tell they really care."

The playrooms and outdoor environments were stimulating and well-resourced, with provocations that encouraged exploration and sustained engagement. For example, within the indoor block area, images of buildings and the nursery building were displayed to inspire construction play. The outdoor mud kitchen had different materials such as mud, sand and water for the children to explore. Sensory-rich experiences were also evident, such as a tuff tray with flour, paintbrushes, and pattern cards, which encouraged creativity and fine motor development. Although children had opportunities to develop their ideas in the block area providing provocations such as building types in a child-accessible booklet could have further supported independent learning. Parents commented: "An excellent range of experiences are provided for my child within the nursery setting and in their garden." Staff commented: "We use a range of resources to support children's development, such as sensory materials, construction toys, songs and stories, and role play.

Literacy and numeracy were embedded throughout the environment. Children were observed counting blocks during outdoor play, and staff engaged them in both short and extended conversations. Staff used open-ended questions to challenge children's thinking, such as "What do you think we could do?", which promoted problem-solving and language development. Children enjoyed a wide range of toys, natural materials, and loose parts that promoted sensory exploration, life skills, and imaginative role play. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, redesigned, and used in multiple ways. Opportunities such as creating an outdoor café with loose parts highlighted children's creativity and engagement. Opportunities could have been strengthened in some areas, as access to resources such as aprons was limited and encouragement to tidy up was not consistently promoted in all age groups. Providing consistency, strengthening routines and ensuring resources were accessible for all children would enhance children's independence, responsibility, and confidence in managing their environment.

The service had good links within the local and wider community, regularly taking part in outings and visiting the local nursing home. This supported children to develop social skills, build confidence in new environments, and gain an understanding of diversity and inclusion. These experiences also promoted empathy and respect for others, while strengthening children's sense of belonging and connection to their community. Parents commented: "They do a range of outings in the local community to shops, parks, libraries and even care homes."

Children participated in outdoor play, but transitions were delayed as they waited in the foyer while staff gathered jackets and prepared. During this time, some children became restless, and staff were briefly unaware of the whereabouts of all children. The service had identified this as an area for improvement, and reviewing routines and ensuring outdoor clothing is readily accessible would support smoother, safer transitions.

Before lunch, some age groups gathered in large activities; however, engagement was limited as children sang or listened to a story while lunch was being set up. Although the manager advised this was not typical practice and may have been influenced by poor weather, restricting children's access to outdoor play at this time, organising smaller groups would have provided more meaningful experiences for children.

Staff were responsive to children's interests and used these to inform planned experiences. Staff commented: "Children learn best when they are interested, using children's ideas and interests is the best way to involve and engage children with their learning." Children's learning targets were developed collaboratively with parents, based on observations and parental input. Observations were shared with families through the Famly app, promoting transparency and partnership. Staff commented: "We post information on our Famly app giving families the opportunity to review this in their own time and add anything they wish for us to work on." However, there were inconsistencies in the information recorded. Some observations were descriptive rather than evaluative, limiting their usefulness in identifying next steps. Adding reflective commentary would have strengthened the link between observation and planning. Observation should reflect on progress against previous targets and how this informed new goals. This would support a clearer picture of each child's developmental journey and ensure planning was responsive and intentional.

Children are supported to achieve — 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.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Most staff consistently demonstrated nurturing approaches that supported children's emotional well-being. Children were offered comfort and reassurance when upset, such as through cuddles and soothing words, which helped them feel safe and secure. Young children visibly sought out staff for reassurance, indicating strong attachments and trust. Staff responded sensitively to conflict, using calm, respectful language to guide behaviour. For example, they used phrases such as "kind hands" and "I don't think that is safe," which helped children understand boundaries and safety.

Children's choices and preferences were respected throughout the day. Staff offered options such as listening to a story or painting a picture, which promoted autonomy and decision-making. During care routines, staff supported children's understanding by showing them items like nappies or clothing at their level, reinforcing respectful and inclusive practice. Staff mainly engaged with children politely and

attentively, often sitting on the floor to communicate face-to-face, which encouraged reciprocal interactions. Parents commented: "The staff are always more than happy to incorporate any changes made at home into my child's routine at nursery."

Staff were attuned to children's moods and responded appropriately, for example, recognising when children were tired and adjusting their approach. Staff respected children's routines and followed safe sleep guidance, which promoted children's comfort, safety, and emotional security. Staff conducted regular monitoring of children while they slept. This supported effective communication and ensured children's safety. Plans to enhance the environment with softer lighting and fabrics, aimed to further support children's well-being. Staff enabled children to wake at their own pace with gentle reassurance, which helped them transition back into activities calmly and strengthened their sense of trust and belonging.

Family links were evident in the environment and in practice, with children engaging with photographs on the walls, which supported emotional security and continuity between home and nursery. The service regularly involved parents in aspects of the nursery as they invited them to stay and play sessions and parents evenings. This provided opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning and develop positive relationships. Parents commented: "We are very often welcomed into the nursery, the nursery have stay and plays, parents' evenings and are open to communicating with parents/cares regarding any issues/concerns that may arise." Transitions were well supported, with younger children spending time in the rooms they were moving into, and new starts offered settling-in visits. The daily routine provided a balanced pace, allowing children time to rest and engage in active outdoor play.

Mealtimes promoted independence, with children pouring drinks, choosing foods, and older groups setting tables. However, practice was inconsistent, with younger children not included in setting tables, limiting their experience of learning routines. While pouring drinks encouraged independence, spills were not cleared away, which left children sitting with wet patches on the table. Providing children with smaller jugs would have reduced this. Children demonstrated good hand hygiene and made choices, such as selecting salad or vegetables at lunchtime, supporting autonomy. However, there were inconsistencies in this: staff did not always ask children whether they wanted lunch before serving, and we observed younger children walking around while eating, which posed a choking risk. Some children also waited too long to be served, as only one bowl of food was available for children to self select foods. Providing two bowls has since been implemented to improve efficiency and outcomes for children.

Children were supported through effective personal planning, which was responsive to their needs. Targets were created in partnerships with parents and parents commented: "We are involved in creating targets for our child" and "Staff invite you to read over targets and add any comments as well as other areas we may want to develop." Planned strategies were in place to help children develop their skills through a range of experiences. This ensured children received the right support at the right time. Although children's personal plans were securely stored, staff and children had limited access to them. Improving accessibility would support children's involvement in their own planning, strengthen staff awareness of individual needs, and ensure more consistent approaches to well-being and learning. While children's personal plans were aligned to the well-being indicators, safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible, and included, as well as national guidance, key elements such as reviews and the child's voice were not yet embedded, reducing their effectiveness as working documents. Plans were not consistently evaluated, so parental information was not always translated into strategies, and the quality of the information in these was varied. Some plans lacked core sections and chronologies, limiting continuity of care. Once fully implemented, these elements should strengthen children's plans and ensure they function as working documents, supporting more positive outcomes for children.

Medication procedures required improvement to ensure consistency and safety. For example, some records did not clearly specify symptoms and dosage in line with prescription labels, and some forms had been completed in pencil. This reduced accountability and increased the potential for errors in areas such as medication administration. Ensuring all records were completed in pen would strengthen accuracy, compliance, and safeguard children's health and well-being. The service had already begun to address some of these issues, demonstrating responsiveness and a commitment to improvement. Strengthening these processes would reduce errors and promote the safe administration of medication, keeping children safe.

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

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good

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

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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