Bathgate Early Years Service
Day Care of Children

Whitburn Road
Bathgate
EH48 2RD

Telephone: 01506 776 234

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 June 2025

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2006131765

About the service

Bathgate Early Years Service is situated in a residential area of West Lothian. The service is provided by West Lothian Council and is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 76 children aged from two years to not yet attending primary school at any one time, of whom no more than 10 are aged two years to under three years.

The service operates within a single storey building and has sole use of the premises. Children have access to an entry area, large playroom and an enclosed outside space. Children's toilets and a designated changing area are situated to the side of the playroom. A smaller room known as "The Snug" sits outwith the playroom and is available for quiet time and sensory activities. A small kitchen area is used for the storage and preparation of snacks.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 18 June and Thursday 19 June 2025. 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 in the service
- reviewed digital responses from 12 families and seven staff
- spoke with six families in person
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and interactions with children
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have 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:
- 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 very well cared for by a kind and nurturing staff team.
- Children had fun as they happily explored all that nursery had to offer.
- Staff recognised the positive impact outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing.
- Children benefitted from a welcoming environment which offered them ample space to play, rest and relax.
- A positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement had been embraced by the service.
- Children were recognised as individuals and supported to achieve their potential.

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?	4 - 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

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support
Children were nurtured and cared for by a responsive staff team who knew each of them very well. Care routines supported children's individual needs and were delivered with kindness and respect. The service understood the importance of developing positive relationships with children and families to promote consistency and continuity of care. Many parents described staff as "approachable, kind and supportive." One parent said, "what I really like is that staff just know, and tell me without me having to ask." Another family told us, "They care for [my child] a great deal. They are lovely and chatty. It's a nice, homely feeling." As a result, children felt loved and secure as their overall wellbeing was supported and their needs were being met.

Children benefitted from a calm and relaxed lunchtime experience. Nutritious meals and snacks were provided by the service and offered children some choice. Staff sat with children and chatted with them as they ate. This helped to ensure children were safe. Mealtimes were recognised by staff as a rich opportunity for children to develop independence and social skills. For example, pouring their own drinks, using cutlery and clearing dishes. Children's rights were discussed and promoted as children noticed they were being responsible while choosing fruit. Staff agreed and reminded children that they have a right to a healthy and nutritious meal. The service recognised the importance of daily routines to promote close attachments and provide a positive social experience for children.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal planning. Families' views and children's voices were evident in the plans and most parents told us that they were kept up to date with children's progress. Individual plans provided all staff with important, meaningful information and strategies to ensure children were appropriately supported. Informal drop in sessions provided additional opportunities for families to meet with keyworkers to share information. This helped to ensure staff could respond quickly and sensitively to any changes in children's lives.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning
Children were confident, with a sense of excitement, as they happily explored all that nursery had to offer. They were encouraged to lead their play and learning and were well supported by staff. They benefitted from a skilled staff team who were responsive and planned play experiences that promoted children's choice, based on their interests. Visual prompts and objects of reference supported some children, when needed, to develop an understanding of routines. This meant children had fun as they played and made progress at a pace that was right for them.

Children were developing skills in language, literacy and numeracy through encouraging interactions with staff and everyday play and learning opportunities. For example, staff and children were singing throughout the day in a way that was natural as they played. Resources available to children promoted and encouraged counting, measuring and mark making. Effective questioning and staff knowledge of how children develop and learn further supported children to deepen their thinking. As a result, children were busy and engaged as they learned new skills.

Children's learning and progress was recorded through carefully considered observations. These were shared with children and families using digital apps, such as Sway and SeeSaw, within floorbooks and on wall displays. Staff reviewed information gathered through tracking and monitoring systems to plan play opportunities which aimed to fill gaps in learning and raise attainment. This intentional approach complemented the child centred, responsive planning that was also being used. As a result, children were recognised as individuals and supported to achieve their potential.

Children's play and learning opportunities were further enhanced as they developed a sense of belonging in their own and wider communities. For example, spring walks in the local area with families, woodland and park visits.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities
Children and families benefitted from a welcoming environment which had been well considered with children's needs and interests in mind. The indoor playroom was spacious with lots of natural light and ventilation. It was well furnished and offered children ample space to play, rest and relax.

The service had carefully considered the layout of all areas and had made positive changes since the last inspection. They had created a calm and peaceful "snug" where children could explore a wide variety of sensory resources and experiences, away from the main playroom. A family "hub" provided families with a warm welcome and opportunities to meet and develop relationships with each other. Families told us that this was greatly appreciated and meant they felt supported and connected.

Children enjoyed free flow access to the interesting outdoor garden areas throughout the day. Staff recognised and understood the importance of outdoor play and learning for children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Outdoor areas were appropriately staffed to ensure children's safety. We discussed ways to improve the space to ensure it was fully enclosed and secure. The service had started this process and were awaiting additional fencing to add height to the existing boundary. They had sourced bamboo screening which was providing a temporary solution, alongside staffing and appropriate risk assessments, to keeping children safe.

Arrangements for maintenance and repair of the setting were in place by reporting through a centralised system. At the time of inspection repairs were carried out in two cubicles within children's toilets. We discussed with the leadership team the importance of ensuring appropriate measures are in place to remove or limit risk to children as they await any repairs being carried out in future. This would minimise the risk of cross contamination and potential impact to health and wellbeing.

Risk assessments ensured that children's safety was promoted as many potential risks had been minimised. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of Care Inspectorate's 'Keeping children safe - look, think, act campaign (SIMOA)'. They invited children to join them as they ensured the outdoor area was safe and secure. The use of a soft elephant toy named 'Simoa' provided a visual prompt to support discussions with children. As a result, children were learning important life skills as they developed an understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. We discussed how the service could develop risk assessments further by including children in the process and considering a benefit/risk approach.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvements are led well
Strong and encouraging leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and develop confidence in their ability to support children reach their potential.

Effective policies, procedures and quality assurance processes were in place and supported the development of the service. A positive ethos and a culture of continuous improvement had been embraced and resulted in quality outcomes and experiences for children.

The leadership team had a very good understanding that self-evaluation was the responsibility of all involved in the service. Leadership roles empowered staff to develop their skills. Regular staff meetings provided opportunities to reflect together and share important information to support children's learning and overall wellbeing. This ensured a clear and consistent approach was effectively communicated.

Children and families were at the heart of the service and their feedback was valued, respected, and listened to. They were meaningfully and actively involved in influencing change and improvements. The staff and leadership team provided opportunities for children and families to have their voices heard and were responsive to their suggestions. For example, the service had recently undertaken significant consultation to update their vision, values and aims. The views of staff, children and families had been considered. This promoted a sense of belonging and meant children and families felt included and valued.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment
Effective use was made of staff experience, knowledge and skills to ensure children's experiences across the day were positive. Staff communicated well with each other and worked together to keep children safe and engaged in learning opportunities. They were proactive when anticipating where and when support might be needed. Staff told us, "We have worked hard to develop and create a staff team who can work together and support each other." They also shared, "The staff team are wonderful in working together with dedication and passion to do the best for our children and families." This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children were appropriately cared for throughout the day.

The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed at all times. Staff were flexible and breaks were planned to minimise impact on children whilst making sure staff had time to rest.

Staff knew all children well and positive relationships between staff and children were evident. Families shared their thoughts with us. One family told us, "We want to thank all the staff for all their hard work and for caring for [our child]." Another parent said, "I think you ladies are all fantastic. Thank you so much for all you do for [our child] and us as a family."

Arrangements were in place to ensure continuity of care for children across the day and week and took

account of staff working patterns and shifts. This meant that children felt safe, secure and happy in a service where a caring staff team nurtured and supported them.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 1 November 2024, the provider must ensure children's continued safety and wellbeing. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

Take action to enable children to continue to experience a service and remain protected following significant incidents.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities'. (HSCS 3.20).

This requirement was made on 28 June 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement
Robust measures of recording and reporting had been introduced by the service. Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures, and additional staff training supported staff to have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in relation to protecting children from harm.

Met - outwith timescales

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 provider should ensure children receive the care and support they need. This should include, but not be limited to, the appropriate recording of identified additional care and support needs, recording and implementing identified strategies of support in a timely manner and appropriate storage of information to

ensure relevant people can access this when needed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 28 June 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had reviewed and further developed children's personal care plans. Families were consulted regularly and positive relationships had been established to ensure accurate and meaningful information and strategies to support children were recorded and shared with all staff.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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