Kidzcare @ Portobello
Day Care of Children

2 Windsor Place
Edinburgh
EH15 2AA

Telephone: 01316 695 040

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 June 2026

Service provided by:
Kidzcare Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002918

Service no:
CS2015342878

About the service

Kidzcare @ Portobello is a registered daycare of children service. The service is delivered from a converted church off the high street of Portobello, Edinburgh. Children have access to play rooms, toilets and a small enclosed garden space.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children aged from three months to entry to primary school age of whom no more than 20 shall be under two years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 and 17 June 2026 between 09:00 and 16:45. Feedback was provided to the provider and management on 18 June 2026. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about the 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 with children;
- reviewed responses from 20 parents and seven staff;
- spoke with two parents;
- spoke with management and staff;
- observed practice and children's experiences; and
- reviewed documents.

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 the service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

• Children were relaxed, happy and confidently approached staff, showing they felt safe, secure and emotionally supported.
• Leaders had begun strengthening self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements. Clear improvement priorities had been identified to support ongoing development across the service.
• Staff provided caring, responsive support and worked alongside children to promote their learning, wellbeing and development.
• Positive partnerships between families and staff helped ensure children felt safe, secure and well supported.
• Children enjoyed their play and learning experiences and spoke positively about their friendships and time at the service.

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

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The service had a clear set of vision, values and aims which helped to create a nurturing and inclusive culture. Leaders had recently reviewed these and they reflected a commitment to providing a safe, caring and homely environment for children. Values such as 'home from home', 'every child is unique' and 'kindness and respect' were visible throughout the setting and reflected in daily interactions. We observed a welcoming atmosphere where staff treated children with warmth, kindness and respect. Families' experiences supported this view. One parent told us, "The staff are so welcoming and friendly and genuinely care for the kids," while another commented, "The staff are wonderful and treat my son with respect and as an individual." As a result, children experienced caring relationships which supported their wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Whilst operational monitoring systems were established, leaders were at an earlier stage of developing a more structured and evaluative approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. An improvement plan had been created and management demonstrated honesty when identifying strengths and areas for development. Improvement priorities included strengthening leadership, developing staff knowledge and skills, and embedding self-evaluation. Leaders had begun introducing tools and processes to support continuous improvement; however, these approaches were at an early stage and had not yet been fully embedded across the service.

Quality assurance arrangements supported oversight of key aspects of the service. Leaders monitored areas including medication, accidents and incidents, risk assessments and policies. This demonstrated an awareness of the importance of maintaining children's health, safety and wellbeing. We discussed opportunities to strengthen these arrangements further by ensuring audits clearly record actions taken, learning identified and the impact of improvements. In particular, auditing of accidents and incidents and in some personal plans where recording required further development. We also suggested introducing more focused observations of practice as part of the quality assurance framework. Strengthening these approaches would support leaders to evaluate practice more effectively and promote continuous improvement for children.

Staff spoke positively about recent developments within the service and described a supportive team culture. We encouraged leaders to build on this by gathering and using the views of children, families and staff more consistently. Family feedback identified opportunities to strengthen communication, staffing consistency and engagement in service improvement. Developing participation and self-evaluation processes further would support informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

Children were supported by a committed staff team who received regular guidance from leaders. Although some planned supervision meetings had been delayed following recent management changes, staff described feeling supported and valued. Staff had engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities, including child protection, outdoor learning and formal qualifications, and were able to describe the impact this had on their practice. They also valued opportunities to visit other settings and share learning with colleagues, supporting the development of skills and knowledge across the team.

Recruitment and induction arrangements followed safer staffing guidance and supported staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. New staff received structured induction, mentoring and regular check-ins. As a result, children were supported by staff who were continuing to develop the skills and confidence needed to meet their individual needs effectively.

Overall, children experienced care from a caring and motivated staff team within a service that was beginning to strengthen its approaches to leadership, self-evaluation and quality assurance. Embedding these systems further will help support consistency, drive improvement and enhance outcomes for children.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Play learning and developing

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 were confident and actively engaged in their play and learning. They moved freely throughout the environment, made independent choices and accessed resources with confidence. We observed children laughing, chatting and playing together with their friends for sustained periods. They used resources creatively and followed their own interests. This helped children experience a sense of ownership of their play and supported them to develop confidence, independence and social skills.

Children benefited from a range of planned and spontaneous learning experiences. Opportunities reflected their interests and supported learning across different areas of development. For example, children explored literacy through mark making and participation in songs and rhymes. Planning showed that children had been learning about people who help us, animals and sea creatures through play experiences and visits within the local community. Children spoke positively about their experiences and friendships and enthusiastically shared their enjoyment of activities such as water play, painting, sand play and role play. This supported children to remain engaged in learning that was meaningful and relevant to them.

Interactions between staff and children were warm, positive and responsive. Children approached staff confidently and sought support when required. Staff joined children's play appropriately, responding to their interests and extending learning through discussion and open-ended questions. This encouraged children to share ideas, solve problems and explore their thinking. As a result, children experienced nurturing support which promoted engagement and learning.

Whilst we observed many positive examples of practice, we discussed with management the importance of monitoring interactions across all rooms to ensure a consistently high standard of support for children's learning and development. Strengthening this approach would help ensure all children benefit from high-quality interactions that maximise learning opportunities.

Planning and assessment arrangements supported staff to respond to children's individual interests and developmental needs. Staff used a range of approaches to record children's learning, including observations, photographs, floor books and a digital learning platform. Learning experiences were linked to 'Realising the Ambition', helping staff consider children's progress and development across different areas of learning.

Children's learning and development were monitored through online learning journals and developmental overview tools. Most children had identified next steps displayed within the setting, supporting a shared team understanding of how individual needs were being met. Management had also begun supporting staff to improve the quality of observations, assessment and next-step planning to strengthen consistency across the service.

Partnerships with families in relation to children's learning were developing. While some families told us they were well informed about their child's learning and progress, others reported receiving limited information. This indicated that experiences were not yet fully consistent across the service. We encouraged leaders to continue strengthening how learning is shared with families and to further develop opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's learning journey. We outlined with management how further developing consistency in interactions, assessment and information sharing could strengthen partnerships with families. As a result this would support even better outcomes for children.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

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 warm, nurturing relationships with staff who knew them well and responded sensitively to their needs. Interactions were kind, respectful and supportive, helping children feel secure and valued. Families described staff as "kind, caring and professional" and highlighted the personalised relationships children had developed with key staff. They also described the service as friendly, welcoming and approachable. These positive relationships created an environment where children felt safe, respected and confident.

Children's health and wellbeing were promoted through caring routines and a focus on their individual needs. Mealtimes were generally relaxed and social, with children provided with healthy and nutritious snacks and lunches. We discussed opportunities to further develop a more homely dining experience through the use of appropriate crockery, cutlery and improvements to the dining environment. We also highlighted the importance of staff consistently sitting with children during meals to support conversation, language development and independence skills. Strengthening this approach would enhance children's mealtime experiences and promote positive social interactions.

Staff followed infection prevention and control practices which supported children's health and wellbeing. Appropriate use of personal protective equipment was evident where required and staff demonstrated an awareness of the importance of hygiene practices. We encouraged continued monitoring of effective handwashing routines. Due to the layout of the setting, access to toilets and handwashing facilities was limited, with no handwashing facilities available within playrooms. We encouraged management to progress planned refurbishment work and signposted them to 'Space to Grow and Thrive' guidance. This would help ensure the environment continues to support children's health, wellbeing and independence.

Children were also supported to develop an understanding of their own safety and wellbeing. Staff and children had engaged positively with the SIMOA campaign, helping children learn about keeping themselves safe. As a result, children experienced care that promoted both their physical wellbeing and emotional security.

Children's health, wellbeing and care needs were supported through personal planning arrangements. Personal plans were in place for all children and included information about their health, wellbeing and safety. Staff knew children well and understood their individual needs and preferences. Plans had been reviewed with families, supporting a shared understanding of how children's needs would be met.

While personal planning arrangements supported children's care, some recording required further development. We identified examples where dates and key care information were unclear, and one child's medical and health information was incomplete. We discussed the need for updates to be clearly recorded, dated and signed, and for strategies of support to better demonstrate how information is used in practice. We signposted the service to the 'Guide for providers on personal planning: early learning and childcare'. Strengthening recording arrangements would support greater consistency and continuity of care for children.

Partnerships with families were positive and respectful. Families were welcomed into the service and spoke positively about their relationships with staff. Staff engaged in regular conversations with families, supporting a shared understanding of children's needs, wellbeing and development. Staff described the importance of working in partnership with families and recognised the role this played in providing consistent support for children. Families agreed they had developed trusting relationships with staff who cared for their child. As a result, children benefited from consistent care, strong partnerships between home and the service, and adults who worked together to support their wellbeing and development.

Complaints

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

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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