Our Zone Quality Childcare
Day Care of Children

c/o Coatbridge Community Centre
9 Old Monkland Road
Coatbridge
ML5 5EA

Telephone: 01236 707 319

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
31 October 2024

Service provided by:
Our Zone Quality Childcare a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Service provider number:
SP2016012745

Service no:
CS2016348383

About the service

Our Zone Quality Childcare is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children attending primary school. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 60 children attending primary school at any one time. Of those 60 children, no more than 20 children are aged from four years to those not yet attending primary school. The service operates during 14:15 to 18:00, Monday to Friday, during term-time and 08:00 to 18:00 during school holidays.

The out of school care service is provided from one playroom within a community centre, which is a shared campus with a primary and secondary school in the Coatbridge area of North Lanarkshire. The service has an enclosed outdoor area and children have regular access to shared playgrounds and pitches within the campus. During operating hours, the service has exclusive use of the safe playroom and creche room as needed.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 and 31 October 2024. The 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with most of the children using the service.
- Gathered views from 17 parents/carers.
- Spoke with three staff and the manager.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children enjoyed spending time at their club. They were happy, relaxed and confident in the setting.

• Children were confident in their interactions with staff and were familiar with routines.

• Staff were caring, kind and fun. They knew children and their families well.

• Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes should continue to be developed to support a culture of continuous improvement.

• Staff should continue to engage in professional development opportunities to strengthen their skills and knowledge.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

We found several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and they clearly outweighed areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this key question as good.

1.1: Nurturing care and support.

We found the quality of nurturing care and support to be very good in this service.

Children were happy, content and safe. They had developed positive relationships with staff and each other. A child commented, "It's fun. All the adults are protective over me."

Children enjoyed spending time together and we could see some special friendships had developed. They had opportunities to meet friends from other schools, which enabled them to socialise with wider groups of children. A child told us, "the best bit is playing with friends and meeting new children."

Children were warmly greeted by staff when being picked up from school and were escorted safely to their club. They were excited to see staff and happily chatted to them about their day. Children understood the routine and told us they felt safe with staff. Staff supported children to be responsible and safe on their journey.

Staff were fun, kind and had a calm, gentle manner which supported children to feel safe and secure. Staff interactions were caring, warm and responsive to children's needs. They knew children well and described their needs, personal preferences and personalities. Children confidently approached staff when they needed support. Parents/carers spoke very positively about the relationships their children had developed with staff. They commented, "the team is fantastic, they really care for my child who always has a great time with them. I also feel confident that all of their needs are being met."

Children were treated with respect, listened to and had opportunities to make decisions about how they spent their time. Staff used sensitive and consistent approaches to support individual children. Children told us about how they were supported to develop an understanding of their rights and displays of their work were attractively displayed to showcase this. A parent told us, "It's a smaller group, all the adults know the children by name and vice versa, it's a very friendly place for children."

Snack time was relaxed and unhurried, with children having responsibility for preparing their food. They told us they liked their snacks and that they had opportunities to make choices about the food they eat. Snacks were healthy and nutritious and special dietary requirements had been well considered. Fresh water was available throughout the session to ensure children were kept hydrated. A child commented, "snacks are good, we eat healthy stuff. We help ourselves. We're having a panto tomorrow."

Personal plans contained important information about children's health and wellbeing needs and how these were being supported. Children were aware of their plans and contributed to these. The manager has agreed to ensure that children's plans are reviewed regularly with parents/carers.

Medication was managed well in the service. Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs and medication was stored appropriately.

1.3 Play and learning.

Children had fun and were excited during play with their friends. Play experiences were fun and reflected their interests, requests and ideas. Children happily engaged in Halloween themed activities, group games, imaginative play and creative activities. Technology was used well to support children to research the information they needed to create their Halloween characters. Children were engaged in their activities and played for extended periods. There was a good balance of child initiated and planned play experiences, which promoted children's choice and independence. This child led approach ensured children were stimulated and motivated to play. Children could choose where they wanted to play and engage in activities, they were interested in. A parent/carer told us, "staff are polite, friendly, made the children feel welcome and they listen to what the children are interested in. They then find ways to interact with the children and support them in things they love doing" another commented, "my child gets to interact with peers and do activities."

Children were very proud of their displays about their rights, GIRFEC and achievement wall which celebrated positivity, uniqueness and diversity. We observed staff providing meaningful praise and celebrating children's achievements.

Outdoor play experiences were particularly good. Staff understood the importance of outdoor play to children's health, wellbeing and development. Children could access the outdoor space independently in all weathers.

We suggested that the manager and staff continue to develop their skills in supporting children's play and consult with them about resources that would further enhance their play. For example, offering more loose parts materials and considering further how areas are resourced would offer more choice, challenge and creativity. We also asked the manager to continue to review times for tidying resources to ensure this does not impact on children's play.

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 any areas for improvement.

The service is provided from a self-contained unit within the community centre. Effective security arrangements were in place. The setting was warm inviting and comfortable. Homely touches, such as displays, photographs and soft furnishings and furniture helped create a welcoming environment for children and their families. Large windows provided the playroom with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Areas were spacious, providing children with opportunities to play on their own and in small or larger groups with ample space to extend their activities. Children had a separate cloakroom area where they could store their belongings.

Play areas had been well considered and took account of children's interests and development, with consideration given to them being able to access toys and resources independently. We noted there was a wide range of toys stored in a cupboard. We asked the manager to consider how children might be able to request and access these.

Children had access to a good range of quality play resources to support their play. We discussed how some areas could be further enhanced, for example, the home area and considering further the development of quiet spaces to enable children to rest, refresh, self regulate.

Children had access to a spacious, outdoor space and could use different outdoor areas within the community complex. This provided interesting, exciting spaces with different surfaces for children to practise key skills. The manager and staff discussed plans to improve the range of outdoor equipment and further develop the smaller outdoor area to provide opportunities for children to plant and grow their own vegetables. A parent/carer also commented on this, "the outdoor area has great potential but doesn't ever get a spruce up. A basketball net or a few other sports things would be good. There are planters which could be used and I'm sure parents would be happy to offer seeds etc."

Children had some opportunities to use play parks and green spaces in the local community. We suggested that they may wish to consult with children about these opportunities and take account of their response. This could help enrich their learning and support them to form positive links with their community.

Appropriate infection control procedures were in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. We saw that good hand hygiene practices were carried out by children and staff.

Accidents and incidents were recorded and shared with parents/carers. We asked the manager to monitor these. This may prevent further accidents/incidents occurring and will contribute to keeping children safe.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

Vision, values and aims were in place that reflected the ethos of the setting. The manager was committed to improving the service and was very proud of the positive changes that had taken place since the last inspection.

While there was scope for self-evaluation and planning for improvement to be further embedded, these changes had made a positive impact on the quality of children's experiences. For example, the service had prioritised further developing child led play approaches, supporting staff's professional development and improving quality assurance processes. The manager was committed to continuing on this journey with a focus on involving children and parents/carers in self evaluation and further developing auditing and monitoring processes. We highlighted self-evaluation bite sized videos and best practice guidance on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

Staff worked well together. Regular meetings provided them with opportunities to receive updates on the service, discuss and plan for individual children and share ideas on what was working well in the playrooms and what could be improved.

Staff benefitted from having their work appraised by the manager. This provided protected time to for them to reflect on their work and consider how this could be supported going forward. The manager has agreed to work with staff to strengthen this approach by agreeing together a plan for further learning, how this will be achieved and the impact to children and their families. We also suggested that the manager continue to consider how staff's interests and skills could be used to lead on specific areas of practice.

The service is a registered charity. We discussed the service's status with the manager, who advised that they were working with the Scottish charity regulator to share the information they required.

We discussed with the manager the importance of ensuring relevant notifications are submitted to the Care Inspectorate. This will ensure they are meeting the legal requirements of providing a day care of children service.

The service used effective methods to communicate with parents/carers. This helped keep them up to date and helped them be involved in the life of the service. For example, welcoming parents/carers at end of the day and regular emails and social media were used well to share and gather information. A parent/carer commented, "Excellent communication. Friendly, interactive and supportive for my child" another told us, "The communication is great, they keep you updated. We appreciate the pictures."

We suggested the service continue develop effective ways to consult with parents/carers to ensure the service provided continues to meet their expectations.

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

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

Staff were enthusiastic about their role and spoke positively about their work. They worked well together to create a positive, welcoming environment for children and their families. A parent/carer commented, "My children love the service and the staff. I find the staff friendly, caring and nurturing towards my children. I like everything about the service."

The staff employed in the service to deliver care and support to the children were appropriately registered, or were in the process of registering with the Scottish Social Services Council, the professional register for social care staff. The manager agreed to continue to support individuals with the application process to ensure registration is completed within the appropriate timescales.

Staff were kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with the children. They were respectful and affectionate. They respected children's rights and it was clear that the valued them and wanted the very best for them and their families. A parent/carer told us, "the staff are so professional and reliable."

Adult to child ratios were consistently maintained. Staff communicated well and were deployed effectively throughout the session. For example, at home time, supporting children accessing to access the toilet and snacktimes were managed well. Staff had time to listen, respond, and care for children, which helped them feel safe, secure and valued. Staff followed children's interests engaged well in their play. A child commented, "the ladies are good fun. They make me laugh and you can talk to them about stuff."

There were a good balance of skills and experience across the team with more recent staff telling us they felt very well supported to develop in their role.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child development and their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. Almost all staff had recently attended Child Protection training with some accessing advanced training on this topic. New staff had opportunities to familiarise themselves with procedures with support from the manager. A child told us that staff, "look after us and we feel safe." A parent/carer commented, "I know my child is in safe hands and mixing with other children."

The service had made good progress in supporting staff to refresh and further develop their skills and knowledge and plans were in place to continue with this. We suggested that staff may benefit from visiting other services to help further develop approaches in consulting with children, promoting children's choice and providing play that supports their learning.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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