Cairngorm Early Learning & Childcare
Day Care of Children

The Coach House
Inverdruie Coach House
Inverdruie
Aviemore
PH22 1QH

Telephone: 01479 811 050

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 August 2022

Service provided by:
Rodgers, Beth

Service provider number:
SP2019990622

Service no:
CS2019375788

About the service

Cairngorm Early Learning and Childcare is located within a quiet rural location on the outskirts of Aviemore. Within the main building there is a large playroom, sleep room, toilet and changing facilities, kitchen and office. There is direct access to a large, fully enclosed outdoor space which contains a large range of loose parts to support and encourage the children's imaginative play and learning.

This building and outdoor space is predominantly used by the under three year olds. Across from the building there is a further large fully enclosed area which was used as the fully outdoor provision for the three till five year old children. This site offers the children a very wide range of opportunities for outdoor exploration and learning. There is a wooden shelter used for a range of activities including the kitchen area.

Cairngorm Early Learning and Childcare is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 30 children not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Of those 30 no more than 21 are aged 2 to those not yet attending primary school and no more than 9 are aged under 2.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 9 August 2022 between 09:15 and 16:00pm. We provided feedback to the manager on 10 August between 13:00 and 13:45pm. One inspector carried out the inspection.

During the inspection we spoke to the manager and staff and gathered evidence from various sources, including children's files, policies and procedures, records and other documents. We observed how the staff cared for and interacted with the children.

Key messages

Children were cared for an a warm, safe and nurturing environment with a large woodland area to explore.

The service had a very good knowledge of each individual child's needs and a plan in place to support their health, safety and wellbeing.

Children benefit from engaging in a wide range of play experiences outdoors which are child led and responsive to their interests.

Children experienced warm, loving and caring interactions from all the staff team.

Children were happy and engaged in their play and freely choose how to spend their time.

Daily communication with families and professionals supported the service to meet the needs of all children in 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

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

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

The children were all happy and settled during their time in the nursery. They experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff who supported their care needs. Staff offered comfort and cuddles when needed, which gave children reassurance. This supported children to feel safe, secure and included in the service.

The staff provided a very good service to promote positive outcomes for all children and had a lot of knowledge and understanding of the individual care needs of each of the children. Staff were kind, caring and very nurturing in their approach. Staff knew the children very well and told us about individual strategies used to support children to feel safe and secure.

Children's personal plans and learning journals were organised and kept a detailed range of information about each child which included their medical and dietary needs. The recording of children's progress and development captured significant events of each child's development. This information supported and guided staff to take appropriate action when required and contributed to keeping children safe and well.

Staff within each play area were responsible for observing children's play and documenting the learning, highlighting their achievements, progress, and next steps. This supported staff when planning and providing high-quality learning experiences for children, enabling them to explore experiences that interest them.

Mealtimes was a positive and relaxed experience in all rooms of the nursery. The management team and staff had been working on improving the snack/lunch menu as a key improvement area. They had introduced some positive changes to the snack/lunch menu while getting parents/children involved, then further assess after changes in consultation with parents. The options for snack and lunch took account of current nutritional guidance as well as any allergies or dietary needs children attending may have. This was a relaxing part of the day and we saw the staff sitting with the children and chatting to them to create a positive social experience. This helped the children to feel included and support speech and language development.

The manager and staff recognised the benefits of partnership working with parents and other agencies. This ensured the service had information on how to support children with identified additional support needs. Regular communication and consultation meant plans were being routinely reviewed with parents and relevant agencies. This promoted inclusion and supported the children to feel safe and nurtured.

Parents spoke about the warmth and the nurturing approach of the staff. Staff knew their child well and focused on their individual needs and had really helped them to develop and progress. They helped children to have a real understanding of their rights through a character called Transition Ted and through conversations. Parents told us that their child was very happy and safe at nursery and that they had gained lots of confidence. Staff involved them well in all aspects of their child care; they felt listened to and involved in their success and achievements

Administration of medication procedures linked with current guidance and are in line with current guidance. Accident and incident records were completed fully by the manager and shared with parents in a timely manner.

1.3 Play and learning

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

Learning outdoors was a key aspect of care in the nursery. The children are based outdoors and the spaces, experiences and interactions provide a wide range of stimulating opportunities for all children. Children had opportunity to lead their own play and learning. We observed children exploring their environment with time and space to explore and be creative. Both the woodlands and the under three area had opportunities for children to be actively involved in their play and learning through a balance of high quality experiences. This promoted children's choice and independence. We observed children participating in some messy play with shaving foam and paint as they giggled and explored the area. As a result, we observed happy confident children engaged in play and learning activities of their choice as well as supporting the development of curiosity and inquiry.

Children benefited from a well organised environment where a range of activities supported their learning and development. Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with good opportunities to be outside. Children told us that they enjoyed playing outside which promoted physical energetic play to keep them active and healthy. We saw some nice interactions between staff and children, with staff responsive to the individual needs of each child. For example, children in the woodlands area were very engrossed in their play. Some children were making witches potions for the staff, using lots of utensils to measure out the liquid. This experience provided opportunities to promote literacy, imagination and creativity.

The children had regular access to outdoor play which encouraged them to be active and to develop their physical co-ordination. Parents were overall very happy with the environment, one parent commented, "the outdoor space is incredible, a huge selection of fun activities, different obstacles to develop physically and socially". The under three area had lots of loose parts outside such as sand, water play, cones, stones, and wood. This supported children to develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity in their play experiences. The children told us they grow fruit and vegetables in the garden and take these in to have for snack/lunches. This experience will support children to learn where food comes from and gain a sense of responsibility by caring for the fruit/vegetables.

Children had strong connections to the community that enhanced their play and learning but also understanding of the wider world. Children visited the local Wildlife park where they learned a lot about animals and where they originate from. The manager also advised they plan to take the children horse riding and for tennis lessons in the next coming months.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

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

A safe, secure and well organised environment had been created for all children. Each room was designed and suitable for the age ranges of children. All areas were well ventilated, clean and regularly maintained. The nursery room was warm and welcoming. There was a calm atmosphere during the inspection visit. The playroom was decorated in a neutral colour with children's artwork displayed on the walls which promoted a natural environment. There was a suitable range of resources for both inside and outside play. The playroom was laid out with lots of resources and a cosy area for the children to chill and relax. Pictures of the children's families were on the walls of some of the main playroom. This helped the children feel safe, secure and valued in the service.

There was a wide range of open-ended loose parts both indoors and outdoors to support children to be imaginative and creative. Each playroom had a range of real life and open ended resources and nice cosy areas for the children to relax in. There were lots of opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills and to develop creativity and problem solving skills.

The environment encouraged children to develop their curiosity and imagination. Children were helped to stay safe as the indoors and outdoors were secured. Staff worked well together to identify and address risk within the setting and during activities, so that children enjoyed and benefited from challenge. Children were also able to manage risk and know their own limits, that helped them to build resilience.

On the day of the inspection we saw a member of staff engaging positively with children singing and using instruments while engrossed in their play. They were all highly engaged in this activity that supported them to develop their numeracy, literacy and emotional skills. This experience contributed to children understanding the importance of recognising and reproducing words, which also builds children's vocabulary and communication skills.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. This included supporting children with good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of spreading infection.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

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

Staff, families and children had been involved in promoting a shared vision for the setting. This supported effective team working to make well informed changes to practice which was leading to improved outcomes.

Opportunities were available for parents/carers to share their views about parts of the service. For example, when the service reviewed their snack/lunch menu parents were involved to give some feedback on this. The staff and management team had a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and their families. Self-evaluation process had allowed all staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for improvement. There were opportunities for the children to provide feedback and suggestions as to how the service could be further developed. This was illustrated well in the children's floor books and mind maps. This supported the children to feel included and respected.

The management team and staff all worked together to ensure a positive ethos within the service. They had a positive working relationship with the families and maintained very regular open communication through the family app and verbal feedback at the end of the day. Parents seemed very happy about the service, one parent commented that "the family app is great for information". We found that this promoted inclusion and allowed parents and carers the opportunity to see how their child's learning is developing through play.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

4.3 Staff deployment

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

Staff worked well together as a team and their differing skills and knowledge complimented one another and resulted in quality interactions with children. They communicated well with each other and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day.

Staff were appropriately deployed throughout the day which ensured they met all children's needs at the right time. Transitions were seamless and well planned with children being comfortable about what was happening next.

Staff were effectively supported by the management team who spent regular time in the nursery. This helped to build positive working relationships and allowed time for professional discussion. Staff were happy, engaging and sharing tasks through working as a team.

Staff inductions were undertaken to support new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences. The manager introduced champion roles to the room leader and assistant manager to mentor the two new members of staff. This contributed to trusting and respectful working relationships within the team.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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