CALA Fortrose ELC
Day Care of Children

Fortrose Pre School
Black Isle Leisure Centre
Deans Road
Fortrose
IV10 8TJ

Telephone: 07831735169

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 January 2025

Service provided by:
CALA Integrated Services

Service provider number:
SP2010011308

Service no:
CS2022000234

About the service

CALA Fortrose ELC is a day care of children service registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children aged from two years to not yet attending primary school at any one time. The service operates from a dedicated area within The Black Isle Leisure Centre in the town of Fortrose. The service is provided by CALA Integrated Services.

Children have access to a playroom, cloakroom, and a large and enclosed garden which is accessed directly from the playroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 January 2025 between 8.45am and 2.45pm. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service;
- reviewed feedback received from 11 families;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Staff knew children well, which meant that they were able to anticipate, and meet their needs.

• Staff were skilled in their interactions to support children to extend their play and learning. This meant children were developing a broad range of lifelong skills.

• Resources on offer provided children with a wide range of opportunities to explore and develop their imagination.

• The vision and values of the setting positively informed practice within the setting. As a result children received high quality care and support.

• Staff were kind, caring, enthusiastic, and demonstrated a high level of motivation. This contributed to children to have positive experiences.

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 how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were warm, caring and nurturing in their approaches to support children. They supported children to manage their emotions with gentle conversation, offering cuddles, and hands to hold. This contributed towards children being able to safely express their needs, and to feel safe and secure. Parents commented:

"Every day my child is welcomed whole-heartedly into nursery".

"Each and every member of staff is approachable, nurturing and welcoming."

Staff knew all children well and were able to talk about individual personalities and preferences. Regular sharing of information between staff and home contributed to the effective use of personal planning information. One parent told us "The staff always greet children and parents on arrival and any issues/ changes to schedule can be discussed." Families were welcomed into the setting, which supported this. Staff took the time to ask children about their lives, showing a genuine interest in them. This meant they were able to anticipate children's needs, and give them the support they needed at the right time.

Snack and mealtimes were calm and relaxed. Children had opportunities to develop their independence skills, for example serving food, making up wraps, selecting cutlery and crockery, and pouring drinks. Children enjoyed their morning snack and lunchtime all together, which enhanced the family feel of mealtimes. Staff were focussed on children, recognising the value of these daily routines in building strong relationships, and to consolidate learning through fun conversation. Food offered was healthy and nutritious, following best practice guidance, such as the "Eatwell Guide". Individual preferences were catered for, and children and their families were able to contribute suggestions to the menu offered. As a result, children enjoyed a positive social experience.

Children were supported to rest and relax when they needed to, which supported their emotional security. Staff followed family preferences, and were responsive to individual children's needs throughout the day, promoting good habits around sleep.

Staff worked closely with other professionals to identify and implement appropriate next steps based on individual needs. For example, supporting communication. This information was used to support children to achieve their potential.

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were having fun as they enjoyed high quality play and learning experiences. They were positively engaged from the moment they arrived at the setting. They were able to choose where they wanted to play, and choose the resources they wanted, supported by staff who were close on hand if needed. This empowered children and supported their developing sense of independence.

Staff demonstrated that they understood when to interact with children to extend their learning, and when to stand back and allow them to become engrossed in their play. They were knowledgeable about child development and children's preferred patterns of play, providing opportunities for children to play and explore in a way that suited them. One parent commented. "I love the emphasis the setting always puts on play and learning through play." This promoted children's development, learning and wellbeing.

Staff used skilled interactions to support children's developing language, literacy and numeracy skills. They understood the importance of repeating words, and giving time for children to respond, recalling previous learning, engaging children in fun conversations as they spoke about previous events. Staff and children were learning to use Makaton, a communication programme, signing words, which supported all children to develop their communication skills. Staff used mathematical language to support children to compare and contrast sizes, weigh ingredients, and measure heights as children played. This meant that children were supported to learn a wide range of life long skills.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests and needs. Staff used observations to inform next steps, which meant that children were being supported to reach their potential. Additional supports were identified and implemented to ensure that all children felt included, and were achieving.

There was a strong sense of the setting being part of the wider community, with children visiting local places of interest, and welcoming members of the community in. These connections enhanced children's opportunities for play and learning.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

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

The setting was clean and tidy, well ventilated and flooded with natural light. Children had ample space to play, learn and relax in, which gave them the message that they mattered. The playroom was warm and welcoming. Children were excited to come in and explore the resources on offer. We discussed with the manager continuing to add decorative touches and real life resources to enhance the homely feel of the setting.

Resources available took account of children's current interests and stages of development. Children had been reading "The Gruffalo", and creative and stimulating resources had been added to all areas of the setting to consolidate and extend their learning, linked to the story. As a result, children were engaged and having fun in their environment.

Staff worked well together to ensure that children were safe and accounted for throughout the day. They undertook regular headcounts as children arrived at and left the setting, and as they moved between inside and outside, updating visual reminders. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of potential risks in the setting, taking action to ensure that children's play experiences were not compromised. This contributed to keeping children safe.

Effective infection prevention control measures were in place, contributing to reducing the risk of potential spread of infection. Children were supported to wash their hands throughout the day, modelled by staff, who were aware of the importance of good hygiene in ensuring a safe environment to play and learn in.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

A shared vision, values and aims positively informed practice, supporting positive outcomes for children and their families. There was a strong ethos of supporting children and their families, in line with one of the setting's values, "Family". The manager valued the opinion of children and their families. All parents who gave feedback told us they were always welcomed into the setting, with most strongly agreeing that they and their children were meaningfully involved in developing the setting. For example, the setting had extended its operating hours in response to requests for parents. Comments received from parents included:

"Regularly asked for feedback and if we want to be involved in different aspects of the preschool."

"They will ask your opinion on things or for any ideas and take these on board."

"Parents are so involved and have a lot of say."

This meant that children and their families were supported to reach their potential

Robust quality assurance and improvement planning highlighted any areas for improvement. The manager engaged well in the inspection processes, responding positively to professional discussion. They regularly reviewed the service offered against national guidance. As a result, children benefited from care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

Staff were confident to reflect on their practice, and were self-evaluating against best practice guidance, such as "A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged children". There was regular time for staff to come together, which contributed to the positive ethos of the nursery and supported staff to drive and sustain improvements. As a result, children, and their families, experienced quality care and positive outcomes.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

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 were kind, caring, and enthusiastic. They demonstrated a high level of motivation in relation to supporting children to have positive experiences. They had developed strong relationships with children and their families. All parents who gave feedback strongly agreed that they had a strong connection with staff caring for their child, telling us:

"The staff are excellent. Engaged, knowledgeable and full of fun."

"Staff do so much for these children. Go above and beyond and really do make you feel so at ease when dropping your little ones off."

The approach to staffing was outcome focused, with staff deployment effective in meeting the needs of children. There was a strong mix of skills, knowledge and experience, with staff supporting their colleagues. Children experienced consistency of care from staff who knew them well. As a result they felt valued and loved.

Positive working relationships had been formed between staff which meant they were all meaningfully contributing to the inclusive and positive ethos of trust and respect. They communicated clearly with each other when they were leaving one area to go to another, or when sharing information about children. This allowed routines and key tasks to be carried out whilst ensuring children were appropriately supported and outcomes remained positive.

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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