

# Watten Early Learning Centre Day Care of Children

Parish Hall  
Main Street  
Watten  
Wick  
KW1 5XX

Telephone: 07785 946709

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

2 October 2018

**Service provided by:**

CALA Direct Management Services

**Service provider number:**

SP2010011106

**Service no:**

CS2010278794

## About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

This service has been registered since 2002.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right for every child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

Watten Early Learning Centre is based in Watten Village Hall in Watten, Caithness. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children aged from two years nine months to those not yet attending primary school. The premises consists of a playroom with a kitchen area, toilets and reception area. The nursery also has use of the large hall and a large enclosed outdoor play area for physical activities.

## What people told us

The children present were observed as being very happy and relaxed in the care of the staff. There was a very good rapport between the children and staff which allowed for natural and open communication. The children enthusiastically told us all about the different things they enjoyed doing at nursery. They told us about all the things they had grown in their garden, how they had planted saplings in the woodland area and made a home for hedgehogs.

During the inspection we spoke with four parents, and three parents and carers gave us feedback through our questionnaires. They were all extremely positive in their comments about the quality of the service provided.

Comments made included:

'Marchael and Grace are very approachable. The service is excellent'

'The children would come every day if they could'

'I feel happy and confident when I leave my child with Marchael and Grace'

'She looks forward to playgroup every day and already I notice a change in her development - she is becoming more curious and assertive'

'A very nurturing and progressive learning environment.'

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance systems. These demonstrated the service priorities for development, detailing how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service, and a clear schedule for improvements.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

<b>Quality of care and support</b>	6 - Excellent
<b>Quality of environment</b>	not assessed
<b>Quality of staffing</b>	not assessed
<b>Quality of management and leadership</b>	5 - Very Good

## What the service does well

During this inspection, we focussed on how the service supported the children to develop a healthy lifestyle and encouraged children's learning through outdoor play. We also looked at the systems in place in relation to quality assurance.

Encouraging the children to develop healthy lifestyles was an ongoing theme within the nursery. There was a wide range of activities where health and wellbeing were promoted. The children's interest at the time of the inspection was 'food', where it comes from, foods our body needs and foods it doesn't need so much of. The interest had come about after a comment from a child - 'milk comes from coos and sheep.' There was lots of evidence throughout the playroom relating to this interest. There were displays containing photographs of the children taking part in various activities including harvesting the vegetables they had grown and then preparing them for snack. The children had taken part in cooking and baking activities. The role play corner had been set up as a café. We observed a group of children taking part in some very imaginative role play. They were organising a party. They had made invites and raffle tickets, had made prizes and explained what food they would be preparing for the party. Meanwhile another child was busy taking orders for meals. The role of staff was very much supervisory and only got involved in the activity when the children gave them invites.

Outdoor play and learning continued to be an extremely important part of the sessions and the children all enjoyed spending as much time as possible outdoors. The staff were both very enthusiastic about outdoor learning and how this element of the service could be expanded to enhance the children's learning and experiences. The nursery made very good use of the outdoor area surrounding the hall which offered a very rich learning environment. The garden contained a very wide range of resources, including loose parts, which encouraged the children's imaginative play and learning. There were opportunities to take part in planting activities, investigative play, numeracy and literacy areas, a mud kitchen, as well as areas for quieter activities. The service also had use of a larger area of grass and trees which was particularly popular. The children had been involved in planting native tree saplings and had also sited a hedgehog house in the wooded area. The children all enjoyed the freedom to play and explore in this area.

On the day of the inspection the service received a letter confirming they had been awarded the green flag award as part of the Eco Schools initiative. The letter stated, 'It is very clear both from the quotes from the children included in your application and the wonderful photographs of children working in the centre grounds that eco-schools at Watten ELC is very hands on and child led.'

The parents we talked with all spoke extremely positively about the opportunities for outdoor play and learning. They were of the opinion that the outdoor space provided invaluable opportunities for their children to play and explore.

The manager stated that she very much valued staff feedback and their involvement in the ongoing evaluation of the service. There were various options available to allow for staff consultation and feedback. These included staff meetings, support and supervisions sessions, individual annual appraisals, as well as informal discussion and feedback. The staff felt very much involved in the identification of the future objectives of the service. They were of the opinion that the manager appreciated, valued and took account of their suggestions.

There were also options available for parents and carers and children to give feedback. The manager and staff recognised that meaningful communication with parents and carers was an ongoing priority as was encouraging stakeholder participation in the process of quality assurance. The parents and carers we spoke with confirmed that the manager and staff were very approachable and welcomed any feedback they might have. Listening to the children and taking forward their ideas and suggestions was a priority for the manager and staff. As stated previously, the children were fully involved in decisions relating to planning. There were mind maps and floor books illustrating what the children wanted to learn about, what they already knew about any given subject, what they had learnt and what they would like to learn next.

## What the service could do better

The staff and the manager were all very committed to the service and its ongoing development. They welcomed any suggestions as to how they could expand the learning opportunities for the children.

The service was continuing to develop the outdoor play and woodland areas. We discussed with the staff how they might further develop this area. During the inspection we discussed where the manager and staff could access relevant guidance and best practice to develop this area of their service, including 'loose parts play' and 'my world outdoors'.

During the inspection, we observed a very lively and sociable snack. We discussed with the staff how they might develop this further. We suggested less reliance on plastic cups and plates, and instead replace them with ordinary cups and plates.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
3 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
5 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
7 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
18 Jan 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

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