

Avondale Early Learning and Childcare Day Care of Children

Avondale Early Learning and Childcare
Kirkland Park Avenue
Strathaven
ML10 6DY

Telephone: 01357 522 451

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 July 2022

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2020379025

About the service

Avondale Early Learning and Childcare is a registered daycare of children service and is located in a residential area of Strathaven, close to local schools, parks and other amenities. The service is registered to provide care for 80 children aged three years to not yet attending primary school.

The service operates from a purpose-built premises, that is on one level. Children are cared for in one large playroom with access to toilets and a large outdoor garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 12 July 2022 between 11:15 and 17:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 since the service registered. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with four people using the service and six family members
- spoke with five staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Management and staff were good at developing positive relationships with children and families.
- Families were encouraged and supported to play an active role in the setting, promoting them to feel included.
- Children's choices and wishes were respected through opportunities for them to choose whether to play inside or outside.
- The lunchtime experience should be improved to ensure this is a relaxed, unhurried, sociable experience for children.
- To support children's emotional wellbeing and development, the environment should be further developed.
- Management and staff should review and implement strategies to ensure children's individual needs are met.
- To ensure improvement is led well and sustained, quality assurance systems should be reviewed.

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?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

We have evaluated this key question as adequate. Where there are some strengths, these just outweigh the weaknesses.

1.1 Nurturing Care and Support.

Children were content and happy in the setting. Most interactions were kind and caring towards children. To support children to feel safe and secure, they were familiar with the routines of the day and approached staff confidently for support if needed. For example, one child approached a staff member when having conflict with one of their peers. Staff were mindful of gentle approaches when it came to nappy changing. They respected children's wishes by asking children if they wanted to have their nappy changed.

Each child had a personal plan in place and whilst these contained some information, additional information was needed to help ensure there is consistent care for all children. For example, the use of strategies to support children's development and next steps to support their progression. Personal plans were not always updated to reflect changes in children's lives to support meeting their individual needs (see Area for Improvement 1).

Staff worked with parents and external agencies to support children and their individual needs. However, we found that strategies for children with additional support needs were not consistently used or reviewed by management and staff. This meant at times children's needs were not met. We had concerns around the restriction of children's movements. We raised this with the manager during the inspection and we were satisfied with the action plan to address practice through training and supporting staff development.

Transitions from playing to lunchtime was calm and relaxed. Children's choices and wishes were recognised when not wanting to stop playing. For example, when one child was asked if they wanted to wash their hands and they said no, the staff member waited a few moments before returning to ask again, when the child indicated they were ready.

Both management and staff acknowledged that lunchtime needed to be improved. The lunchtime experience took place in the corridor and was very busy with staff particularly task focused during this period. The narrow environment meant that there was limited space for children and staff to move around freely. A lack of ventilation resulted in the environment becoming very warm for both staff and children. The high noise level of the experience meant there were missed opportunities for children to be heard by staff or their peers. We discussed with management how lunchtimes could be improved and signposted to best practice documents.

Medication was stored in a locked room in the playroom and each medication had their own storage box. Medication forms were reviewed and to help ensure medication is administered correctly, we discussed with management that symptoms should be clearly outlined for each child. Management agreed to address this.

1.3 Play and learning.

Children were able to move around the indoor and outdoor environment with ease. To promote children's independence, staff offered support when children were putting on or taking off their weather clothes when going out or coming in.

Children were having fun both indoors and outdoors. Children chatted and laughed with their peers supporting positive relationships. A mixture of toys and materials were available to support children's learning. We acknowledged there had been some recent changes to the environment. However, further development is needed on the toys and materials available to provide challenge and support children's engagement. There were plans in place to address this.

Opportunities for risky play were at the early stages of being developed and children were benefitting from some opportunities to assess their own safety. For example, children were climbing and jumping from cable drums.

The planning process to support children's learning had recently changed and staff were at the early stages of implementing this. Best practice documents such as Curriculum for Excellence and the local authority's document, Together We Can, was used to support the planning of children's experiences. Regular planning meetings took place for staff to communicate as a team and to have discussions in response to children's interests. Staff recognised the importance of child led learning and this was encouraged. Staff asked children for their views to support their interests and the learning that took place throughout the day which supported the planning process.

Observations of children were used to identify their stage of development and learning. The use of online learning journals allowed for children's progress to be tracked by staff, and shared with families. Regular information sharing through online learning journals supported families to feel involved in their children's learning and development. Parents told us they would like more opportunities for information to be shared on their child's learning and progress. The manager valued the feedback from parents and agreed to organise these opportunities.

To continue supporting families involvement, opportunities for them to attend the nursery and spend time in the playrooms with their children had been positively received. Additional opportunities included four weekly 'workshops' for parents to attend which had been attended by all parents, supporting positive relationships.

Children were involved in opportunities within the local community, helping to strengthen the community links. This included a recent 'Gala Day' with their families and friends. To help promote responsibility and a sense of achievement, children also had a planting plot in the local park that they tended to.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and development, the service should enhance personal plans to ensure they contain the information needed to meet children's individual needs. This should include, but not limited to, strategies needed to support children, any changes that occur in children's lives and next steps to support children's progression.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good. This means several important strengths, as taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

A secure entry with a buzzer system was in place to help ensure children were safe at nursery. The environment was spacious, clean, and bright creating a welcoming environment for children. Toilets were located in the playrooms for children to access promoting children's independence.

Some cosy spaces were available for children. For example, cushions and a tepee tent. Additional spaces which include soft furnishings would be beneficial for children to access to maximise emotional wellbeing and relaxation.

All children had opportunities to free flow between both indoor and outdoor environments helping to ensure they had access to fresh air daily. Both spaces offered different opportunities for children. For example, water play, mud kitchen, construction area and arts and crafts. Consideration should be given to developing all areas further to support children's curiosity and challenge. For example, more equipment in the mud kitchen to support spontaneous play.

Staff worked well together to ensure children were safe and accounted for. Detailed environment risk assessments were carried out to help ensure the environment was safe and secure for children. Children were involved in the risk assessing process, supporting them to develop their understanding of keeping safe. Garden gates were securely locked to help ensure children could not leave whilst outdoors.

Maintenance systems were in place and used effectively to report any broken items. For example, the hobbit hut door had been broken and reported and the growth of mushrooms in the grass had been reported to the local authority. This contributed to a safe and healthy environment for children.

Children regularly washed their hands throughout the day and staff were observed to use hand sanitisers before entering the playroom. Windows in the playrooms and doors allowed for effective ventilation in the playroom. Staff used gloves and aprons when supporting lunchtime and carrying out nappy changes.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good. This means several important strengths, as taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

There had been a number of changes to the management structure recently and the temporary manager had been receiving support from the local authority. Quality assurance processes were in place to support the outcomes for children and families. Management were at the early stages of reviewing these to ensure they are sustainable and achievable. This included reviewing the improvement plan in the service and ensuring that parents and children were involved in developing this. Best practice documents used to support the improvement plan included How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare.

Management carried out monitoring observations of playrooms to evaluate practice and experiences available for children. These highlighted some areas for improvement and management should now begin to think of the next steps to make these improvements. To help enhance staff knowledge, discussing these observations and linking to best practice documents would be of benefit to drive improvements forward.

There was a shared vision between management, staff, parents and children. This was developed through consultations and supported an ethos of shared thinking. This vision was reviewed regularly and ongoing consultations were carried out to help ensure it was reflective of the care provided.

Both management and staff had created opportunities for families to be involved in their child's nursery life. This included 'workshops' for parents to attend which included storytelling and creative play. Positive relationships have been formed between staff and families. One parent told us 'the nursery is very open, flexible and engaging. My family enjoys going there and my daughter enjoys playing there'.

Staff took on roles within the nursery in a variety of ways. For example, facilitating the parents' workshops and leading on innovations to support children's development. Staff had begun visiting other establishments to help develop their knowledge and enhance practice. Staff should reflect on these experiences and assess the impact these visits have on the outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good. This means several important strengths, as taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment.

To support children's safety and supervision, a number of staff were deployed both indoors and outdoors. Staff were responsive to children during their play and they supported them through story times and provided encouragement at different areas. For example, asking questions to extend children's thinking.

Staff worked well together to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children. To support the shared vision and a positive working ethos, regular team meetings took place, meaning that there were opportunities for information sharing between the staff team. Parents told us staff were welcoming, caring and approachable contributing to positive relationships.

Staff were passionate about their role and told us of their aspirations. They told us that children were central to their practice and were working towards new ways of maximising children's experiences through additional training and visiting other settings to share practice. Staff should reflect on their learning and evaluate the impact this has on promoting good outcomes for children.

To support staff in their role, induction processes took place when staff started at the setting. Management used the national induction programme to support this. Staff told us they felt the induction was beneficial and they had time to build positive connections with each other and children. We found mentoring programmes were in place to support staff practice and staff told us they felt this was helpful to their development.

Management promoted positive health and wellbeing of staff. This included an open-door policy for staff to approach management if they needed which contributed to them feeling supported at their work. Staff breaks were planned in a way that had limited impact on children allowing staff to recharge and rest. Regular meetings with staff took place to discuss health and wellbeing and development. Staff told us management had been supportive of their roles and of building their confidence.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
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
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.