

Kirkstyle Early Learning and Childcare Day Care of Children

Eastfield Road
Carluke
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Telephone: 01555 772856

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
12 August 2022

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2020379024

About the service

Kirkstyle Early Learning and Childcare is registered to provide care to 126 children aged two to entry into primary school at any one time. Of those 126 no more than 15 are two years to under three years.

Care is provided from a new build property, located within the town of Carluke, South Lanarkshire. The service is close to shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities. The service is fully integrated and provides both mainstream and additional support needs provision for children across five playrooms which all lead directly to secure gardens.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 9 August 2022 between 09:30 and 15:45. 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 registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with nine people using the service and 17 of their parents
- spoke with 14 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with three visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Children's rights were respected. Their voice was celebrated and viewed as important to improve their outcomes as well as the outcomes of service.
- Additional support plans and staged intervention was in place for individual children where needed and was helping to improve outcomes.
- To make certain systems are robust the manager should review the process for administration of medication to ensure it is effective and consistent.
- Children benefitted from daily visits to the local forest. Opportunities to develop ideas, thinking and imagination were enhanced through this learning.
- Planned strategies to improve communication with families should be used to communicate regularly and consistently with all families to discuss all aspects of individual children's play, learning and development.
- An extensive variety of resources and materials were available for children which enabled the development of learning and exploration across the curriculum.
- The manager and staff team worked well together and were committed to bring about positive outcomes for children through regular self-evaluation.
- Staff shared a common vision and worked hard to achieve high quality care and learning for children.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Relationships between children and staff were nurturing, respectful and support was offered sensitively. A parent told us "Our child thrived in their time at Kirkstyle ELC. All their needs were met as they changed, and the nursery adapted easily to them, whilst always communicating these changes with us".

Another parent told us "All staff know my child's care and wellbeing needs and go above and beyond to support them in meeting their requirements." This was consistent with our findings. All children had a personal plan in place which contained information to help meet their needs. For example, targets for learning, likes and dislikes. This supported children's care and learning needs to be met.

We observed staff being considerate and aware of children's personal preferences and individual needs. A visiting professional told us "Kirkstyle ELC try to be active, solution-focused and look to engage professionals who can provide extra support. The service is active in trying to support families and is very structured and very organised. The manager should continue to access specialist ASN training for staff due to complexity of needs they are presented with". This approach ensured care and support for children was consistent.

Children's rights were respected. Their voice was celebrated and viewed as important to improve their outcomes as well as the outcomes of the service. Children were happy, loved and secure in their attachments. Interactions were at children's level and natural. A child told us "I like to play in the garden and throw frisbees".

Children were involved in a committee which included having reflective discussions about what they wanted their nursery to look like and provide for them. For example, children helped to select a new climbing frame for the garden area and told staff they wanted to have the same experience in the garden as they did during their forest visits.

Additional support plans and staged intervention was in place for individual children where needed and was helping to improve outcomes. A parent told us "Our child has an additional support need, and this has been supported amazingly by the nursery. They help support with visits within the nursery from speech and language, early learning practitioner, child psychologist and they also support with doing the check in calls between us and everyone else to see how our child is doing."

Children experienced an unhurried, sociable lunch and ate in bistro areas created out with the playrooms. These were presented in a café style with real crockery, napkins, flowers and name cards. Some opportunities were available to develop skills in self-serving, pouring and cutting. However, staff told us lunchtime was a developing area and we agreed. The transition from lunch to relaxation and play in the 3-5 room was not engaging for all children. We advised the manager to continue to review this experience and the transition to ensure routines are reflective of individual children's needs and promote good habits around rest and relaxation.

A system was in place to manage medication and recent updates were introduced to support this. However, to make certain systems are robust the manager should review the process for administration of medication to ensure it is effective and consistent. This will contribute to children's health and wellbeing. See area for improvement 1.

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. They participated in regular training and systems ensured they were confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Planning for learning was responsive and child-led based on interests and needs. For example, during learning in the forest children used nets, water trays and magnifying glasses to look for small water creatures. Staff supported by providing sheets to explore which creatures were in the trays. All children enjoyed the experience and when asked by staff and the inspector they said it was a "thumbs up". This type of learning helped to progress skills in problem solving and curiosity. To ensure high quality outcomes for children, staff should record how learning links to improving outcomes for all children.

Children benefitted from daily visits to the local forest. Opportunities to develop ideas, thinking and imagination were enhanced through this learning. The outing was led by a confident and knowledgeable forest school trained staff member who was well organised, and risk assessed the experience. Children were happy, bubbly and enjoying chatting to staff and their friends. During this experience children explored safety around nettles, chats within the community and pond dipping.

Flexible learning pathways for individual children ensured they experienced high quality outcomes. Some parents were involved in assessment, multiagency and partnership working to create plans for children. Frameworks for learning were tailored to help support children with complex learning needs. A visiting professional told us "Kirkstyle ELC really incorporate any advice into the child's nursery day. The range of play equipment has really helped promote development in a way that limits unnecessary involvement from visiting professionals. The service is very responsive to advice. On return visits we have been able to embed even complex and more challenging strategies."

Children were able to flow between indoors and the garden. They were making choices of where to play and were leading learning. Children would benefit from further opportunities to explore self-regulation and resolving conflict during play. Staff engaged with children skilfully during play such as when one child communicated by signing their wish to explore the interactive whiteboard.

A parent told us "Communication within the establishment I feel could be encouraged a little more especially at handover time" and another parent told us "other than the sways there are no updates on what activities or tasks my child as an individual has been doing." Following discussion with the manager, we learned that strategies to improve communication such as individual learning booklets, a parent app, parents committee and Glow blog were planned as part of the upcoming 2022/23 service improvement plan. To ensure positive outcomes for all children the manager and staff should ensure as part of those plans they communicate regularly and consistently with all families to discuss all aspects of individual children's play, learning and development. See area for improvement 2.

Areas for improvement

1. To protect children's health and wellbeing, the manager should ensure medication systems are robust and follow best practice guidance. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the best practice document: 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states: I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice. (HSCS 4.11)

2. Parents should be involved in discussions on all aspects of play, learning and development to enable them to contribute to identifying appropriate next steps. To enable this to happen and to ensure strategies are based on individual needs and support positive outcomes for all children the manager and staff should communicate regularly and consistently with families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states: My care and support are consistent and stable because people work together well. (HSCS 3.19)

How good is our setting?

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 quality indicator as very good.

The premises offered a calm, warm and welcoming environment. It was clean, tidy and a well-maintained space that had plenty of natural light for children to play, learn and relax. A visiting professional told us "The service is very welcoming, it is a nice atmosphere and a great place to be."

Suitable infection control procedures were in place such as embedded handwashing before mealtimes and after outdoor play. Posters and information displayed supported children to develop their understanding of this.

As a relatively new service, layout had been given careful consideration and rooms such as nurture, visiting services, multipurpose and sensory were used to support children and their families. Staff worked carefully to identify where children needed support and accessed these rooms for individual and small groups support sessions. This ensured a strong message was shared with children that they mattered and there was ample space to support their emotional and wellbeing needs.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. For example, a secure entry system and a variety of risk assessments. The large garden provided lots of opportunities to develop learning through risk and challenge. The space was well organised with many areas offering a variety types of play opportunities. For example, a climbing frame, tunnel, water pump and bridge.

Cosy spaces were available for children to relax and feel safe. For example, a large tent in the garden and cosy corners with soft furnishings indoors. An extensive variety of resources and materials were available for children, which enabled the development of learning and exploration across the curriculum. A parent told us "My child really enjoys the variety of activities that are available every day and if there is an activity that they don't enjoy there are always lots of alternatives available."

A range of experiences and resources that stimulated natural curiosity, learning and creativity were provided. For example, children enjoyed a rolling snack both indoors and in the garden in the 3-5 room and were observed squeezing oranges to make orange juice for snack whilst other children were supported by staff to extend learning through play. Three children were engaged in role playing doctors and patients. A staff member used the opportunity to chat with children and ask questions such as "what does this equipment do?".

The variety of learning and the environment was welcomed by parents. Parents told us "The nursery is full off age-appropriate toys" and "I appreciate it's surrounding natural play and risk taking" and "I like how my child is given opportunities to take part in a lot of activities and explore the local area - forest friends and visits to the local library."

The service had established community links. Children visited the library, local shops and forest. The service intended to establish further community links with more local primary schools and to seek opportunities to link to music therapy sessions to enhance children's experiences. We agreed this would provide children opportunities to participate in a range of recreational and social learning activities.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Relationships with families had been established and were supporting meeting the needs of children. Methods to enhance two-way communication with families were planned as mentioned in quality indicator 1.3. This would ensure families had the information needed to work in partnership. A parent told us "The empathy, support and understanding of the staff team has meant so much to us a family. We had a wonderful relationship and communication was so present" and another told us "I did make a complaint regarding a situation that, after consultation with staff, was dealt with immediately and an action plan was put in place by management and staff going forward".

Quality assurance processes were in place and having impact on practice and improving outcomes for children. Whilst overall these were well managed some improvements were needed. A parent told us "The handling of the injury my child sustained along with the response to my complaint was poor. No incident report, no form, no phone call". For these processes to be robust, the manager with the staff team should reflect on the auditing and any remedial actions that may be required of key records such as accidents and incidents. This would contribute to a well-managed service.

The manager and staff team worked well together and were committed to bring about positive outcomes for children through regular self-evaluation. For example, elements of the service 2022/23 improvement plan priorities reflected some of our findings on communication and individual learning. A parent told us "Staff and management are not afraid to change a process if it doesn't work" and another parent told us "Any issues at all, have always been handled with respect and care and I have left these chats feeling more informed". This helped demonstrate a well led service with capacity for and commitment to improvement.

Staff told us they could approach the management team with any concerns. They received regular feedback on their work. For example, individual performance reviews and observations of practice led to supportive improvement discussions about how to meet children's needs.

Sharing learning within the team was encouraged such as specialist personal care training, play and

learning and nurture training. Continuing to progress this type of practice would help to ensure individual children continue to receive the right support from the right person at the right time.

Care Inspectorate provides registered care services with guidance on notification reporting. During inspection it was noted that there had been a recent inconsistency in making notifications. Following discussion with the manager, two notifications were submitted before the inspection ended. We were satisfied the manager had reflected on and understood notification guidance.

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 quality indicator as very good.

Deployment of staff was strong and supported supervision of children. Staff were in constant communication during daily tasks and responsibilities. This ensured children's experience across the whole day were positive and they were safe.

Communication methods such as phone calls, emails and face to face chats provided a platform for sharing information that supported meeting children's needs.

Staff participated in training that led to improvements in children's experiences. For example, training in inspire to achieve increased staff's knowledge of the importance of holistic development, helping to develop their speech, language and emotional wellbeing. A visiting professional told us "Kirkstyle ELC maintain a high standard of multidisciplinary working, and this is evident through their regular review meetings for children in their establishment, particularly those who require additional support."

Distributed leadership roles such as Bookbug lead, Makaton co-ordinator and attachment ambassador helped staff reflect well together to continually maintain a high-quality service. They used best practice guidance to support better outcomes for children and met regularly to evaluate the quality of the service and any improvements needed.

Staff shared a common vision and worked hard to achieve high quality care and learning for children. They were motivated, happy to be at work and committed to their role. Working well together they had created a warm and welcoming environment for children. Parents had the opportunity to build trusting relationships with them. Parents told us "Staff have really brought my child's learning and understanding skills on. They have gained confidence and learned excellent life skills." and another parent told us "My child has built an exceptional bond with their key persons and still has to this day."

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	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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