

Galston Early Childhood Centre Day Care of Children

Western Road
Galston
KA4 8BG

Telephone: 01563 820 360

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 October 2022

Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000142

Service no:
CS2003016950

About the service

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Galston Early Childhood Centre is provided by East Ayrshire Council and is located in Galston Primary School Campus. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 82 children over two years of age until they start primary school.

The early childhood centre is close to local amenities, green spaces, parks, and transport links. Children have access to a playroom, quiet room, enclosed garden, and large outdoor area with an outside toilet.

About the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection, which took place on Wednesday, 26 October 2022. Following that, we used virtual technology to review documentation. Feedback was provided to the management and the team on Friday, 28 October 2022.

The inspection was carried out by three 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 last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- spoke with the children using the service and 12 of their family/representatives;
- spoke with seven staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- spoke with children using the service - emailed all families questions;
- spoke with staff and management - emailed all staff;
- observed practice; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children experienced warmth, caring, and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing.

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning.

The setting was very comfortable, furnished to a very high standard, and welcoming.

Children's and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting.

Staff worked well together and were confident in their roles to ensure the best outcomes 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?	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

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.

Children experienced warmth, caring, and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing. For example, the nest nurture group supported children to talk about their feelings and the staff supported children with praise, calm voices, and cuddles. Parents also told us, "My child is enjoying his time at nursery and loves all the teachers". Another parent said, "Thanks to them for making us feel so welcome and helping my daughter settle in. After a few upset weeks my child now adores the ECC and gets so excited as she says when she is going in for her session."

Children and staff enjoyed eating together in an unhurried and relaxed atmosphere, ensuring a caring and positive social experience. Some staff ate with the children, and this promoted positive eating habits, including children being supported to self-serve. The children in the under-three room were encouraged to clear away their cups and plates with support from staff; however, this was not consistent in the three-five room. To support children to develop important life skills, we have asked staff to ensure this is consistent across all ages. Children were offered nutritious meal choices which took account of current good practice guidance 'Setting the Table'. One parent commented, "My child enjoys the range of food very much and always has something to eat. If I collect her early, the practitioners always offer to give me a box of food home for her high tea which I think is so thoughtful."

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal planning, taking account of the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. All children had personal plans in place with targets, and staff had recorded how they planned to support children to achieve them. We identified some gaps in recordings relating to what children's targets had been achieved. This had been noted by senior management, and an audit was due to be implemented. Parents were included in reviewing children's personal plans and helping to set targets for their child. One parent told us, "They (staff) review it regularly and if anything changes, we have a discussion." This supported parents to be involved in their child's care, play and learning.

The setting had made a positive start on welcoming parents back into the building following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. Parents were able to come in during drop off and pick up times and staff told us, stay and play sessions had been organised and were well received by families. One parent told us, "We take them in and pick them up from inside the nursery, which I much prefer, as it allowed us to speak to their key workers and get a run down of their day, and to see all the toys and activities they have for the kids". This provided opportunities for parents and carers to spend time in the nursery with staff, which helped strengthen relationships, supporting children's home to nursery links.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their own play and learning, through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences, that promote children's choice and independence. A parent told us, "My child thoroughly enjoys nursery. She enjoys playing in the 'home' area, in the garden on different pieces of equipment, making pictures/collages with different materials, growing vegetables, making play dough and slime".

Staff interacted skilfully during play to support children's interests and curiosities. Children's ideas were valued and staff provided experiences that extended children's sense of wonder about the world. For example, the staff asked the children, "How could we get the object out the ice?" and "How does the ice feel?".

Planning approaches were child-centred and responsive to children's interests and life experiences. Children were happy and confident during play and were progressing well in their learning and development. We saw staff facilitate experiences that sparked children's curiosity and extended their individual interests. One child told us he liked "to play superheroes with his friends", while another child shared he liked "building sandcastles and using the shovel".

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their own and wider communities. The staff and children had developed strong links with local shops and staff told us they had worked in partnership with a local garden project to set up a pumpkin patch for children and the community to take part in.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 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.

The setting was very comfortable and welcoming, and furnishings were of a high standard, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had ample space to play and explore their surroundings. We observed children enjoying a story in the quiet area which had a comfy sofa, bean bags, sensory lights, and cushions. The under-threes have a quiet room with sensory toys and resources as well as lights, mats, and cushions. This ensures that children have access to a calm quiet space if they need it.

The indoor and outdoor environments were sensitively structured and took account of children's stages of development and learning. Spaces reflect children's current interests and curiosities, with appropriate resources and materials to support learning. For example, children made an obstacle course using a balancing beam with a large cable reel, long piece of wood and wooden pallet. Children were supported to walk along and balance by a member of staff. A parent shared, "Children have free access to outdoors as they please."

The playrooms were decorated in neutral colours which promoted calm, natural spaces for the children attending. The manager and staff team shared their understanding of the Education Scotland 2020 document 'Realising the Ambition: Being me' guidance, that had supported them with the changes to the environment. This ensured both playrooms made good use of the space available to encourage children's independence, with children accessing and choosing activities and resources freely. A parent told us, "My daughter attended the same centre previously and it was great then, but I think it's even better now, great all round improvements. Elaine and the team have done and are doing a great job."

The indoor and outdoor environments took account of the age and stage of the children and encouraged their interests with appropriate resources and equipment to support their play and learning. Children were confident and relaxed as they moved around the playrooms and between indoors and outside.

Infection control measures were in place throughout the service to minimise the spread of infection. Children were reminded, and supported where needed, to wash their hands. We saw staff wash their hands often, role modelling for the children the importance of good hygiene to keep children and staff well.

Staff worked well together to identify and remove risks to children within the setting both indoors and outdoors. For example, walkie talkies were used by staff outdoors to share information with staff inside. Risk assessments were in place and children had helped to write the outdoor risk assessment. This supported children to understand and manage their own risks through play.

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; therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Robust quality assurance systems, including informal and formal monitoring were in place and carried out by the senior management team. Management and staff had a very good understanding of Education Scotland's 2016 document, 'How good is our early learning and childcare' and the Care Inspectorates 2022 document, 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare'. Management and staff told us they used these documents as an evaluation tool to reflect and support assessment and improvement within the service.

The effective use of leadership roles supported staff to lead change in areas in which they had a keen interest. For example, the nurture group 'nest' and community champion. Staff told us they felt empowered by management to develop their areas within the nursery. This supported staff in promoting positive outcomes for children and their families.

Children's and families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the setting. We observed parents coming into the setting at pickup time and a stay and play session. A parent said, "All the staff in the nursery have gone above and beyond, to make sure both my children's needs are met."

A comprehensive improvement plan was available and staff told us they were asked to contribute to this, and their views were used to implement change. This supported a culture of collaboration where staff felt valued and listened to.

Policies and procedures were in place which underpinned the service and supported staff practice. These were reviewed annually to ensure they continued to follow best practice and remained relevant to the service.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 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 and were confident in their roles. Staff were enthusiastic and committed to

providing quality outcomes for children.

There was a very good mix of skills, knowledge, and experience within the staff team. Staff were supportive of each other and communicated well, ensuring children's activities and play and learning experiences were consistent throughout their day. Effective staff deployment within the service ensured that children's individual needs were being met by the appropriate number of staff.

There was continuity of care for the children; for example, when staff went to lunch, staff who knew the children covered in the playroom. Staff were responsive to children's needs, and we observed effective supervision and quality engagement with children in all playrooms.

Staff had the opportunity to take part in training and gain qualifications. They were enthusiastic about continuing with their professional development. They were able to discuss the impact this had on their practice and outcomes for children. For example, nurture training, which has supported staff to have a better understanding of the importance of early connections and talking to children in a nurturing way.

An induction programme for all staff was in place and this contributed to staff feeling secure and supported in their role. The senior management team had developed a support booklet for supply staff with their roles and responsibilities. This contributed to a positive, supportive and inclusive ethos across the service.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The service should undertake a review of the play space to ensure they make best use of the space and resources. To achieve this they need to develop the play space that reflects and is responsive to the needs and interests of the children. The play space should promote good opportunities for children to explore, investigate and be creative meeting children's natural curiosity to find out how things work.

This area for improvement was made on 2 March 2017.

Action taken since then

The service has reviewed the play space and has developed both playrooms to promote good opportunities for children to explore, investigate and be creative, meeting children's natural curiosity to find out how things work.

Previous area for improvement 2

The service should further review the daily routine and pace of the nursery sessions. To ensure children have high quality experiences the service needs to reduce the number of transitions and waiting times for children throughout a session.

This area for improvement is met.

This area for improvement was made on 2 March 2017.

Action taken since then

The service has reviewed the daily routine and pace of the nursery sessions. This has ensured children have high quality experiences of the service. The children have only a few transitions and waiting times throughout the day.

This area for improvement is met.

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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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