

Dingwall Ducklings Day Care of Children

Pefferside Park
Dingwall
IV15 9PW

Telephone: 01349 865 698

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 February 2023

Service provided by:
CALA Direct Management Services

Service provider number:
SP2010011106

Service no:
CS2019373568

About the service

Dingwall Ducklings is registered to provide a care service for up to a maximum of 20 children aged two years to those not yet of an age to attend primary school. The nursery is operated by CALA Direct Management Services. The services operates in term time only.

The accommodation used by the service is a stand alone building, within a large parkland area in the town of Dingwall. Children have access to a secure garden area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 7 February 2023 between 09:00 and 14:30. Feedback was given on 8 February 2023. 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 previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and four of their family;
- spoke with six staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were warm and caring in their interactions and knew children well.
- Children were developing their independence skills.
- Play and learning followed children's interests.
- Children's progress was clearly recorded through observations.
- Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation was supporting the service to improve outcomes for children and families

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

4 - Good

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing care from staff who knew them well. Staff supported children to settle when they arrived at the setting, speaking to them about what they had been doing, and about their families. As a result, children felt welcomed and secure.

Effective use of personal information, shared by families, helped staff to support children's overall wellbeing. Staff told us that by using an online platform, 'DoJo', some parents were able to translate information, and that this supported them to share relevant information for their children. This meant that all children were receiving the care and support they need with consistency.

Children benefited from calm and relaxed snack and mealtimes. They were given opportunities to develop independence and lifelong skills, such as pouring and selecting their fruit. Staff recognised the importance of mealtimes in developing relationships with children. Children were supported to develop their language and numeracy skills through conversations with the staff team. We discussed with the management team that some children would benefit from support to freshen up after lunch, for example, wiping their faces after eating.

Children had access to an area where they could rest and relax, away from noisier activities. We saw children using this area to read books and play quietly. As part of ongoing improvements, the staff team, along with the children and families, were reviewing this area, planning changes to make it more inviting to children. This gave children the message that they were valued and that their opinions mattered.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were seen to be engaged in their play and having fun. They were confidently able to self-select resources which were invitingly presented. Some children were digging in the sand for treasure hidden by pirates while others were very engaged in puzzles. Staff sensitively supported children in their play, helping them to problem solve and access a variety of learning experiences. They supported children in developing core skills such as language, literacy and numeracy. This meant that children were being supported to reach their potential.

Responsive planning supported children to develop their likes and interests. Different play and learning opportunities, both inside and outside, were available linked to the current interest of pirates. For example, children could practice their gross motor skills and assess risk 'walking the plank' outside. As a result, children were supported to develop their confidence, creativity and imagination.

Quality observations recorded children's development and progress. Learning profiles were shared with parents who commented "It's great to see what they get up to in nursery and how much they are learning". Staff were able to plan for children's progression which supported children to develop a broad range of skills.

Children made regular use of the local environment, visiting parks, shops and places of interest such as the hospital. On the day of inspection, they made good use of the children's play park beside the setting. Staff were aware of the importance of risk assessing outings to ensure children's safety was maintained. These strong connections with their local community enhanced children's play and learning opportunities.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

The setting was clean and tidy inside, with a range of resources arranged for children to access themselves. Resources inside were attractively displayed which encouraged children to explore and play with them. Some natural, loose parts and real life items were available. The service should continue to add to these, to increase opportunities for children to develop their skills in understanding, imagination and problem solving. Children were very respectful of their environment, returning resources when they had finished playing with them. The outdoor area offered a number of play and learning opportunities which reflected children's current interests and supported children to safely assess risk.

Staff were confident in the procedures to follow when resources or equipment needed repair or maintenance. Effective processes were in place to address issues quickly. As a result, children's experiences were not negatively impacted.

Children were kept safe as staff were always vigilant about accounting for children. They ensured doors to the setting were secured appropriately when children were arriving at, or leaving, the setting with parents.

Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. Staff understood the importance of keeping the setting clean and supported children to wash their hands at appropriate times such as before mealtimes or after toileting and nappy changes. This meant that children were protected from the potential spread of infection.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good where major strengths supported positive outcomes for children. There were very few areas for improvement.

Robust quality assurances processes supported ongoing improvement. These processes identified areas for improvement, such as the layout of the environment and resources. The opinions of staff, children and families had been sought in the development of this area, which had recently been improved as a result. The manager told us they were considering ways in which to encourage further parental involvement, for example, using online surveys.

Effective self-evaluation, using best practice guidance such as 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged children', was undertaken by the whole staff team. The manager and staff team met together regularly to reflect on their practice and children's experiences. This was resulting in further areas being identified for improvement. As a result children were receiving care and support based on relevant evidence and best practice.

The setting's vision, values and aims set out what parents and children could expect from the setting. The manager told us they would soon be reviewing these, in conjunction with families, as they valued their input in shaping future development of the setting.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

The service was effectively staffed to meet the needs of children. Staff skills, knowledge and understanding complimented each other. This meant that children received consistent care and support throughout the day.

Staff were conscious of being present and supporting children during mealtimes; on occasion this meant that staff did not take appropriate breaks. We discussed this with the manager who told us she had already highlighted to staff the importance of taking breaks. They told us they will revisit this with staff to ensure that they take breaks. This should support staff to feel refreshed and rested, whilst not impacting negatively on children's overall experiences due to the level of staffing.

The staff team worked well together, sharing tasks throughout the day. They communicated clearly with each other when leaving areas or taking children to other parts of the setting for personal care. As a result, children were effectively and safely supervised.

Staff who had recently joined the setting told us they felt supported by their colleagues and the manager. They had received an induction when they started and were being supported to continue to develop their skills and knowledge. This meant that children were receiving care from a staff team that was confident and competent.

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?	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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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