

Glenurquhart Childcare Centre

Day Care of Children

Glenurquhart High School
Pitkerrald Road
Drumnadrochit
Inverness
IV63 6XA

Telephone: 01456 450 679

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 October 2023

Service provided by:
Glenurquhart Childcare Centre

Service provider number:
SP2003001792

Service no:
CS2003008606

About the service

Glenurquhart Childcare Centre is situated in the village of Drumnadrochit within the Inverness-shire area of Highland. The service provides a breakfast club, holiday provision, out of school care and an early learning and childcare service. Glenurquhart Childcare Centre is a local charity based service and is provided by a board of trustees. The early learning and childcare service is provided in partnership with Highland Council.

The centre operates from Glenurquhart Community Centre. The accommodation comprises of an entrance and reception area, toilets, office space, two indoor playrooms with a shared kitchen and a quiet room which is situated off one of the indoor playrooms. Each playroom has direct access to the enclosed outdoor space.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children from aged 3 to 14 years.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 October 2023 between 09:00 and 16:30 and on 11 October 2023 between 08:45 and 14:00. 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 eight children using the service and two of their families;
- spoke with staff and management;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from eight families;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from five staff members;
- observed practice and children's experiences; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff supported children's individual care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships.
- Children were able to participate in planned and spontaneous play experiences that were interesting and offered opportunities for children to investigate and be creative.
- Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to the local community and the outdoors.
- Careful consideration had been given to the continuous provision indoors to promote children's curiosity and imagination at different developmental stages.
- The current nappy changing facilities did not support effective infection prevention and control or children's privacy and dignity.
- Effective quality assurance and self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service.
- The views of children and families were actively sought to inform the development of the service.
- Effective staff deployment supported positive 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?	4 - 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

Staff supported children's individual care and learning routines with kindness and compassion which contributed to the development of strong and trusting relationships. Practice by staff reflected the personal preferences of families and promoted children's independence. For example, the service provided alternative food choices for particular children and worked closely with families when developing children's independence with toileting. All parents who responded to our survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: 'Staff know my child well, including what they like and what is important for their care.' As a result, children received the care and support which was right for them.

Children's overall wellbeing was promoted through effective personal planning. This was carried out in collaboration with families and partners to promote consistency and continuity in care. One parent commented: "Audrey and the staff are very knowledgeable. They provide great advice and have referred me to the correct services when I've been concerned about my child's eating." Personal planning information contained relevant information and strategies which were used by staff to support the development needs of children. Staff spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the care needs of children and implemented strategies to support them. As a result, all children received well-planned care and support to meet their individual needs. Following attendance at a professional learning event delivered by the Care Inspectorate, the manager and staff team had identified steps to improve the system for documenting personal planning information for children in the out of school care and holiday provision.

Snack and lunch times were positive, relaxing and sociable times for children where they were provided with a range of opportunities to develop their independence. For example, children experienced a strong sense of pride as they helped to organise and serve the snack. They prepared fruit items, spread their own toast, poured their own milk and water and cleared away their own plates and dishes. As a result, children had opportunities to take responsibility and learn key life skills. At snack and lunchtimes, staff sat with children, which provided opportunities to promote close attachments and develop their social skills. Food choices were healthy and nutritious, family requests for specific food items at lunchtime were accommodated and children had access to fresh water throughout the day to support hydration. This supported children to be nurtured through their daily experiences.

Systems were in place to ensure the safe storage and administration of medication. Appropriate information was recorded which ensured medication was administered in line with best practice guidance. Accident and incident records were completed by the staff, monitored by the manager and shared with parents in a timely manner. This helped to keep children safe and protected.

Staff worked in partnership with outside professionals to improve outcomes for children when they needed additional help. For example, after liaising with the local speech and language therapy team, appropriate strategies had been identified and put in place to support children with communication and language development. As a result, children were supported to reach their potential.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

During the inspection the holiday provision was in operation. Children were able to participate in planned and spontaneous play experiences that were interesting and offered opportunities for children to investigate and be creative. The activities on offer were differentiated to offer challenge and enjoyment for the range of children attending. For example, we observed older children having fun playing badminton outdoors and we observed younger and older children working together using construction materials to build structures and test out their ideas. When sharing their views on the service, some children commented: "It's really fun for the kids", "We have different activities on different days, we go strawberry picking and on other trips" and "Older ones can help little ones and stuff". Across the service, staff were responsive to the needs of children during play. This supported children to be empowered and lead their learning.

Staff used skilled interactions to support children's learning and development. We observed staff using a range of communication techniques to support children at different development stages. This included using open questions to extend and enable play and learning as well as using visual prompts to engage and support other children. This contributed to children feeling valued and included within the nursery setting.

Planning approaches within the service were child centred and responsive to the children's interests. Within the early learning and childcare and out of school club provision staff used a floor book approach to plan and document children's learning. Children's words, pictures and ideas were captured within these floor books which demonstrated their involvement in the planning process. We spoke with the manager about extending this planning approach within the holiday provision to further enhance children's experiences.

The individual development and progress of children in the early learning and childcare service was recorded and shared with families through profile folders. Within these folders, staff gathered observations of children's development and learning and used best practice guidance to support planning for next steps. This ensured that children in the early learning and childcare service were progressing well and were happy and confident learners. Most families who responded to our survey strongly agreed with the statement: 'I am fully involved and informed about my child's learning and development'. We spoke with the manager about developing the recording of individual learning experiences for children within the out of school care and the holiday provision further.

Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their community. The early learning and childcare provision had established regular visits with a local care service providing adults and children with opportunities to strengthen intergenerational links. Weekly forest school sessions were also in place for younger children where they had opportunities to spend time playing and learning in natural outdoor spaces. This supported children to be active and healthy as well as learn more about their local environment and sense of place.

The holiday club provided children with exciting and varied learning experiences within the community. Some of these experiences included visits to a cookery school, a local fruit farm and a nearby agricultural show. These visits provided opportunities for children to learn new cooking skills and understand where food is produced in their local area. As a result, children were enabled to develop their understanding of the wider world and develop skills for life.

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.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The indoor playroom was homely, calming and comfortable, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. This provided a warm and welcoming space for children and families. The quiet room situated beside the main indoor playroom provided a cosy space which gave opportunities for children to rest and relax. The layout of the indoor spaces enabled children to access a wide range of resources easily and lead their own play. This demonstrated the value of children's ownership and autonomy within the service.

The indoor environment was structured to take account of children's various stages of development and learning. Careful consideration had been given to the continuous provision indoors to promote children's curiosity and imagination at different developmental stages. For example, we observed children having fun creating seasonal themed arts and crafts with a range of natural and open ended resources such as clay, paints, leaves and cones. The selection of resources in the block area met the needs of older and younger children. As a result, this was a popular space for play and provided ample space for children to construct, use their imagination and work together.

Staff recognised the benefits of outdoor play and provided children with daily opportunities for free flow access between the indoor and outdoor areas. This enabled children to be independent, direct their own play and supported them to be active and healthy. The outdoor space provided a range of play opportunities to extend learning and follow interests. Outdoors, children had access to a range of loose parts including, tyres, plastic pipes and sticks. Areas to climb, run, explore and play sports games also provided opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills.

There were infection prevention and control procedures in place which supported a safe environment. For example, the service was clean and well maintained. During food preparation and serving, staff followed best practice guidance and carried out effective cleaning of tables before and after snack and lunch. We observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times. This contributed to minimising risks of infection for both the staff team and children. However, the current nappy changing facilities did not support effective infection prevention and control or children's privacy and dignity. Some nappy changing was taking place on a mat on the floor in a children's toilet area. This has the potential to increase the risk of the spread of infection and does not currently meet best practice guidance (see area for improvement 1). The service were proactive in working to find solutions to address the availability of suitable nappy changing facilities during the inspection process.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receiving personal care are effectively supported, the provider should ensure suitable nappy changing facilities are provided. This should include, but not be limited to:

a) ensuring suitable facilities are available for nappy changing which promote children's privacy and dignity; and

b) ensuring nappy changing practices are consistent with the Care Inspectorate document: 'Nappy changing for early learning and childcare settings (excluding childminders) July 2023' and the Scottish Government publication 'Space to Grow - Design guidance for early learning and childcare and out of school care settings'.

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

'If I require intimate personal care, this is carried out in a dignified way, with my privacy and personal preferences respected.' (HSCS 1.4); and
'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The manager recognised the need to review the service vision, values and aims to reflect the current aspirations of their children, families, partners and the wider community. This review had been included in the service improvement planning priorities for this session to help identify, and understand more fully, what is important for children and their families as the service moves forward.

The views of children and families were actively sought to inform the development of the service. For example, children had been consulted about the food options available. As a result, changes were made to snack choices which promoted healthy eating and reflected children's ideas and wishes. The service recently used an online survey to ask families for feedback on the holiday club provision. The responses received were used to make improvements which included; sharing more of the children's learning on their blog and social media pages and providing families with extra organisational information about trips prior to them taking place. All families who responded to our survey strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: 'My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting and our ideas and suggestions are used to influence change'. Meaningfully involving families in this way helped to promote a shared partnership in the delivery of high-quality care for children.

The service recognised the need to develop family engagement and promote opportunities to welcome families back into the service after the Covid-19 pandemic. As part of the service improvement work last session, a comprehensive family engagement calendar was created to develop more opportunities to involve families in the service. This included providing open evenings and stay and play sessions, sharing learning journeys more frequently, improving engagement through their social media channels as well as offering opportunities for families to volunteer at fundraising and celebration events. As a result, opportunities for families to engage with the service improved and further areas for development have been identified for this session.

Quality assurance processes were in place to ensure aspects of the service were routinely monitored. An improvement plan for this session had been created which identified key areas for change, which included developing literacy and numeracy provision outdoors, as well as renewing the service vision, values and aims. Aspects of monitoring were taking place which were supporting the identification of areas for development of staff. For example, monitoring of key learning observations highlighted areas of the curriculum where observations of learning could be developed further. This supported a culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement and promoted positive outcomes for children.

Effective self-evaluation processes supported the ongoing development of the service. Staff were familiar with current improvements and could describe the positive difference they were making for children and families. Planned improvements were realistic, with a focus on promoting positive outcomes for children and supported by best practice guidance. For example, changes made to develop the snack and lunchtime experience had improved children's opportunities for independence and made transitions at these times more relaxed and less chaotic. Staff had developed self-evaluation floorbooks to document their improvement journey and review aspects of practice identified for development. This process included the views and comments of children and families which promoted the voice of all partners within the improvement process.

Regular staff meetings and visits to nursery from the manager and senior staff were supporting effective self-evaluation. The service had used best practice guidance to implement changes and review aspects of provision together, which had included implementing refreshed personal planning approaches for children in the out of school care service and holiday provision. The staff team worked well together, and staff welcomed feedback and suggestions for improvement. Staff were encouraged to be part of the service development, contribute ideas and reflect on their practice together. Opportunities to look outwards and reflect on practice with colleagues from other settings provided staff with valuable time for professional dialogue and peer support. This demonstrated the commitment of staff to the ongoing development of the service and improving outcomes for children. We spoke with the manager about including the out of school club and holiday provision more fully in the self-evaluation and improvement process.

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 key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The service was appropriately staffed to meet adult-child ratios and the staff team worked to ensure all areas of the service were appropriately supervised and supported. The staff team communicated well with each other when a task took them away from their designated area. They informed each other when leaving an area or when attending to a child's needs. The ethos between team members was positive and interactions between staff were kind and respectful. This helped to create a positive atmosphere for both staff and children to feel comfortable and secure in.

Continuity of care for children was consistent throughout the day with minimal changes to staffing. At lunchtime, staff breaks were well planned to minimise impact on the children whilst enabling staff to rest and be refreshed. Staff shared important information about the needs of children at necessary times. This ensured positive transitions for children and very good communication with families at pick up and drop of times. One parent commented: "It's flexible, staff are lovely. Staff keep me informed when my child has an accident. Staff give me a little verbal update when picking up my daughter with a brief of how her day went and what she got up to. My child loves the activities."

Arrangements for unplanned absence were supported by effective systems to ensure children's needs were met. For example, the service tried to use members of the existing staff team for supply work to minimise disruption to children's routines. A folder with key information was available to all staff. This ensured that staff working in the service understood the needs of individual children and how to support them.

New staff had received an induction, which covered important information needed to care for children as well as important policies and procedures. Good practice guidance including 'Early Learning and Childcare - The National Induction Resource' was used to support staff who were new to the setting. Regular support and supervision meetings had taken place for all staff. These meetings provided opportunities to celebrate individual staff achievements and agree areas for future development. Staff with skills in particular areas used their expertise to provide helpful guidance to other staff. For example, using floorbooks to support the planning process was modelled by a staff member for other staff in the team. This ensured children received good quality learning experiences and support from all adults.

Regular visits within the local area as well as trips and learning experiences to Nairn, the Black Isle, Inverness and Elgin supported children's overall development and wellbeing. Staff were flexible in the change of routine at these times and worked proactively to ensure these experiences could be facilitated. As a result, children were provided with enhanced social experiences and opportunities to be meaningfully connected to their local community.

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?	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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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