

Abbeymill Childcare Ltd

Day Care of Children

Abbeymill Business Centre
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 November 2025

Service provided by:
Abbeymill Childcare Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004004085

Service no:
CS2003054842

About the service

Abbeymill Childcare Ltd is a daycare of children service provided by Abbeymill Childcare Ltd and is in partnership with Renfrewshire Council to provide funded provision for children aged 2-5 years. The service is located in Paisley, Renfrewshire, and is close to the town centre.

The service is currently registered to provide a daycare service to a maximum of 98 children aged from six weeks to children not yet attending primary school. The accommodation comprises three age appropriate playrooms, separate changing facilities and toilets. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor area available.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 and 11 November 2025. 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 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 a small number of children using the service
- spoke with one family member of children using the service
- spoke with staff and management present on the days we visited the service
- gathered feedback from four staff members using a questionnaire
- gathered feedback from 41 family members using a questionnaire
- observed staff practice and children's experiences
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- reviewed documents.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well-maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Management and staff were committed to the continued development of the service to improve outcomes for children.
- Staff were motivated and passionate in their roles. Informal discussions took place between staff and the management team, we discussed the benefits of introducing a formalised approach to staff appraisals and one to ones to further support development.
- Quality assurance approaches had been developed and were supporting continuous improvement within the service, we discussed the addition of a quality assurance calendar to further strengthen this.
- Children experienced rich play and learning experiences indoors and outdoors that supported them to be curious, imaginative and creative in their play.
- Children were happy, confident and having fun. They experienced warm and nurturing care from staff who knew them well and were responsive to their individual needs.
- Planning and learning journals captured children's experiences and interests. We discussed with management about strengthening the links between observations and next steps to further support children's individual progress.
- Positive relationships between families and staff were well-established, parents valued the warm, trusting connections that had developed between staff, children and their 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

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The nursery vision promoted safe, stimulating and active play that nurtured curiosity, confidence and learning through exploration. We observed children consistently engaging in quality play that supported their enthusiasm for learning. The service was in the process of consulting with families as part of its review of its vision, values and aims to ensure these remained relevant and aligned with families' priorities. This promoted a shared understanding of the service's purpose and strengthened partnerships with families.

The management team had expanded with two deputy managers, senior staff and room supervisors, supporting distributed leadership. They demonstrated a strong commitment to improvement and were reflective in their approach. Changes, such as calmer lunchtimes and increased opportunities for quality interactions, meant children benefited from more consistent care and richer experiences.

Champion roles were beginning to be embedded, with managers utilising staff skills and strengths effectively. Their role modelling and monitoring supported staff confidence and professional growth. Staff told us they felt included in the improvement journey, fostering a shared sense of responsibility and a positive team culture.

Families were informed and consulted through newsletters, questionnaires, an open-door approach and the Family app. Most parents spoke positively about these methods, highlighting that feedback was 'welcomed and requested regularly by email or using the Family app' and 'staff encourage parents to share their views'. Another commented, 'We give our feedback or propose ideas to improve the quality of the service'. These approaches helped families feel involved. The management team told us of their plans to further develop communication strategies to ensure consistency and accessibility for all families.

An improvement plan supported ongoing development. Revised routines and planning documentation promoted a better balance between adult-led and child-led learning. One staff member told us, 'Working with the management team I have had the opportunity to reflect on the service and make changes to practice accordingly' and a parent commented, 'really happy with changes that have been made, I can walk into rooms and easily see the learning that is taking place'. As a result, children benefited from a more engaging learning environment that better supported their development.

Some quality assurance systems were in place including audits for accidents, incidents and medication, alongside some formal monitoring of practice. We discussed with management, ways to further strengthen these processes including continuing regular formal monitoring, reviewing and documenting the impact of changes and developing a monitoring calendar to support consistency and accountability across the leadership team. Strengthening these systems would support ongoing improvements and help maintain high-quality experiences for children.

Staff were encouraged to reflect on practice daily and during meetings, with minutes showing a range of topics and contributions. We suggested formalising agendas to maintain focus on key areas. While informal discussions took place, appraisals and one-to-one supervision were not yet embedded. We highlighted their importance in supporting staff, tracking progress and promoting professional development. Developing these processes would ensure a formalised approach to support staff in continuing to deliver positive outcomes for children (see area for improvement 1).

Safe recruitment practices were followed and all staff were registered with the appropriate regulatory bodies. Inductions had been completed with management planning to strengthen these using the national induction resource. One staff member commented positively: 'I was welcomed into Abbeymill with open arms! Their caring and nurturing approach meant that I felt like a part of their team from the beginning. Management had open communication and together we were able to produce a plan of what my role and responsibilities would be within the settings'. Mentoring systems, and shadowing, further supported staff in understanding the service's values and expectations, ensuring children experienced care from confident, skilled practitioners.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children consistently experience high-quality care and learning, we suggested developing a monitoring calendar to include and not be limited to:

- a) continuing to formally monitor planning documentation and children's experiences
- b) reviewing and documenting the impact of changes to support ongoing improvement
- c) developing formal staff supervision and appraisal procedures.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were happy, motivated, and having fun. We saw all children confidently leading their own learning and engaging in play that nurtured curiosity and creativity. Play spaces were well thought out and designed to create warm, inviting areas that supported exploration and comfort. Cosy areas with soft lighting, cushions and calming music offered opportunities for rest and connection. A large range of easily accessible, open-ended loose parts supported problem-solving and imaginative thinking.

Outdoor spaces promoted active play with natural materials and sheltered areas encouraging rich sensory exploration. Children aged 2-5 made good use of the space. We discussed outdoor play opportunities for children under two, the management team shared that they are working on ways to provide more frequent access for babies. One parent commented, 'My child always has plenty of opportunities to play outdoors.'

The outdoor area is well equipped and offers a variety of activities that encourage physical play, exploration and learning. Staff make great use of the space in all weathers'. As a result, outdoor play effectively supported children's physical development and overall wellbeing.

Literacy and numeracy were embedded across the service and evident in daily play and routines. We saw babies enjoy participating in a Bookbug session, responding with excitement to familiar songs and developing early language and social skills. One parent agreed and told us, 'my child's speech and confidence has massively improved in recent months'. Sensory play with natural materials encouraged curiosity, coordination and problem-solving. Babies were happily rolling tins and crawling after them, as well as exploring the climbing frame to build balance and confidence.

Children aged 2-3 explored sand, water, playdough and rice play, developing early maths, fine motor and communication skills. Schematic play was supported with children particularly enjoying rolling items down ramps and participating in music and movement sessions that promoted repetition and body awareness.

Older children engaged in construction, arts and crafts, imaginative play, playdough and mark-making, strengthening creativity, independence and early literacy and numeracy. The walk-in sandpit was a particularly popular feature where children spent a lot of time. Staff extended learning through open-ended questions and by following children's ideas, helping them develop new skills, deepen thinking and sustain interest in learning.

Staff positioned themselves at children's level, showing genuine interest and supporting children to confidently lead their own learning. They encouraged children to use their own ideas, make choices and take time to explore. Staff were attuned to children's needs, responding to verbal and non-verbal cues and using a range of communication approaches. They celebrated children's achievements and adapted practice to support individual progress.

Children's voices influenced planning and daily experiences. Staff listened and responded when children asked to change or add resources, ensuring play reflected their interests. Floor books captured children's ideas through photos and observations, although next steps were not always clear or consistently linked to individual development. We discussed this with management who agreed that strengthening the links between observations, planning and assessment would help demonstrate a clearer learning journey for each child.

Planning for older children aligned well with national guidance, and management shared their plans to further develop planning approaches for under-threes. These improvements will help ensure all children experience learning that continues to be responsive, meaningful, and tailored to their individual needs.

Staff used the Famly app to share learning journals, helping parents stay connected to their child's experiences and development. Some parents had requested more regular updates. We spoke with management who were aware of this and told us they had recently hosted a curriculum evening to showcase the learning environment and shared examples of children's learning. Progress tracking was in place for older children and under development for under-threes. Management told us of their plans to act on parents' feedback and continue to further strengthen communication and parental involvement.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children and families were welcomed into the service and greeted in a friendly and relaxed way, helping to build strong relationships. Children arrived confidently and settled quickly, showing they felt safe and comfortable in the environment. Staff knew the children well and responded to their needs with patience, care and respect. They were tuned in to children's emotions and offered comfort and reassurance when needed, helping them feel secure and valued.

Personal plans were in place for all children and developed in partnership with families. These included key information to support routines, preferences and health needs. For children requiring additional support, some plans outlined specific strategies, and staff worked closely with other professionals. We discussed with management the value of adding an additional section to all personal plans to highlight support strategies for all children. This would promote greater consistency across plans and ensure children continue to receive individualised care tailored to their needs.

Mealtimes were calm and unhurried, soft lighting and calming music created a warm and relaxed atmosphere. Staff sat alongside children chatting to them whilst ensuring their safety. Babies and younger children were gently supported to develop self-feeding skills. Older children had some opportunities to build independence, with small groups dedicated to being snack helpers each day. We discussed with management simple ways to extend this for children aged 2-5 years, including helping to serve food, pour drinks and scrape plates, to further promote confidence and self-help skills. Management identified this as next steps in their plans to further develop mealtimes. Children had access to water throughout the day to stay hydrated. As a result, mealtimes supported children's wellbeing and promoted social development.

Children's individual sleep and rest routines were supported. Staff followed safe sleep guidance and carried out regular checks to make sure children were comfortable and secure while resting. Familiar comfort items were offered, helping children settle peacefully and feel at ease throughout their rest periods.

Personal care was carried out in a gentle and respectful way. Older children were encouraged and supported to be independent with handwashing and toileting to help build their confidence. For younger children, nappy changes were carried out in a way that supported their privacy and dignity.

Staff had completed child protection training and understood their responsibilities in keeping children safe. Policies and guidance supported this practice. Medication procedures were in place, with safe storage and administration records completed. Staff were knowledgeable about children's individual health needs. We discussed with the management team about reviewing the location of some emergency medication to ensure it could be accessed more quickly if needed. This would help further support children's safety and wellbeing.

Family engagement was actively encouraged, and the management team told us they were continuing to explore ways to strengthen this further. The service provided a variety of opportunities, including stay-and-play sessions, Bookbug activities, an open-door approach, curriculum evening and a lending library. These experiences helped families feel welcome, included and connected to their child's learning.

Parents reported feeling valued and spoke positively about the warm, trusting relationships built with staff. Feedback included comments such as, 'My child is happy and safe; the staff are very nurturing', 'Warm and caring staff' and 'Staff work really hard, you can tell they care about the children in their care'.

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 provider should review all policies and practice in relation to infection control guidance, making any adaptations as required.

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

This area for improvement was made on 2 July 2019.

Action taken since then

There were no concerns regarding infection prevention and control, floor observations supported best practice, handwashing was well-promoted and supported by all staff. The environment clean and well-maintained, cleaning schedules were in place and a cleaner was employed to maintain cleanliness. Nappy changing facilities were in line with current guidance, as well as gloves and aprons readily available for staff. Clear procedures were in place to support this.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Staff should consider how knowledge from training is implemented into their practice to support positive outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that the staffing in the service is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 2 July 2019.

Action taken since then

Training logs supported staff to reflect on training and its impact, as well as discussions with management and at team meetings. Staff shared practice with one another. We spoke with a number of staff on the day of inspection who talked about recent training and how this had been implemented into their practice to support positive outcomes for children.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

Management should make further use of self-evaluation strategies and national guidance to further develop self-evaluation to identify what is working well, how do they know and what next to help secure positive outcomes for children in their care.

This is to ensure that the management and leadership in the service is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 4.19)

This area for improvement was made on 2 July 2019.

Action taken since then

Self-evaluation processes were in place. Questionnaires and discussions with staff gathered their input. Staff told us they felt involved in the service improvement journey. The quality improvement framework had been introduced to support staff to reflect under quality indicators what they do well and what they could do better. We saw evidence of improvement focus areas and the positive impact on outcomes for children with the changes made.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

The provider should review recruitment procedures referring to current best practice guidance. This should include taking checks of Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration and any action needed should any workers registration lapse.

This is to ensure that the staffing is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited'. (HSCS 4.24)

This area for improvement was made on 2 July 2019.

Action taken since then

All staff were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC). Systems were in place for reviews to monitor staff registration status. Recruitment files were sampled and were satisfactory in line with best practice for safer recruitment.

This area for improvement has been 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

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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