

# Cairndow Community Childcare Day Care of Children

The Fyne Den  
Clachan  
Cairndow  
PA26 8BL

Telephone: 01499 320 429

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 January 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Cairndow Community Childcare  
Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004004112

**Service no:**  
CS2003036696

## About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service provider is Cairndow Community Childcare.

The service operates from a purpose built building in Cairndow, Argyll. The conditions of registration include to provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time.

At the time of the inspection, there were 31 children registered, five of whom were present during the inspection.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 8 and 9 January 2026. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and any intelligence gathered. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Collected survey feedback from parents.
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- Spoke with the staff and management.

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.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have 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

- Children enjoyed a welcoming space that encouraged their engagement in a wide range of play experiences.
- Children benefitted from accessing the wider community to further enhance their play and learning experiences.
- The staff were fully qualified and engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities to further develop their skills and enhance outcomes for children.
- Management was continuing to develop their quality assurance processes to ensure ongoing high quality provision across the setting.
- Children were benefitting from nurturing relationships with staff, supporting their sense of security and wellbeing.

## 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	5 - Very 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

### Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The setting demonstrated a strong and well defined vision, values, and aims, which were consistently embedded in daily practice. Management and staff were clear that their core aims were to meet children's individual needs and to provide a safe, happy, and nurturing environment. These aims were evident in practice. For example, spaces had been thoughtfully reconfigured to ensure children who required additional support had access to calm areas to help them self regulate. This had a positive impact on children's emotional wellbeing and engagement.

Management and staff worked effectively together to create a welcoming and homely environment where children could confidently access a wide range of play and learning experiences. As a result, children appeared settled, secure, and eager to participate. This approach supported children's health and wellbeing and contributed positively to their overall development and learning experiences.

Both management and staff were receptive to the inspection process and engaged openly in professional discussions. They responded positively to feedback and were reflective in their practice, demonstrating a clear commitment to continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children. Staff were passionate about their roles and confidently shared their ideas and vision for the setting's continued development. Staff reported feeling well supported by the management team and the management committee. This positive and supportive leadership approach contributed to high staff morale and effective teamwork, which in turn had a positive impact on the quality of care and experiences provided for children.

We sampled the recruitment process and found these were robust, clearly documented, and consistently followed. Appropriate checks were in place to ensure staff were safely recruited, which supported effective safeguarding arrangements and promoted positive outcomes for children.

Staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), supporting the maintenance of professional standards and a commitment to continuous improvement. We discussed the importance of maintaining detailed and reflective records of professional development discussions and ensuring these were clearly linked to constructive and regular staff supervision. This would support more effective monitoring of staff development and help ensure professional learning directly informs practice.

There were early stages of self evaluation using A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors. We discussed the importance of embedding self evaluation as a routine and ongoing process. This would support a more consistent and systematic approach to identifying strengths and areas for improvement and ensure that self evaluation outcomes were clearly aligned with the service's improvement plan, contributing to sustained improvements in practice.

We also discussed the importance of involving families, staff, and the wider community in the evaluation process. This would help ensure a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of the service's strengths and areas for development. The manager was receptive to exploring a range of approaches to gather views, such as consultations, questionnaires, and informal feedback, to support meaningful participation and shared ownership of improvement.

The manager had established some quality assurance processes, including reviews of some policies and practice against current best practice guidance. We discussed the importance of continuing to update policies in response to new and emerging guidance and ensuring these updates were clearly communicated to staff. We discussed methods to audit accidents and incidents, and the manager was receptive to continued development of their quality assurance processes. This would help ensure the service continued to meet regulatory requirements and deliver positive outcomes for children. See area for improvement one.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience consistently high quality care and learning, the provider should continue to develop and implement systematic and robust quality assurance processes. This should include regular and effective monitoring of practice and frequent reviewing of policies and procedures against the most up to date best practice guidance.

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 5 - Very Good

### Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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.

Children experienced fun and engagement as they explored and played in spaces that promoted imagination and creativity. The play areas were arranged to encourage a range of play experiences, for example problem solving, role play, creativity, physical play and opportunities for risky play. Within the play environment, children had free flow access to secured outdoor spaces and enjoyed a clean, well lit and ventilated spaces that allowed children to explore. The addition of fairy lights and soft furnishings created a cosy, welcoming atmosphere, supporting children to feel safe and secure. We suggested further reducing the echo in the toddler room to help minimise overstimulation and contribute to an environment that supports children's comfort, concentration, and emotional wellbeing.

Children enjoyed a wide range of visits within the local community, including regular walks and visits to the beach, woods, and the nearby aquarium. These experiences widened their play and learning opportunities and helped children develop a strong sense of belonging to their local community.

Staff demonstrated strong awareness of children's interests and effectively used this information to inform planning and extend lines of development. For example, planning captured children's ideas and interests, supporting a child led approach that engaged children in play and deepened their learning. Staff showed a clear understanding of children's developmental needs and supported learning through responsive and intentional interactions. Staff spoke passionately about how learning was embedded through a carefully considered approach to play provision. For example, opportunities for higher order thinking, emergent literacy, language, and numeracy skills were thoughtfully planned within the contexts of children's interests, deepening their engagement and offering appropriate challenge. This approach supported children to lead their learning, make independent choices, and build confidence in exploring new ideas. Children's progression could be clearly identified in their learning journals, supported by skilled observations and meaningful next steps. As a result, children were observed to be highly motivated, curious, and deeply involved in their play. Staff's skilled interactions and purposeful planning contributed positively to children's progress across key developmental areas.

## Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

### Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

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.

Children were consistently treated with warmth and compassion. Staff were attuned to children's emotional needs and responded with sensitivity and care. Secure attachments and positive relationships between children and staff were evident, contributing to a strong sense of emotional safety and wellbeing. Staff adopted an individualised approach to transitions, carefully considering the impact on both children and families during these periods. This approach promoted emotional security during transitions, helping children and families settle into the setting with confidence.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected. Staff maintained a nurturing and caring approach, delivering personal care in a warm, kind, and respectful manner. We observed staff asking children for permission before offering any assistance with personal care, ensuring children felt included and in control of their own routines. All care was carried out promptly and sensitively, contributing to children feeling safe, valued, and emotionally secure within the setting.

Children experienced relaxed and positive mealtimes where they were supported to be independent. Mealtimes provided opportunities to socialise with peers and engage in conversation with staff, promoting language development. Children demonstrated independence by self-serving, which supported confidence, fine motor skills, and independence.

Hygiene and infection prevention were embedded in daily routines, with consistent handwashing after toileting, before eating, and when coming indoors. This practice helped reduce the spread of infection and supported the development of good hygiene habits.

Children each had their own personal plan with varying amounts of detail. These were regularly updated and reviewed with parents to ensure information remained current, accurate, and reflective of each child's individual needs. Strengthening the level of detail within some plans would support staff to provide consistently well informed care and ensure children's health, wellbeing, and learning needs were fully understood and effectively met in partnership with parents.

We sampled medication management practices and suggested these be reviewed against the latest Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services guidance. Ensuring procedures reflect current best practice will support safe, consistent administration of medication and promote children's health and wellbeing. See area for improvement one.

Management and staff spoke about their goal of strengthening parental involvement in the setting. Parents told us they felt comfortable talking to staff and had positive relationships with the setting. They described staff as approachable, supportive, and easy to communicate with, which helped promote a welcoming and trusting environment for families. We discussed accessing and sharing best practice resources such as "Me, My Family and My Childcare Setting" and "Connecting With Your Childcare Setting: A Guide for Families" to support this. Parents were welcomed into the setting foyer, known as the "bubble", and we discussed the importance of inviting parents further into the setting to foster a stronger sense of partnership. Creating regular and meaningful opportunities for parents to see the play environment, engage with staff, and observe learning experiences would help build confidence, strengthen relationships, and support a more collaborative approach to children's care and learning.

### Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and keep them safe the service should review their administration of medication policy and procedures to ensure they are following the most recent best practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective" (HSCS 1.24).

### Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good



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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

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