

# Wellington Children's Centre Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
30 January 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Wellington Children's Centre

**Service provider number:**  
SP2013012072

**Service no:**  
CS2013317434

## About the service

Wellington Children's Centre is provided by a voluntary management committee. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children aged 3 years to Primary school age.

At the time of our inspection, 40 children were registered with the service. 24 children were of school age.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 and 28 January 2026. 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 children using the service
- received six completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- spoke with visiting professionals.

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, some improvements were identified relating to infection prevention and control practices. The manager and staff took action to address these concerns before the completion of our inspection.

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

- Children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care that supported their overall wellbeing.
- Trusting, respectful relationships with children and their families contributed to positive outcomes for children.
- Staff had a very good understanding of how children develop and learn.
- Children were happy and engaged. Staff skilfully used effective questioning to support children to extend their thinking.
- Management and staff should strengthen monitoring arrangements to include monitoring medication.
- Infection prevention and control practices should be routinely monitored, with effective audit processes implemented to ensure safe and consistent practice across the setting.

## 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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	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

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 service's vision, values and aims placed children's rights and wellbeing at the centre of practice, providing a strong foundation for continuous improvement. Staff demonstrated these values consistently, including through the development of the children's rights committee that met monthly and enabled children to influence decisions about their experiences. While respectful practice was evident across the setting, the vision, values and aims would benefit from being revisited in partnership with children and families to ensure they clearly reflect shared aspirations for the service.

An improvement plan was in place that aligned well with national improvement priorities, and the team were making good progress with the identified actions. To build on this progress, the service should continue to use self-evaluation to identify next steps and inform future improvements. As a result, children and families should experience a service that is responsive to their needs and committed to delivering consistently high-quality outcomes.

Monitoring processes across the setting were at an early stage of implementation and should be further embedded to ensure consistent and effective oversight. For example, strengthening the monitoring of medication, personal plans, and infection prevention and control practices would support the management team to identify where further development may be needed and take timely action to improve outcomes for children and families.

Accident and incident records were completed appropriately and shared with parents. The management team should extend its audit process to identify any patterns or reoccurrences and consider preventative actions. This would continue to support staff to reduce risks effectively and promote a safe environment for children.

Effective recruitment procedures contributed to a safe and welcoming environment. Robust checks were completed in line with safer recruitment guidance. New staff had received an induction to the service and attended core training, including food hygiene and child protection. Staff told us they felt well supported within their roles. This helped ensure the service appointed individuals with the right values and skills to enhance children's experiences.

## Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 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: Children experience high quality spaces

A secure entry system was in place, supported by risk assessments that outlined how children's safety should be maintained. On arrival, we noted that the doors had been left latched open, which created the potential for unauthorised access. Following discussion with the manager, who confirmed this was not

typical practice, action was taken promptly to reinstate appropriate security. Continued monitoring of entry procedures, in line with risk assessments, will help ensure children consistently experience a safe environment.

The environment was welcoming, comfortable, and well ventilated, with natural light and neutral tones contributing to a calm and nurturing atmosphere. Children's photographs, artwork and voices were prominently displayed, reinforcing their sense of identity and belonging. This helped children feel valued and demonstrated that their experiences and contributions were respected.

Play spaces were functional, well equipped, and organised to support children's independence. A range of toys and natural materials were easily accessible within play areas, enabling children to make choices and engage in meaningful, self-directed play. As a result, children were able to explore, experiment, and follow their interests, which supported sustained engagement and positive learning experiences.

While the overall environment promoted play, some resources were offered in boxes on tabletops, limiting children's ability to fully engage with them. Staff should give further consideration to how play items and provocations are presented. Provocations are carefully arranged materials or objects that are designed to invite children to explore, investigate, and think more deeply. Improving how these are displayed could help spark children's curiosity, enrich their play experiences, and support more purposeful engagement.

Children were given opportunities to influence the environment, which supported their independence and decision-making. For example, they selected resources they wished to use and contributed to wish lists for new materials. This helped children feel included in shaping their environment and promoted a sense of ownership.

Children's personal information was stored securely in line with data protection requirements. Records were kept in locked cabinets with access restricted to designated staff. This ensured confidentiality was maintained and contributed to a safe and respectful approach to managing children's information.

A Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) system was installed; however, at the time of inspection it was not operational due to an equipment fault. The service planned to reinstate its use. The provider and management team should develop a clear CCTV policy, install appropriate signage, and ensure parents are fully informed about its purpose. These steps will help ensure any future use of CCTV is proportionate, lawful, and compliant with data protection regulations, safeguarding children's rights and privacy.

## Children play and learn **5 - Very Good**

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

### Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children experienced a rich and stimulating play environment that promoted high levels of engagement. Staff were consistently responsive to children's play requests and interacted with them at their level, which helped create a fun and enjoyable atmosphere. Children's smiles and laughter demonstrated that they were relaxed, confident, and absorbed in their play.

Staff demonstrated a very good understanding of when children required support and when it was appropriate to step back, allowing learning to unfold naturally. They considered the pace of the day and

took their lead from children. Through developmentally appropriate commentary, explanations, and questions, staff extended children's thinking and enriched their learning. Interactions routinely promoted early literacy and numeracy skills. This thoughtful and responsive approach promoted children's independence and encouraged exploration and discovery within a child-led environment.

Improvements to resources for school aged children had strengthened their play and learning experiences. Access to digital technology, games to enhance literacy and numeracy skills, and creative materials provided increased challenge and supported a broader range of interests. Children showed particularly interest in magnetic shapes, group rhymes and team games to support communication and physical skills such as Twister. As a result, all children were able to engage in activities that reflected their developmental stage and personal preferences.

Staff had recently reviewed their planning approaches and identified clear improvements that strengthened the quality of children's learning pathways. Planning demonstrated a balance of responsive and adult-directed experiences, underpinned by high-quality observations of children's play, interests, and individual needs. Observations were used effectively to inform both responsive and intentional planned experiences. Children's ideas were captured through inclusive tools, such as discussions, mind maps and floor-books, enabling them to share their views and inform resource choices. As a result, children were active contributors to their learning and consistently experienced meaningful, and developmentally appropriate play and learning opportunities.

Tracking and assessment systems had been effectively reviewed and strengthened, resulting in a well organised and purposeful approach to monitoring children's progress. Staff worked collaboratively with parents to agree children's next steps, ensuring a clear and well-rounded understanding of each child's needs. Children benefitted from timely, targeted support through well-embedded play initiatives such as PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) and early literacy supports; story grammar and Ican. As a result, children experienced steady, sustained progress and benefitted from learning that was responsive to their individual needs.

## 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 across the setting experienced warm, consistent and responsive care that supported their emotional and physical wellbeing. Care routines met children's individual needs and were delivered with respect, kindness and compassion. Parents told us, "The staff are wonderful and hard working, they put so much work into meeting the needs of the children."

Families experienced warm and positive relationships with staff, who, alongside daily discussions, used digital learning journals and social media effectively to share information and support continuity of care. This helped parents feel well informed and reassured about their child's day. Families told us that, "The staff have great communication with parents" and "Staff always have time to discuss my child."

Mealtimes were well organised, enabling children to experience a calm and unhurried environment. Interactions were nurturing and responsive, with staff sitting alongside children to model positive behaviours and support fun conversations. Children were able to make some independent choices, such as

pouring drinks and selecting fruit. Increasing opportunities for children to self-serve meals and engage more fully in mealtime routines would further enhance their independence and confidence.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning. Plans provided a clear and holistic picture of each child, reflecting their strengths, interests, and any required support. For school-aged children, increased engagement with their plans helped them take greater ownership of their learning and build independence and confidence. Plans were child-centred and co-created with children and their families. Parents told us their views were actively sought, and they felt meaningfully involved in shaping their child's plan. This approach helped ensure children's rights were upheld and their needs met.

We sampled medication practices and advised that these should be reviewed and improved to align with the Care Inspectorate's (2025) 'Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services'. Strengthening procedures and auditing arrangements will help ensure medication is easily accessible in an emergency and that emergency medication plans are readily available when needed. This will support safe, consistent administration of medication and promote children's health and wellbeing (area for improvement 1).

Management and staff spoke about their goal of strengthening parental involvement in the setting. Parents told us they felt comfortable talking to staff and described relationships as supportive and friendly. Parents were welcomed into the setting foyer, and we discussed the value of encouraging them to enter the play environment to build on partnership working. Creating regular opportunities for parents to see the learning environment and observe play would support confidence and encourage more collaborative involvement. We discussed sharing best practice resources such as 'Me, My Family and My Childcare Setting' to further support this.

## 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 reflect the most recent best practice guidance. Action taken should include, but is not limited to: robust auditing of all medical information to ensure that documentation accurately reflects prescribing information.

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).

## 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

To ensure all children consistently receive high-quality play and learning experiences that supports their curiosity and critical thinking, the management team should improve the quantity and quality of equipment

and play resources available to school aged children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 November 2024.**

### Action taken since then

The management team and staff had prioritised improving the quality and quantity of play and learning resources for school aged children. As a result children were happy, engaged and having fun.

This area for improvement was met.

### Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children's health welfare and safety needs can be met and to support a culture of reflective practice which identifies and actions areas for improvement, the management team should ensure effective quality assurance processes are in place. This should include but is not limited to robust monitoring of service delivery, medication processes and personal plans for school aged children.

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).

**This area for improvement was made on 4 November 2024.**

### Action taken since then

The management team had developed some quality assurance processes including systems to support reflective practice. This meant that staff were identifying actions for further improvement. The management team should continue to imbed these processes and further develop systems to include monitoring of service delivery. Where further improvement were needed, we have reported on this throughout this report.

This area for improvement was met.

## 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

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Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
Children experience high quality spaces	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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