

Crookfur Family Centre Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 March 2026

Service provided by:
East Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003372

Service no:
CS2013318436

About the service

Crookfur Family Centre is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 120 children, who are aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school full time. 147 children were registered with the service during our inspection, of which up to 78 children were in attendance during the inspection.

The service opened in December 2020 and is situated in Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire. The Family Centre is part of Crookfur Primary School and now sits on a separate site from the school building, it is within close proximity to the school.

The service is close to local shops, parks and other amenities. The building has a secure entrance with spacious dedicated playrooms and access to a wraparound garden area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 9 and 10 March 2026 between the hours of 08:45 and 17:15. 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.
- Gathered feedback from 36 families through online questionnaires.
- Spoke with staff and management.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- 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 a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to the core assurances.

As part of this inspection, we also 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; and
- Children's engagement with the experiences provided in their service.

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

Key messages

- The service demonstrated a clear and ambitious vision, showing high aspirations for all children, their families, and the wider community.
- Children were highly motivated and deeply engaged in rich, challenging, and responsive learning opportunities.
- Warm, caring, and nurturing interactions supported children's wellbeing.
- The entire team showed a strong and consistent commitment to promoting family wellbeing and building meaningful connections beyond the nursery setting.
- Every aspect of the service was driven by the needs and wellbeing of 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

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

QIs inspected: Leadership and management of staff and resources.

The service's vision, values, and aims had recently been reviewed in collaboration with staff, children, families, and the wider community. The shared ethos of 'learning, caring, and working together to be all we can be' was clearly understood and consistently embedded in daily practice. Core values of curiosity, confidence, love, and unity were evident across interactions and routines. Staff encouraged children to explore, ask questions, and take age appropriate risks to build confidence.

Warm and nurturing relationships were a significant strength, with staff demonstrating kindness, sensitivity, and genuine affection. One parent shared "Cannot say enough good things about Crookfur- changed my child's life for the better". Another told us "The staff are fantastic, it's the most welcoming place to arrive to, my child loves it". This strong alignment between vision and practice created an environment where children felt safe, respected, and valued, and where staff shared a clear understanding of the service's direction.

Self-evaluation was well established and purposeful. Staff engaged confidently in reflective practice and used the 'Quality Improvement Framework for Early Learning and Childcare', to review and develop the service. Regular reflection and professional dialogue helped identify strengths and next steps. This systematic and thoughtful approach supported continuous improvement and ensured developments were responsive to the needs of children and families.

A clear improvement plan guided ongoing development. Leaders and staff monitored progress through regular check-ins, team discussions, working groups, and training reflections. Staff demonstrated strong ownership of improvement activity, with leadership roles aligned to their interests and expertise. Champion roles in areas such as literacy, numeracy, ICT, sewing, and Hanen contributed to meaningful, well embedded improvements that positively impacted children's experiences. As a result, children experienced consistent, high quality learning that supported their development and wellbeing.

Partnerships with families were very strong. Parents described feeling welcomed, listened to, and valued, noting very good communication and staff's deep knowledge of children. Families were actively involved in a wide range of learning opportunities, including literacy and numeracy workshops, woodland sessions, Bookbug, woodwork, sewing, cooking, and pop in and play events. Parents also contributed cultural and professional knowledge, sharing experiences linked to Ramadan, Eid, Diwali, and biomedical engineering. One parent highlighted feeling empowered by the literacy workshop, reflecting the inclusive and community focused culture. This high level of family engagement strengthened relationships and enriched children's learning.

Robust quality assurance systems promoted consistent practice. Audits, supervision, peer reviews, and playroom monitoring were used effectively to maintain oversight. The 'Up up and Away' framework enhanced the quality and challenge of learning environments, while learning journal audits supported consistency in documenting progress. These processes helped staff reflect meaningfully and ensure high quality experiences.

Leadership promoted a culture of professional learning and high expectations.

Staff spoke positively about training opportunities and reflected on how learning, such as infant mental health and supporting children with English as an additional language, had enhanced their practice. Professional dialogue was embedded and contributed to staff confidence and growth.

Recruitment and induction procedures were robust. New staff completed core training and felt well supported. While the 'National Induction Resource' had been used initially, it had not been revisited. Creating a clearer schedule for revisiting key elements during the induction period would support ongoing learning and reinforce expectations.

Policies and procedures enabled effective management of the service. Comprehensive accident and incident recording, supported by audits, helped identify patterns and address risks promptly.

Across the setting, staff demonstrated high levels of skill, experience, and commitment. They worked effectively as a team, contributing to a positive ethos and a shared focus on delivering high quality care and learning.

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

QIs inspected: Playing, learning and developing.

Children were fully engaged in a rich and stimulating play environment where they confidently exercised choice and ownership over their experiences. Throughout our visit, they showed high levels of independence, following their own interests and initiating meaningful play. Children decided where to play, which resources to use and how to interact with others, supporting their autonomy, wellbeing and sense of belonging. They were deeply absorbed in high quality play, often sustaining focus for extended periods in sensory and exploratory experiences such as sand, water and malleable materials. Their interactions reflected curiosity, creativity and enthusiasm, demonstrating a nurturing environment where they felt secure, valued and empowered to explore at their own pace.

Children experienced a well-balanced blend of child initiated and adult supported learning. They independently selected materials and developed imaginative ideas, such as building ramps for electric cars using wooden planks and bricks. Staff skilfully extended these experiences through open ended questioning, to promote problem solving and critical thinking. Adult initiated activities added breadth which included story writing, shape matching and group times focused on rhyme, storytelling and discussion. Staff support was adapted to children's age and stage, with younger children receiving help to scribe ideas and older children engaging in more independent sequencing and storytelling.

The environment offered a wide range of open ended and natural resources that encouraged creativity, exploration and imaginative play. Children built complex structures with blocks, planks, loose parts and recycled materials, developing spatial awareness and early engineering skills. Real-life items in the home corner supported role play and social development. Creative and sensory experiences were plentiful, with materials such as moon dough, pasta, flowers and natural resources encouraging exploration, filling, emptying and imaginative play. To maintain high quality, it would be beneficial for staff to continue replenishing and resetting areas during the session to keep spaces inviting.

Digital technology was used meaningfully to enhance learning. Children explored programmable electric cars using coloured coding squares and iPads, supporting early understanding of sequencing, cause and effect and directional language. Staff linked this work to the centre's digital technologies improvement priority, showing a consistent approach.

Free flow access between indoors and outdoors allowed children to choose their play environment. They independently collected jackets and moved outdoors, supported by staff who encouraged them to dress themselves in wetsuits and wellies. The outdoor area offered varied experiences including bikes, balancing equipment, football, water exploration and role play. Children transported water using tubes and jugs, demonstrating sustained engagement and early scientific thinking. Outdoor spaces were opened flexibly depending on staffing and risk assessment, ensuring safety while promoting autonomy. One parent told us "The outdoor space is amazing and my child loves being outdoors playing".

Children benefited from opportunities for risk beneficial play that developed confidence, physical skills and resilience. They built balancing structures, used climbing equipment and engaged in sewing and woodwork with real tools. Staff encouraged independence while ensuring safety.

Planning was flexible, responsive and informed by children's interests. Weekly discussions, observations and floor books helped identify emerging interests and link learning to Curriculum for Excellence. Mind maps supported planning when interests were less defined. Children's journals documented progress through meaningful observations, photographs and children's voice, supporting next steps and communication with families. Refining the next steps section would help strengthen alignment with online tracking.

Home learning was promoted through literacy, numeracy and outdoor learning bags. Staff knew children and families well, creating a warm, inclusive environment where voices were respected. Literacy and numeracy were well embedded across everyday play, supporting language development, creativity and problem solving skills.

Children are supported to achieve **5 - Very Good**

QIs inspected: Nurturing care and support.

Children experienced a warm, nurturing, and emotionally supportive environment where their wellbeing was prioritised. Staff knew children very well and demonstrated a strong understanding of their individual needs, preferences, and personalities. This enabled them to provide care that was sensitive, attuned, and highly responsive. Children benefitted from consistent, trusting relationships with staff, who used calm voices, gentle reassurance, and thoughtful interactions to help children feel secure and confident. Throughout the session, a range of sensory and play based opportunities supported emotional regulation, communication, and social development. These nurturing approaches helped children to settle quickly, engage purposefully in their play and learning, and develop a strong sense of belonging within the setting.

Care routines were flexible and adapted to meet the needs of each child. Personal care was carried out respectfully, preserving children's dignity and supporting their emotional security. Staff used routine moments to strengthen relationships, offering connection and comfort as required. To further enhance nurturing practice, the service should continue to support staff in consistently responding to children who need assistance with nose wiping, ensuring tissues and handwashing facilities remain readily accessible and promoting children's independence and comfort.

Mealtimes were calm, sociable, and nurturing. Children enjoyed unhurried routines that encouraged independence, such as self serving food, pouring drinks, and tidying away dishes. Staff sat with children, engaging in warm and relaxed conversations that promoted language development and supported secure attachments. These experiences helped create a strong sense of community and belonging, while ensuring children's nutritional and cultural needs were met sensitively and appropriately.

Transitions were planned thoughtfully to ensure children felt safe, secure, and well supported. Approaches such as home visits, tailored settling in arrangements, and individual transition plans enabled staff to build relationships with families and understand children's needs from the outset. Parents shared that these practices had made transitions smooth and reassuring for their children, highlighting the positive impact of the service's nurturing and family centred approach.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective and flexible personal planning. Staff involved parents meaningfully, providing regular opportunities to review plans and contribute to updates. Families reported feeling informed, listened to, and included in decision making. Where children had additional support needs, more targeted support plans were in place and staff worked positively with external agencies. To strengthen this further, consideration should be given to streamlining key information and linking strategies more clearly within personal plans to support clarity, planning and progress monitoring. Reviewing aspects of the care plan paperwork would also support clearer understanding of what parents are signing during six monthly updates.

The safe management of medication contributed to children's wellbeing. Clear procedures ensured medication was stored, administered, and recorded appropriately. Documentation sampled showed accurate completion of consent forms and administration records, reflecting safe and competent practice. Regular reviews ensured that information remained up to date and responsive to children's health needs.

There was a warm and nurturing staff culture that prioritised children's wellbeing. Staff were compassionate and supportive, recognising children's verbal and nonverbal cues and responding quickly to provide reassurance or additional help. This ensured children received the right support at the right time, including help with emotional regulation when needed.

Parents were meaningfully involved in the life of the service. Their views were actively sought through questionnaires, workshops, feedback on transitions, and self evaluation activities. The service demonstrated how parental feedback informed improvement through its 'You Said, We Did' approach, strengthening trust, communication, and shared decision making. One parent shared "The team here should be highly regarded - a fantastic group of teachers". This collaborative culture ensured families felt valued and helped children feel safe, settled, and well supported in their learning and wellbeing.

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

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