

Castlemilk Day Nursery Day Care of Children

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Castlemilk
Glasgow
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 June 2025

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003014819

About the service

Castlemilk Day Nursery is a day care of children service in a suburban area, in the south of Glasgow. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council.

The service can accommodate a maximum of 86 children not yet attending primary school at an one time. This includes no more than six children are aged under two years, no more 24 children are aged two years to under three years and no more than 56 children are aged three years to those not yet attending primary school full time. The outdoor space has been taken into account when agreeing the maximum number of children aged two to not yet attending primary school. Children must have access to the outdoor space at all times. At the time of our inspection there were a total of 89 children present on the first day and 63 children present on the second day.

The service operates from a purpose built premises in Castlemilk. The accommodation consists of three playrooms and a sensory room. Outdoor play spaces are accessible from playrooms and the Willow Garden is an additional outdoor play space. There is changing and toilet facilities for children and office, catering and staff facilities. The service is close to schools, transport routes, shops and community services.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 and 25 June 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. This inspection took place as a response to notifications that required further scrutiny. As part of our inspection, we assessed the actions taken by the service to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children.

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
- reviewed feedback from 10 parents and carers whose children attend the service
- reviewed feedback from 10 staff members employed in the service
- spoke with management and staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

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

- Following notification activity from the service the provider had taken action to prevent risk to children.
- Kind and nurturing interactions from staff helped children feel welcome and supported positive relationships.
- Lunchtime was a calm and unhurried experience, with staff providing supervision that contributed to a safe, supportive, and enjoyable mealtime for children.
- Personal plans should be further developed to ensure they fully support meeting children's needs and are updated as a minimum every six months.
- Children confidently transitioned between indoor and outdoor environments, exploring and engaging in play that reflected their individual interests and choices.
- The provider should review procedures for safeguarding children to keep children safe and protected from harm.
- The newly appointed manager had a clear improvement vision and was initiating and leading with improved changes to the service.

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

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| How good is our care, play and learning? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 4 - Good |

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children's care and learning routines were delivered with kindness and compassion from staff who were warm, nurturing and caring towards children. This supported children to feel safe, secure, and contributed to the positive relationships they had with staff. Parents agreed and one commented, "They are all welcoming and friendly and when you walk in the doors in morning, they all say morning to you from the admin to head teacher." Another parent said, "The staff go above and beyond to help me and my child out meeting his needs and are very accommodating."

Children were happy, settled, and confident in their environments and had developed friendships which enhanced their wellbeing. One child told us, "I like the crayons and playing with my friends."

Lunch was a relaxed and unhurried experience with staff supervising children, contributing to a safe mealtime experience. We observed improvements had been made to the mealtime experience. There were opportunities for older children to make choices, be independent and responsible with the self-serving of food and clearing away used lunch items. Opportunities to enhance responsibility and independence could be provided for two to three years aged children with the self-serving of food. Staff were aware of children's dietary requirements, contributing to children's health, safety, and wellbeing.

Staff knew the children well which meant they were able to respond to their individual needs and preferences. Personal plans were in place for children. Plans were created in partnership with parents and carers. There were inconsistencies with information recorded within plans. These did not always contain the information staff needed to support children and meet their needs. Some children would benefit from meaningful next steps. Not all plans were reviewed within six months. One parent told us, "Each time there is an update with his care plan I am asked to review and sign this, same with his medical plan. In contrast another parent said, "Never being asked or being told how they are doing in nursery. I have never had a one to one with his support worker." Management and staff should review personal plan procedures for consistency in the information as part of a child's plan. As this has the potential to compromise children's care and play and learning. We have made an area for improvement (see area for improvement 1).

Children's medicine was clearly labelled and stored safely. Health care plans were in place for children to support children's health and wellbeing. We discussed with the manager inconsistencies within the recording of the dosage of medication for some children between administration records and health care plans. We were satisfied that action would be taken to address these. We suggested the service review medication every three months in accordance with Care Inspectorate guidance 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' to continue to support with medication being reflective of children's current health needs.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun and engaged in a variety of experiences. They had good opportunities to lead their own play and learning, which impacted positively on their development and wellbeing. Parents told us, "My wee boy loves nursery, he likes all the different things what is offered to him and he has come on brilliantly since starting nursery" and "My son is very happy each morning about coming to nursery. He often talks about the experiences he's offered such as playing games, small world with the animals and playing in the garden with his peers."

Older children were using their hands and tools to manipulate clay and created shapes. Block play was popular with children who were selecting blocks of different shapes and sizes and created large models. This contributed to supporting children's problem-solving, imagination and language skills, which impacted positively on their development.

Children under three years had fun using playdough, building with sensory and construction toys, listening to stories, and pouring and exploring water play. This supported children's creativity, sensory, numeracy and language skills which impacted positively on their development.

Staff joined in with play and were responsive to children's interests. They stepped back from play and joined in again to spark children's interest and curiosity. Staff recognised where further challenge would be beneficial and equally, where support was required. This meant staff could respond meaningfully to children's needs and wishes and supported children's overall wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Management and staff had reviewed and were developing their procedures for planning for children's play and learning for older children. Staff were responsible for designated areas to support children's learning and progression. Plans were linked to curriculum guidelines and consisted of a medium and weekly plan. There were inconsistencies within the information recorded within the plans. Management were monitoring these and provided feedback to staff to acknowledge strengths of the plans and support with continued improvements. Some of the plans were responsive to children's choices and interests for play. This contributed to valuing and respecting children and provided a message to children that they mattered.

Children under three years plans were linked to schematic development and children's rights and provided opportunities to celebrate children's achievements. Staff captured children's interests to support literacy and took account of how the environment was supporting children's curiosity and enquiry. Plans were child centred, linked to evidence-based approaches and supported children's development and progression.

The service had transitioned from online learning journals to paper journals. Staff shared photographs and observations of children at play. We sampled observations and found inconsistencies. Observations lacked analysis and next steps, and there were inconsistencies in reporting timescales with some children having one observation per term. Regular documenting of children's observation and next steps will support progression in children's play and learning. As this has the potential to compromise children's play and learning we have made an area for improvement (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's care, play and learning management and staff should ensure individualised personal plans capture children's health and welfare needs, progression in learning and support children to reach

their full potential. Management and staff should ensure meaningful strategies are identified and recorded to support children. Plans should be reviewed in partnership with parents and carers as a minimum every six months.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in an environment that was bright, welcoming and clean. Play spaces were furnished with natural resources which helped create calm and relaxing environments. The displays had been changed to natural colours and materials, supporting a homely atmosphere. Management and staff shared their plans to continue to enhance their environments including new furniture and resources to support children's care, play and learning.

Toys and resources including natural materials were organised to support children's choices and curiosity and were accessible to children. Children were able to join in experiences which were of interest to them. Cosy areas provided opportunities for children to rest or relax, supporting children's health and wellbeing. Parents told us, "a wide range of resources are available for my son to learn and grow in his development, the children get a chance to have outings in their community" and "My child enjoys exploring the new sensory room and outdoors mostly as its more quiet."

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they had free flow access to the outdoors for fresh air and exercise. Children confidently moved between and within indoors and outdoors to support their choices and interests for play. Children were using loose parts materials to join in imaginative play. They created potions in their mud kitchen with lemons, smelling and squeezing these as part of their play. Children were participating in physical, challenging and risky play. Children had opportunities to develop their gross motor skills when using apparatus to climb, performing forward rolls and when riding bikes, steering and manoeuvring around obstacles.

Children and staff were growing their own vegetables. This provided children with a deeper understanding of where food items come from and helped to develop a positive attitude towards healthy eating.

Children benefited from a cloakroom area to change into and out of outdoor clothing. Some outdoor suits were available for children to support their comfort and play in most weathers. Staff shared they are waiting on additional suits to support more children to access these when needed.

Indoor environments were safe and secure for children and the service was well maintained to support children's safety and wellbeing. Following notification activity, management and staff had responded appropriately to risks supporting children's safety and wellbeing. We observed the service's management and response to risk with the closure of The Willow Garden. The service was carrying out maintenance to

improve the security of the area to minimise the risk of children leaving the service in response to containers being removed. This contributed to supporting children's safety and security within the service.

Children and staff were washing their hands before and after mealtimes, tables were cleaned between the serving of meals and children's noses were cleaned promptly to prevent the potential spread of infection. We discussed handwashing could be improved in the sensory room. Children and staff were using a multi purpose sink to wash their hands. There is potential for cross contamination when children and staff hand wash in a sink that was used for other purposes. Staff were responsive to this feedback during the inspection and began to make improvements to enhance children's health and wellbeing.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The new manager was passionate, visible, friendly, and approachable to children, families, and staff. They were leading with improved changes to the service that included planning procedures, auditing of medication and accidents and incidents and responding to risk. Staff told us the changes were positive and they were consulted within the developments to support improvements for children's care, play and learning. This helped to develop a motivated staff team who were committed to the children and families who attended the service.

Children were being consulted and their thoughts and feelings were considered in relation to their environments and play experiences. This was particularly evident when creating the service's outdoor growing area and within some curricular plans where children helped plan play experiences that met their interests. For example, staff were responsive to children's suggestions to change their indoor environment by having a bedroom in their role play area. This contributed to valuing and respecting children and provided a message to children that they mattered.

Parents were kept informed of news and the sharing of information through general feedback and nursery newsletters. Some consultation had taken place to support developments. This could be further enhanced to support parents to feel fully valued, use their views to measure change and as a starting point for improvements.

An improvement plan was in place which identified areas for development. We saw some evidence of improvements in priority areas of increasing staff knowledge and skills, the curriculum and ensuring wellbeing. Management and staff had also made improvements to lunchtime experiences. We could see the positive impact these were having for children.

The service was using a quality assurance calendar to monitor and audit aspects of the service. There were gaps within quality assurance systems including audits of accident and incidents, medication and care plans. The new manager had identified this and was making changes to identify strengths and areas for improvements. Although at the early stages we could see the potential this was having for improving outcomes for children and their families.

Monitoring of practice was taking place by the management team. This was positive in supporting continual staff development that promotes positive outcomes for children. Improvements could be made by re-visiting the areas for improvement. This would continue to support with celebrating success from staff or identify where further support may be needed to support with continuous improvement.

Staff had attended child protection training. They were aware of their responsibility to safeguard children in their care and had the ability to pass on possible concerns to management. We sampled child protection files and identified staff with lead safeguarding responsibilities had followed guidance and procedures to ensure any possible concerns were responded to appropriately for almost all children. When this did not happen, this meant that children were possibly at risk of harm. We discussed how information within records could be improved to include recording information of the outcome for all children. As this has the potential to compromise children's safety and wellbeing, we have made an area for improvement (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To keep children safe and protected the provider should ensure management and staff with lead safeguarding responsibilities are competent in reviewing chronologies and child protection records to assess the level of risk to children and concerns identified are responded to timeously. All safeguarding records should be updated with information to include outcomes to provide key staff with the information they need. This should be in accordance with the service's policies and procedures and the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff Deployment

Since the previous inspection the service had experienced some staffing changes and changes in leadership. A permanent manager was now in post and staff provided positive feedback about having consistency in staffing. This has the potential to support the service, children, families and staff team with continuity within the service.

Staff deployment worked well in almost all areas to support the needs of children in their care, play and learning. We discussed with management reviewing staff deployment at mealtimes for older children. This has the potential to support with lunch being a more sociable experience and providing more opportunities for staff to sit with children during the experience. Parents told us, "I feel the setting has enough staff to care for my child and have been open and honest about staffing issues reducing service to make sure there is enough staff at all times," and "Have had a few occasions where illness caused staffing issues that meant no care available for kids, but has not happened in a few months." One staff member told us, "Over the last

few months there was a number of weeks where the establishment was on reduced service due to staff sickness and holidays. Without Senior Leadership Team presence in the play floor there was at times where staff felt very short handed and struggling." We observed staff were deployed indoors and outdoors and supervised children in their play contributing to the safety of children. Procedures were in place to account for all children. Staff used registers and regular headcounts of children took place.

We observed examples of communication and team working taking place. Staff supported each other and communicated when leaving a space or attending to a child's needs. We discussed with management, staff could improve communication of children's movements between indoors and outdoors for older children. This would align with the service's policy and procedure to be accountable for children's movements between play environments.

The staff team provided a diverse range of skills and experience to the service within and across environments. Key working arrangements were in place to ensure consistency in the care provided to individual children across the day. One parent said, "The staff, they're like a second family to my child. They feel so safe and happy with them."

Staff participated in training and development that supported their professional practice. They shared with us the opportunities enhanced their learning and skills, and how this, in turn, positively impacted their practice. One staff member said, "My training has helped me to create a nurturing environment where children have a safe space to explore their environment and have opportunities for self regulation."

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

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| How good is our care, play and learning? | 4 - Good |
| 1.1 Nurturing care and support | 4 - Good |
| 1.3 Play and learning | 4 - Good |

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| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 4 - Good |

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| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 4 - Good |

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| How good is our staff team? | 4 - Good |
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 4 - Good |

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