

Wemyss Bay Nursery Class

Day Care of Children

Wemyss Bay Primary School and Nursery Class
Ardgowan Road
Wemyss Bay
PA18 6AT

Telephone: 01475 715 976

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 June 2025

Service provided by:
Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000212

Service no:
CS2003016349

About the service

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011.

Wemyss Bay Nursery Class is based within Wemyss Bay Primary School in the coastal town of Wemyss Bay in Inverclyde. The service is provided by the local authority and is managed on a day to day basis by the head teacher. A maximum of 51 children from three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service operates term time only.

Children have access to a large play room and fully enclosed garden area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 04 and 06 June 2025 between 09:00 and 16:45. 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 five children using the service;
- spoke with five staff and the manager;
- spoke with four using the service;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from eight families;
- observed practice and daily life;
- 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; and
- 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 kind and nurturing interactions, supporting them to feel valued and secure.
- Planning and observation processes should be further developed to ensure children experience progression in their learning.
- Children benefitted from free flow access to a stimulating outdoor environment.
- Children experienced an environment that was welcoming, clean and safe.
- Self evaluation and quality assurance processes should be further developed and embedded to support high quality outcomes for children and families.
- Respectful, supportive relationships ensured staff were happy and felt valued.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
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, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and settled and enjoyed playing with their peers. Staff were kind and nurturing in their approach, offering cuddles and reassurance if needed. Most parents told us they valued the relationships staff had built with their child and families. One parent commented: "The staff team are fantastic. Not only do you build up a relationship with your child's keyworker, you also get to know the whole team who give feedback on your child also and fill you in on funny stories that have happened with them." As a result, children felt secure and developed positive attachments.

Staff knew children well and could discuss individual children's health and emotional wellbeing needs. Personal plans were in place and contained some relevant information to support staff in meeting children's emotional, health and wellbeing needs. Whilst staff had identified individual targets for children, it was not always clear what strategies were needed to support progression and development within this area. We discussed with the management team, how monitoring children's personal plans should now be implemented to ensure consistency when planning 'How' children's needs will be met. This will ensure children continue to receive care and support that is reflective of their current needs.

Where external agency involvement was needed, staff liaised with professionals to ensure children received the right support. To ensure this continues to be effective, we asked that where professional discussions have taken place, these be recorded on a chronology of significant events. This will ensure information is easily accessible and in a simpler format for staff.

Mealtimes were a relaxed and unhurried experience. It was evident that staff valued this opportunity to sit with children and engage in conversation about their day. Opportunities to develop life skill and independence were promoted. For example, children were supported to self serve, pour their own water and clear away their own dishes. Children's dietary requirements were catered for, including allergies, intolerances, and cultural needs. As a result, mealtimes were a quality experience where children could engage with their peers and develop important life skills.

Personal care routines at times, did not fully respect children's privacy. We asked that staff were mindful when communicating with each other about children's toileting, ensuring this is done appropriately in a way that will ensure children's dignity is respected. There were some spaces for children to rest and relax, however this could be further developed. Whilst we did not observe children sleep, evidence showed that children's sleep was monitored at ten minute intervals in line with best practice guidance.

Most families agreed communication was a strength and that they felt involved in their child's care. One parent told us: "The teachers are friendly and approachable. It is obvious that they genuinely care for and do the utmost for the children." Planned approaches including; stay and play sessions, end of year outing and supporting the lending library supported families to be involved in their child's care. The management team told us of future plans to introduce a parents committee. This will further strengthen parental participation.

Robust medication processes ensured children's overall health and wellbeing was supported.

Clear medication consent forms and medical care plans were in place to support safe and effective practice. These were audited regularly to ensure they were accurate and reflective of children's current needs.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Most children were having fun with their friends as they engaged in activities, including matching games and arts and crafts play. Children were comfortable with staff and happily invited staff into their play. We saw some examples of staff using effective questioning to extend children's learning, however this was not consistent. As a result, there were some missed opportunities for children to be challenged or supported through play. Staff should now consider the range of interactions and questioning to support children's higher order thinking skills. This will ensure breadth, depth and variation of experiences to ensure effective support or challenge for all children, supporting progression.

Planning processes had recently been reviewed and were intended to support children to lead their own play. We sampled children's journals and noted that staff currently pre plan learning intentions in advance, this included themes and topic to inform planned activities. We discussed with the management team how a more responsive approach to planning would be beneficial. For example, experiences linked to children's individual needs and interests, would support children to learn in a context that was meaningful to them.

Children's play was self-directed, and we saw children confidently choose where they wanted to play and who they wanted to play with. Play materials available to children did not always support variation in skills and foster individual creativity. For example, symmetry was a focus of this week, but resources throughout the play environment did not support children's understanding through their chosen play area. Further improvements should be made to ensure all children have the opportunity to revisit, extend and consolidate learning.

Children were confident in their play and it was evident when sampling learning journals that they were learning. Parents told us they enjoyed seeing photographs of their child during their day at nursery. One parent commented: "The learning journal is a great way to keep in touch with the staff as well as see pictures of what the kids are up to and what they are going to be learning about each month." Recorded observations of children's learning, within their journals, at times, lacked sufficient detail to show analysis of learning and skills developed. Further development is needed to show how staff observe children through play, plan high-quality experiences that extend children's interests and curiosities. We discussed with the management team how further use of play provocations would support this. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

Processes for tracking children's attainment over time were in place, however, due to gaps in how staff observed, support and assess children it was not always clear how accurate this data was. We discussed with the leadership team how further monitoring and mentoring of staff could improve the quality of attainment data gathered. This can be used to inform targeted support for children, ensuring children continue to experience progression and depth across their learning.

Children's learning was enhanced through effective partnerships working with community groups, including Inverclyde food network. Children were keen to show us their allotment and tell us what they were currently growing. As a result, children were supported to understand the importance of sustainability. Parents told us they valued the opportunities their children had to get out in the local community. "Beach clean, school pitch, maze just at the community centre and sponsored walk", were a few of the things parents told us their children enjoyed.

Areas for improvement

1. The management team should monitor the quality of staff observations and offer guidance and on-going support to help them to undertake high-quality observations of children through play. This should support staff to ensure children's ideas, wishes and interests are used to inform planned play and learning experiences and are evident within the observation, assessment and planning cycle. This will support children to progress and reach their full potential.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a welcoming, inclusive ethos. Spaces for children were bright, clean and well cared for. Furniture both indoors and outdoors for children were of a good standard and appropriate for use. Children's artwork was on display throughout the service, and children had space to store their personal items demonstrating to children that they were valued.

Children independently chose where they played and moved confidently between the indoor and outdoor play spaces. Wet weather clothing was readily accessible and children were encouraged to change independently, with staff available to support if needed. The outdoor space was a strength of the service, with many children choosing to spend the majority of their time outside. During our inspection children enjoyed playing in puddles, engaging in physical games and using water to 'put out fires'. As a result, children's overall health and wellbeing was supported.

Overall, effective infection prevention and control measures protected children from the potential spread of infection. Staff washed their hands at appropriate times and children were supported to take part in hand washing practices before lunch and when coming in from outdoors.

Boundary fencing and gates were in place to keep children safe. Regular headcounts were undertaken, and whiteboards updated to ensure staff were aware of total number of children present. Registers were in place and accurate for the number of children attending, however, they were not always promptly updated on children's departure. Staff should consider recording children's time of arrival/departure to support them in tracking any patterns/changes for children.

Written risk assessments were in place for all areas of the service indoors and outside. We discussed with the management team how these should be further developed to ensure they are accurate in terms of risk identified. For example, some risk identified in the outings risk assessment were not relevant. Where new resources and materials had been added to the environment, these were not reflected in the current risk assessments. For example, the hammock and self made fertiliser had not been added to the current outdoor risk assessment. To support a safe environment for children risk assessments should be reviewed and updated.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The management and staff team engaged well during the inspection and were receptive to suggestions we made. The management team were reflective of their improvement journey and demonstrated a commitment to improving outcomes for children and families.

The service had recently reviewed their vision, values and aims in consultation with children and families. This supported families to understand what to expect from their early learning and childcare experience and promoted inclusion.

A whole school improvement plan was in place, however there was limited acknowledgement of early years class. Where priorities had been identified in the previous Standard and Quality report, it was not clear to see where these had been incorporated into the current service improvement plan. For example the quality of staff interactions, self evaluation processes and pupil participation had been identified as areas of next steps, however there was no evidence of progression or impact of these. The management team agreed that these would benefit from being looked at in more depth and developed.

The management team told us they was in the early stages of implementing self-evaluation and quality assurance processes to enhance the quality of the service. Staff told us they had previously been consulted and asked their views and opinions on improvements. One member of staff told us: "We are always asked our opinion on new ideas being introduced into the nursery, and how we think it can be improved." The management team should continue to further develop and embed these process to ensure continual, sustained improvements. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

Staff spoke positively about the support the received from the senior leadership team. They placed value in the open-door policy supporting personal and professional conversations, enabling them to feel that their wellbeing was important. A formalised process for staff positive conversations was in place. One member of staff told us: "Management are supportive and always checking in with staff. We have annual positive conversation with senior management to review any areas I could be supported. We are also made aware that if we every have any concerns we can speak to management at any point. This process should now be further strengthened to support quality reflective discussions that celebrate successes and identify targeted development opportunities.

Areas for improvement

1. To provide a high-quality service that meets the needs of children and families, the management team should ensure that quality assurance processes are improved, imbedded and impact positively on outcomes for children. To achieve this, action taken should include, but is not limited to; monitoring the quality of service provision, undertaking self-evaluation and developing a nursery classes improvement plan which identifies key priorities for improvement.

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).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator: 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff had developed strong relationships with children and families and it was evident staff cared for children. One parent told us: "They are all warm, welcoming and approachable." As a result, children and families felt valued.

Staff engaged well in the inspection process and were open and honest during discussions. Staff valued the positive relationships that had developed within the team. One member of staff told us: "We have a great team with great relationships with the families."

Staffing levels were appropriate to ensure ratios were maintained and children were cared for safely. Staff were deployed to promote continuity of care and were flexible in moving across areas as needed. The management team supported staff by spending regular time on the nursery floor, including during busier times of the day. This helped build positive working relationships.

Children benefitted from a staff team who brought a mix of experience, and knowledge. For example, some staff had undertaken further qualifications including degree level. Through observations we noted further development of staff skills around extending and scaffolding children's learning is needed. The management team agreed to monitor this and put strategies in place to further support staff. This would improve outcomes for children.

Staff have participated in a variety of learning and development opportunities. Including in service day events and more target courses. We sampled some staff post learning reflections and noted they lacked analysis of their learning or how this had influenced their practice. We discussed with the management team, how these post learning reflections are important to support staff in understanding the impact of their learning and how this has improved outcomes for children and families.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

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
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.