

## School's Out - Mount Vernon Day Care of Children

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Mount Vernon  
Glasgow  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
29 September 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Ann Tierney

**Service provider number:**  
SP2013985519

**Service no:**  
CS2013322263

## About the service

School's Out - Mount Vernon is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 50 children of primary school age. The care service operates during term time from Monday to Friday from 15:00 until 18:00 and during school holidays from 08:00 until 18:00. The service is provided from a church hall in the Mount Vernon area of Glasgow. An outdoor play area has been identified within the church grounds. The service is close to two primary schools, a local park and main roads.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 September 2025 between 15:30 and 18:15. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children attending the service
- received electronic feedback from six families whose children attended the service
- received electronic feedback from two staff who worked in the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced warm and supportive caregiving and engaged in fun play experiences that were responsive to their changeable interests and demands.
- We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's rights to play.
- Opportunities for engaging children in personal planning could be extended and provide children with a greater sense of ownership of their next steps for play and development.
- The management and staff had a clear understanding of how they wanted to take forward quality improvements within the service.
- The security of the outdoor play area required improvement to ensure children's safety and wellbeing were not compromised.

## 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	4 - 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 leadership approach we observed in place was clearly founded on principles of high-quality care and learning and active engagement with children and their families. The manager was committed to providing the highest standards for children, and families. The manager and staff were committed to including all stakeholders in the design and review of their vision, values and aims. We discussed how these might be regularly reviewed and adapted to highlight key aspirations of the children and families who currently use the service.

The manager had gathered feedback from parents and children to help change and inform ongoing improvements to the service. Effective communication between the manager and the staff team ensured an understanding of the service's improvement goals. The manager had created conditions where all staff feel increasingly confident to initiate well-informed change and share responsibility for the process. Staff told us how they engaged meaningfully with self evaluation and used team meetings to discuss and reflect on their practice. We discussed with the manager how this shared reflection could be enhanced by utilising challenge questions linked to school age childcare quality indicators drawn from national quality frameworks. We highlighted practical consultation strategies for widening family engagement in the improvement planning process. The staff agreed these would enhance communication with parents and help strengthen the capacity of service to deliver care and support tailored towards children's and families' particular needs and choices.

The importance of recruiting and retaining a stable and skilled team was recognised by the manager as essential to the wellbeing of children and staff. At the time of the inspection the manager was in the process of recruiting a new playworker. She discussed the importance of selecting the right individual with the capability and capacity to sustain and improve outcomes for children. The manager prioritised values-based recruitment by clearly communicating the values that matter most to children and families using the service and assessing whether each candidates' values aligned. We found that existing staff had been recruited in a way that was informed by national safer recruitment guidance. We highlighted the value of adapting current induction procedures to reflect best practice approaches outlined in the Scottish Government's national induction resource. This can help to enhance the systems in place for ensuring newly recruited staff have the knowledge and skills necessary for providing high-quality care for children and that they fully understand their responsibilities within the team.

## Children play and learn 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: Playing, learning and developing

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting children's right to play through a wide range of creative and physical play experiences.

Children were consulted and their ideas listened to inform daily, weekly and monthly play plans. We found that children had lots of freedom to pursue their own play ideas during the observed session. This promoted children's choice and independence in their play. We looked at examples of play experiences that had been captured in displays and personal plans. These provided evidence that children were happy and confident in their play and this was consistent with our observations on the day of the inspection.

Staff encouraged children's interactions with each other, and recognised the important role other children have in enriching play. Staff used a variety of approaches to respond to children's cues to support development of self-regulation, empathy, confidence, creativity and curiosity. Staff understood that interacting and exploring with children was a valuable way to foster understanding, and a sense of wonder and excitement about the world. This enabled children to make the most of their interactions and experiences. We found children had opportunities to participate in a variety of creative and active play experiences including: tree swinging, den building, mud kitchen, dancing, ball games, imaginative play, gymnastics, messy play, wheeled toys, skipping, loose parts play, construction, board games arts and crafts, bughouse creating. During term time holidays the children also had opportunities to visit a variety of local places of interests including Baltic Street Adventure Play Park. Children and staff told us how they celebrated important annual cultural events including Burns Night, Chinese New Year, Mother's Day and Red Nose Day. The balance of organised and freely chosen extended play opportunities provided opportunities for children to develop social and physical skills, confidence and self-esteem as well as awareness of the wider community.

We found that the security of the outdoor play area required improvement to ensure children's safety and wellbeing were not compromised (see Area for Improvement 1). While staff were vigilant during outdoor play, aspects of the physical environment did not fully meet best practice standards for secure boundaries and controlled access. Enhancing the security measures will reduce potential risks and provide children with a safer, more protected space to explore and play freely. We highlighted a range of strategies including the use of fencing or mobile barriers that would offer reassurance to families and support staff in delivering high-quality outdoor experiences with confidence.

All of the qualified staff we spoke to during our visit had a good understanding of the playwork principles and used this to support children's play experiences. Staff told us how they used observations of children's play to promote opportunities for children's independence and creativity. We highlighted observation approaches that help to identify children's most engaging and involving group play experiences. We discussed approaches for working together with children and families to celebrate and share their successes and achievements in play. We discussed with staff how this could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments. This can extend opportunities for staff to reflect on when children display deep level engagement in their play and enhance systems in place that provide autonomy and choice as to how this will be taken forward.

### Areas for improvement

1. To support children's safety and security the provider should review and strengthen the perimeter security arrangements for the designated outdoor play area. This should include reassessing and introducing new physical boundaries, access points, and supervision strategies to minimise risk and ensure children can play and explore safely.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "My environment is secure and safe." (HSCS 5.19)

## 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 were cared for in a friendly and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported. All of the parents that completed our survey strongly agreed or agreed that they were happy with the care and support their child received in the service. Staff told us how they worked with children to create spaces and experiences which were culturally sensitive, accessible and inclusive for all. Staff knew the children and families very well and this helped them respond sensitively to individual needs and circumstances. Families had opportunities to discuss their child's care and development, both informally and formally. Children told us that when they had an accident or a fall staff were warm, caring and nurturing. We found these actions supported an overall approach where children's sense of security and confidence was being actively fostered.

Throughout the play session we observed it was clear that children experienced warm and supportive caregiving. We observed staff adapting daily planned activities and being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that promoted self-esteem, encouraged them to feel valued as well as responsible for their play choices. One parent told us: "They are in an environment where there is structure, consistency and they are happy." Another parent commented: "My child feels safe and nurtured in the environment."

We looked at how the service's planning approaches for children's care, play and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. The manager told us how they worked with parents to ensure personal plans included the key information needed to provide appropriate care, meet any medical needs and take forward children's play interests. We identified a need to ensure that personal plans were closely monitored to ensure they were reviewed by parents at least every six months or when important changes occurred. We discussed with staff approaches that may make a gathering of personal planning information more collaborative and provide children with a greater sense of ownership of their next steps for play and development. We discussed with staff how personal plans had potential to include a forward-looking element that highlighted the children's own play goals. Staff agreed that this would provide time and space for children to regularly review, evaluate and adapt their plans. It can enhance the existing approach to personal plans by ensuring they become a meaningful forward-looking planning tool that supports children's ownership of developmentally challenging play opportunities.

We found that while staff recognised the importance of recording significant events relating to child protection and wellbeing, chronologies recording formats could be developed to reflect best practice guidance. By strengthening chronology practice in line with the Care Inspectorate's guidance, the service will be better equipped to monitor children's experiences over time, respond promptly to emerging concerns, and ensure that children's safety and wellbeing are robustly safeguarded. The manager agreed to implement these changes during the course of our inspection.

## 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	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good



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