

# Pitreavie Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Pitcorthie Drive  
Dunfermline  
KY11 8AB

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 September 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Fife Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004005267

**Service no:**  
CS2003017106

## About the service

Pitreavie Primary School Nursery is a daycare of children service provided by Fife council. The service is registered to provide a care to a maximum of 104 children from three years of age up to an age to attend primary school.

The service is located in Dunfermline on the same site as the primary school. The accommodation comprises of three playrooms that open onto a fully enclosed outdoor play area. Nursery children use other parts of the school premises including the dining area and the woodland area adjoining the school playground. It is near local shops and public transport routes.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 September 2025 between 09:00 and 16:30 and 16 September 2025 between 09:00 and 13:00. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from 11 families
- spoke with the staff and management team
- 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
- 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 were happy, settled, and enjoyed their time at nursery.
- Strong relationships between staff and families supported children's wellbeing.
- Children were developing their understanding of how to keep themselves safe using the SIMOA campaign.
- Children were supported by staff who worked well together, which created a warm and welcoming environment.
- Safeguarding practices were not consistently followed. This placed children at risk of harm.
- There were limited quality assurances processes in place to effectively review children's experiences and outcomes and ensure all staff were supported to improve their practice.

## 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	2 - Weak
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?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated different parts of this key question as adequate and good, with an overall evaluation of adequate. Whilst we identified important strengths, key areas of performance need to improve.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at nursery. Almost all children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care and learning needs. Most staff recognised children as individuals and responded effectively to their needs and wishes which provided them with responsive care throughout the day. They communicated with children at their level in a quiet and sensitive way.

Children were encouraged to be independent which helped to increase their confidence and responsibility throughout daily experiences. Staff supported children with their personal care in a sensitive manner, effectively promoting children's dignity and privacy, while fostering children's independence and choice.

Most children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning which had been reviewed with families. Staff knew children well and were aware of their individual needs. However, information and support strategies for some children were not clearly documented. This meant staff did not have the right information to effectively review and establish progress. This had potential to compromise continuity and consistency in care (**see area for improvement one**).

Most children experienced positive mealtimes. Children were encouraged to participate in these daily routines which provided them with some opportunities to be responsible and independent. Staff sat with children during lunch which supported a positive, social experience. In one room children could choose when they had lunch and had opportunities which promoted independence such as, self-serving their own food. However, these opportunities were not consistent across the setting. The service should now consider how they can enhance opportunities to promote independence at lunchtime for all children.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, inconsistencies in practice needed to be addressed to ensure children's safety and wellbeing were consistently prioritised. Staff we spoke with were able to describe the procedures for reporting child protection and wellbeing concerns to the designated child protection leads, which reflected a positive commitment to safeguarding. However, safeguarding practices were not consistently followed. For example, personal mobile phone use did not align with best practice in maintaining a safe and secure environment. This presented a potential breach of confidentiality and safeguarding protocols. In addition to this, not all chronologies were being effectively used to assess and ensure children's safety and wellbeing. This meant that significant events in a child's life may not have been fully considered to ensure timely interventions and support were given when required (**see requirement one**).

Staff knew children and families well which enabled strong connections supporting children's wellbeing. The leadership team and staff were visible at drop off and collection times. This created a warm and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported. Daily communication and online updates contributed to creating positive attachments and enabled opportunity for information to be shared between nursery and home. Families engaged in meaningful learning experiences and built stronger connections with the service through opportunities such as PEEP, Bookbug, and Tea and Toast sessions.

Parents comments included, 'I like stay and play and see-saw updates, and staff talk to us daily' and 'All staff are really friendly and good communication- there's lots of information displayed'.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were involved in leading their learning experiences. They had opportunities to experience adventurous and imaginative play which promoted their curiosity and creativity as well as problem solving and critical thinking skills. Children engaged in activities outside, such as water play, exploring loose parts and natural materials and physical play. Indoors, children were engaged with the well resourced craft areas; experimenting with playdough and paint. Displayed examples of real art work prompted children's imagination and creativity. There was a sense of purpose and enjoyment, which meant children experienced learning opportunities that promoted meaningful engagement, exploration and critical thinking.

Children had good opportunities to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills. These were woven into the play experiences both indoors and outdoors with real life resources and natural and opened-ended materials across the setting. Children's play and learning was supported well during the inspection. Most staff were responsive to children's requests in their play and intervened at appropriate times. This contributed to children feeling valued and having the ability to lead their own learning by following their interests. Some staff used effective questioning to extend and develop children's individual learning. This supported children to be challenged and built their confidence in their play and learning. As a result, children experienced exciting and fun activities.

Children had good opportunities to connect with their local community. For example, children regularly visited local shops, Duloch woods, and the local beach. This enriched their learning and social experiences and promoted a sense of belonging.

Planning approaches had been recently reviewed and revised by the staff team, resulting in a more streamlined and supportive format. Responsive planning was recorded and demonstrated effective differentiation, which was positively impacting children's learning experiences. Staff were using this approach to respond to children's emerging interests and ensuring learning remains relevant and engaging. We suggested to the team ways in which the intentional planning could be more detailed. This could strengthen the link between planning and outcomes, and support more targeted assessment of children's progress. Floor books had been used effectively to evidence the starting points of learning journals. This practice supported child-led learning and provided a clear narrative of progression over time.

Children's progress and development was recorded through personal learning journals (PLJ's) and developmental overviews which were shared with parents. Some observations identified children's knowledge, skills and understanding and some were descriptive. The leadership team should continue to monitor staff practice to help identify inconsistencies and provide support in quality observations.

## Requirements

1. By 7 November 2025, the provider must keep children safe and protected from harm by ensuring staff and leaders fully implement child protection and safeguarding procedures, including whistleblowing.

To achieve this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) the manager and staff are competent in completing chronologies and use these to take appropriate action to support children and their families.
- b) ensure all staff understand child protection procedures, and implement these in practice
- c) ensure all staff implement relevant safeguarding policies, including use and storage of staff personal mobile phones.

**This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).**

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

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are supported to achieve their potential, the manager should develop personal planning which clearly identifies children's progress and achievements, along with relevant and achievable next steps in learning. This is to ensure that children's needs are planned and met.

To achieve this, plans should;

- set out how children's needs will be met, including strategies of support
- record how children have progressed.
- be reviewed every six months or more often if the child's needs a change.
- be shared and updated with children, parents and carers.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As child, 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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**2.2 Children experience high quality facilities**

Playrooms were clean, bright, and well furnished which helped create calm and relaxing environments. All rooms were welcoming and inviting spaces and provided children with ample space to play. Children made good use of the space available, were happy and played independently or cooperatively in groups. This helped them to build positive relationships with their peers and develop their social skills. Resources were well maintained, safe and accessible to children.

Children were happy and engaged in play whilst outdoors. The outdoor environment provided opportunities for active, and energetic play across two gardens. Children were curious and creative with loose parts and had fun as they explored the natural environment. Opportunities for free flow play meant children could make choices about where they wanted to play.

Children were developing their understanding of how to keep themselves safe using the SIMOA campaign. They were involved in a variety of experiences such as learning about safety in the community and to support their wellbeing. They were supported effectively by staff to assess risks and implement measures to keep themselves safe. One child told us 'Simoa helps keep us safe'. This helped children to develop essential skills and build confidence.

Infection prevention and control practices contributed to children's continued wellbeing. The service was clean and well maintained. Children clearly understood the need for good hygiene and hand washing at necessary times. This contributed to minimising risks of infection for both the staff team and children.

To support the service to keep children safe, we highlighted areas that would benefit from additional security measures. For example, there was potential for children to exit the main door unnoticed, increasing the risk of children being unaccounted for.

Information about children and their families was kept in a safe and secure manner in line with general data protection regulations (GDPR). Sensitive information was stored safely, with physical records kept in a locked filing cabinet. This helped to maintain children's privacy and confidentiality.

## How good is our leadership?

2 - Weak

We made an evaluation of weak for this key question. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children were cared for in a service with clear vision, values and aims. These were shared with parents when children started, along with information about the service. This helped families understand what to expect and supported a clear and consistent approach from staff. We suggested that when the service vision, values and aims are next reviewed, this should include all stakeholders so that children, families and staff are fully involved, and their views are included. This would promote the sense of belonging and partnership for children, families and staff.

Families had some opportunities to be involved in the service. Informative notice boards and the sharing of information on 'seesaw' provided opportunities for involvement. Parents were asked for regular feedback through questionnaires and at informal events such as tea and toast sessions. This helped provide opportunities for parents to be involved in developing the service.

Regular meetings between staff and the leadership team provided some opportunities for staff to come together and reflect on practice. However, we found that reflections were not always leading to improved outcomes for children. As a result, there was not a clear cycle of improvement in place to ensure identified improvements were impacting positively on children's experiences.

There were limited quality assurance processes in place to effectively review children's experiences and outcomes. For example, we identified gaps in the auditing of accidents and incidents, and no audits of medication had been undertaken. This had the potential to impact on children's health safety and welfare. Monitoring of practice had not yet been established. This meant children experienced inconsistencies in the quality of staff interactions. When concerns or complaints had been raised, including in relation to safeguarding issues, appropriate actions from these had not been identified or addressed. This failure compromised children's safety and wellbeing (**see requirement one**).

The service did not have a robust approach to their regulatory responsibilities. Services are required to notify the Care Inspectorate of certain events. The service had not submitted relevant notifications to Care Inspectorate. Management must now ensure that the Care Inspectorate are notified appropriately and in a timely manner of all protection concerns, allegations of misconduct and incidents. This would support the effective safeguarding of children (**see requirement one**).



## Requirements

1. By 20 February 2026, the provider must ensure improved outcomes for children by implementing effective systems of quality assurance.

To achieve this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) the leadership team effectively monitors the work of staff and the service as a whole and any actions are addressed effectively.
- b) robust audits are developed and implemented, and any actions are addressed effectively.
- c) self-evaluation is used effectively to support improvement.
- d) concerns or complaints are effectively managed, including identifying and taking appropriate actions.
- f) relevant notifications are submitted to the Care Inspectorate within appropriate time scales.

**This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) and 18(3) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210)**

**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) and '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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 4.3 Staff deployment

Children benefited from consistent relationships with familiar adults, for example, during busier times of the day such as mealtimes. This supported children's emotional security and engagement. They were supported by staff who worked well together, which created a warm and welcoming environment. One parent commented, 'My child absolutely loves going to nursery, the teachers are all great'.

Most staff were motivated, enthusiastic and committed to their role. There were sufficient staff to support children and meet their needs, including busier times of the day. The effective planning of staff breaks minimised disruption to children's routines.

The mix of staff knowledge and skills across the setting had been well considered. This meant that children experienced quality care, play and learning experiences. Overall, the ethos between team members was positive and interactions between staff were kind and respectful. This helped create a positive atmosphere for both staff and children to feel comfortable and secure in. For most of the time, staff communicated well with each other when a task took them away from their designated area. For example, they would inform each other when leaving the room or when attending to a child's needs.

New staff were supported by mentors throughout their induction period which helped them to develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities to meet children's needs. There was scope to make better use of the reflective questions within the national induction resource to support staff in further developing their practice.

## 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

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
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?	2 - Weak
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	2 - Weak
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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