

# St. Patrick's Family Learning Centre Day Care of Children

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Kilsyth  
Glasgow  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
23 October 2025

**Service provided by:**  
North Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000237

**Service no:**  
CS2007144810

## About the service

St. Patrick's Family Learning Centre is registered to provide care for a maximum of 87 children at any one time, of those 87 no more than six are aged under two years and no more than 15 are aged two years to under three years. At the time of inspection 85 children were registered to the service.

Care is provided from a single storey purpose built building, which is located within a quiet residential area of Kilsyth, North Lanarkshire. The service is situated close to shops, transport links and other amenities. Children are cared for in three separate playrooms with direct access to secure gardens.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 October 2025 between 09:00 and 17:15. We provided feedback to the service and provider on 23 October 2025. 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.
- reviewed electronic feedback from seven parents.
- spoke with staff and management.
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- observed practice and daily life.
- reviewed documents.
- spoke with three visiting professionals.

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 that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

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

- Leaders had developed a strong ethos of continuous improvement and staff were empowered to share ideas and take on individual leadership roles.
- Children were engaged in play and were exploring resources and activities with confidence.
- Daily opportunities for all children to play outdoors were provided, which had a positive impact on children's social, physical and emotional skills.
- Staff knew children very well and responded to their individual needs and wishes.
- Strong relationships had been established with families, which resulted in positive outcomes for children.
- Staff understood the importance of an individual approach to transitions to meet needs 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

### Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The vision for creating a nurturing, loving and respectful environment was reflective in practice. Clear vision and values meant that staff had a strong understanding of the aspirations of the service. The core values of children's rights, care and supporting children to achieve their full potential created a nurturing and respectful learning environment which valued children as individuals. Whilst this was frequently reviewed by staff, we discussed where parents and children could be further involved to help ensure an inclusive approach in reviewing the settings vision and values.

Staff were passionate and motivated and wanted the best outcomes for children. There was a strong ethos of continuous improvements within the setting that enhanced the delivery of high-quality practice. Leaders had embedded a shared approach to self-evaluation, where staff were confident in sharing their view, ideas and suggestions. This helped support reflection and continuous improvement to promote positive outcomes for children. Staff spoke positively about contributing towards change and felt their suggestions mattered and they were heard. Staff told us "we are always training to improve our practice and keeping things up to date sharing practices and knowledge been colleagues" and "the whole staff team participate in discussions and everyone's input is valued."

Leaders and staff had a shared understanding of plans in place for improvement. This was enhanced through distributive leadership approaches. This included well informed initiative's such as digital technology, communication groups and wellbeing which was supporting the continuous development of the service and the emotional wellbeing of children. We discussed where this could be further developed through recording the impact of these initiatives.

Quality assurance processes supported the continuous improvement of the service, this included a detailed improvement plan. Timeously check-ins supported staff in recording their progression within improvements, as well as highlighting where adjustments needed to be made. Management used monitoring strategies such as playroom observations and audits of learning journals to support staff practice. We discussed where some approaches could be further developed, for example auditing personal plans.

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm and inclusive environment. Effective methods of communication, such as newsletters, surveys and parent feedback supported parents to be included in evaluating aspects of the service and driving improvement. Parents told us "we are always asked for suggestions or ideas to help improve. They also have a parent question every month" and "always looking for comments on ways to improve on the notice board outside the play room." The service could further developed their approaches to reflect the outcome of parents and children's voice within the self-evaluation processes.

Induction programmes helped to develop staff awareness of the setting and the needs of children. The induction processes included discussion with management and being mentored by a designated staff member within playrooms.

The service were in the process of using 'National Induction Resource' (NIR) to support staff to reflect on key areas of practice, their roles and knowledge and skills. We agreed this would continue to support staff in delivering high quality care for children.

## Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

### Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children's right to play was at the heart of the service's approach. Children were having fun and were engaged in a range of play opportunities. Staff recognised and valued play as an opportunity for developing skills for life, promoting children's learning. This included supporting children's independence when getting ready to play in the garden. Children told us "we can play in the garden whenever we want", "look at me, I can get ready all by myself" and "I love playing on the bikes."

Consideration had been given to the layout of most rooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interest and develop their ideas. The enabling and creative environment supported older children to lead and direct their own learning both indoors and outdoors. They had time, space and support to make decisions and develop their learning, creativity, resilience and independence. A rolling snack and free-flow approach to play meant children's play was not unnecessarily interrupted and they could make meaningful play choices, promoting child led play. One parent told us "[my child] loves outdoors and [they] love that [they are] free to explore this area when they want." We discussed where further consideration to the provocations and invitations to learning within younger playrooms would further support and stimulate children's natural curiosity, creativity and independence.

Staff were knowledgeable and demonstrated a strong understanding of what children need to learn and develop. They were responsive to children and interacted in a way that supported their thinking and learning. Staff used effective questioning, commenting and pausing to allow children time to think and make decisions through their discoveries. Children were engaged in play experience for prolonged periods of time showing high levels of engagement, excitement, wonder and awe. This included children exploring digital technology and exploring schemas (repeating patterns of behaviour) when exploring the water features outside, filling and emptying containers.

Planning approach were child centred and responsive to children's interest, using a mixture of intentional and responsive planning. Staff used observations of individual children's patterns of play to plan, support, challenge and extend their learning. This enabled children to progress at their own pace. We discussed where planning formats could be further enhanced for younger children. Parents told us "my child has a great time at St. Pats, they have learned so much already about feelings, days of the week and weather" and "their confidence is just growing and growing thanks to the caring and nurture side of the staff."

The service enriched children's experiences by actively making good use of the local community with regular walks, visits to the shops, park outings that nurtured a sense of belonging. Additionally forest school visits offered a wealth of benefits such as, connecting with nature, developing understanding of environmental responsibility, and instilling a sense of wonder and respect for nature. One parent told us their child loved "forest walks and learning and respecting nature."

## Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

### Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions that helped them feel safe and secure. Staff knew the needs of children well and were responsive to their cues and requests. Staff were down at children's level engaging in play and conversations. They listened and followed children play ideas. This helped children feel valued and respected. One parent told us "all the staff are genuinely interested in my child and us all as a family. They are available to help if needed and offer their support. They keep us well informed and I really feel we leave [my child] in the best possible hands, we know [they are] safe, happy and learning."

Staff understood the importance and individual approach to transitions, which were tailored to the needs of children and families. This included between home to nursery and between playrooms. Staff worked closely with families to observe and reflect on how children managed this transition to ensure it was a pace that was right for and helped them feel safe. Staff took time to get to know children which supported them to respond sensitively to their needs and interest. This supported them to build strong connection with families. One parent told us "the nursery is great, my child has settled in well and loves going, they learn so much and I'm thankful they have built lovely relationships with staff."

Children's privacy and dignity was respected. Personal care needs were delivered in a warm, kind and respectful manner. We discussed where changing facilities for older children could be reviewed to ensure children's privacy and dignity was respected during changing routines. The provider agreed to review this.

Children benefitted from relaxed, sociable and unhurried mealtimes. Opportunities for preparing snack and self-serving meals were available which supported children's independence and skills for life. Staff were knowledgeable about children's routines and dietary needs. They interacted with children throughout mealtime experiences, supporting children's language and communication skills. Management and staff had recently reviewed the snack menu to reflect new guidance, this promoted a well-balanced and nutritious menu for children. The service were in the process of sharing information with families. Fresh water was available throughout the day, which helped to ensure children stayed hydrated.

Suitable procedures were in place to ensure safe administration of medication. Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs and had undertaken training to support their knowledge of complex medical conditions. We discussed how the storage of some medication could be improved. The service agreed to address this.

Personal plans were created in partnership with parents which helped to promote consistent care for children. This included children's interests, preferences and needs. We discussed reviewing these regularly to ensure they reflected children's current preferences. Children with additional support needs had effective personal plans that supported their progression and development. The service worked well with families and external agents to identify and implement clear and detailed strategies to meet their needs. External agents told us "the staff in the Family Learning Centre are always professional, approachable and know the children in their care so well" and "I have a very good working relationship with the nursery staff and find that they demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting children's health, development and wellbeing."

Staff valued the importance of meaningful engagement with families. They worked hard to create a warm, welcoming environment, where everyone felt welcomed, nurtured and supported. A wide range of programmes increased family engagement, providing opportunities to support their understanding of the benefits of play and learning experiences which promotes children wellbeing and development. Parents commented positively about their involvement within the setting telling us, "my child's keyworker holds a peep class... it gets the parents involved and shows them more about what goes on with the learning, which I'm looking forward too", "they put on incentives that I can try at home and they are very supportive" and "the nursery are always offering opportunities to interact with them, they offer days to visit and take part in activities too."

## 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	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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