

Rhunahaorine Primary Pre Five Unit Day Care of Children

Rhunahaorine Primary School
Tayinloan
Tarbert
PA29 6XG

Telephone: 01583 441 269

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 October 2025

Service provided by:
Argyll and Bute Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003373

Service no:
CS2003014659

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service provider is Argyll and Bute Council.

The service operates from a single storey school building on the Kintyre peninsula of Argyll with access to local beaches and woodlands.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 15 children. The age range of the children will be from three years to those not yet attending primary school. A minimum of two adults must be present at all times. During the operating times the service will have the use of the pre five classroom, school classroom, school hall, toilets and playground. At the time of the inspection, there were four children registered, three of whom were present during the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 23 October 2025. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and any intelligence gathered. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- Spoke with the childminder.

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.

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

- Staff demonstrated a strong understanding of the children's individual needs and had established warm, supportive relationships.
- Children benefited from free-flow access to the outdoor environment, where they showed excitement in developing their newly enhanced space.
- Increasing regular one-to-one meetings and observations should promote professional dialogue, feedback, and staff development.
- Children enjoyed a wide range of activities to promote their development and wellbeing.
- The head teacher is developing a robust process of quality assurance across the various aspects of practice.
- Children's voices were captured and embedded throughout 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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The setting had established a vision, values, and aims, which the head teacher and staff had begun reviewing in response to staff changes and the implementation of new frameworks. They recognised the importance of involving parents and children in this process to ensure the ethos reflected the shared values of the school and nursery community. Children showed confidence in expressing their opinions, and staff actively listened and embedded their views across planning and the environment. This approach supported children's sense of self-worth and promoted their emotional wellbeing.

The head teacher and staff identified themselves as being on an improvement journey, following a period of leadership and staff change. They engaged in frequent informal self-evaluation discussions, which were evident in the floor books and in conversations about changes made to resources and the environment. We discussed the importance of recording and embedding a self-evaluation cycle as part of robust quality assurance, supporting a more consistent and structured process for monitoring progress and identifying areas for development.

The improvement plan was actively under review to address identified areas for development. The head teacher communicated a clear and ambitious vision focused on strengthening partnerships with parents and enhancing collaborative working. Staff demonstrated confidence and enthusiasm in sharing ideas and trialling innovative approaches, routinely gathering feedback from families and responded effectively. For example, they removed Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes from the digital platform following parental feedback and planned to consult the new parent cohort to ensure this preference remained relevant. One parent shared that they felt able to express their thoughts and ideas and that their views were genuinely valued. This approach supported active engagement with families and fostered a collaborative culture and a robust capacity for continued improvement.

Staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), and we discussed the importance of recording CPD and reflecting on how training impacted practice, while ensuring essential training was completed. Regular and recorded one-to-one meetings with the head teacher would support professional dialogue and reflection, promoting staff development and the application of learning. The head teacher had been informally supervising practice, however, to strengthen this, we suggested conducting regular observations across different aspects of staff practice and providing feedback and actions for improvement or recognising strengths. See area for improvement one.

Risk assessments were in place across all aspects of practice, including the implementation of a risk-benefit approach. Staff actively involved children in managing risks, which supported their sense of safety and self-esteem. We discussed the need to strengthen this further by introducing a specific risk assessment for travel to off site locations. A range of essential policies and procedures were in place, and discussions with staff confirmed that they were following correct procedures aligned with current best practice guidance. However, this alignment was not clearly reflected in the written policies. We asked the leadership team to review and update policies and procedures to ensure they accurately represent current practice. See area for improvement two.

We discussed introducing a quality assurance calendar or schedule to support a more structured and consistent approach to monitoring practice. This would help in identifying strengths and areas for improvement and promote consistency across the setting. We recommended that this be considered as part of the ongoing improvement planning. See area for improvement three.

Areas for improvement

1. To effectively support children's wellbeing, care, play, and learning, the provider should ensure that staff are skilled, knowledgeable, and competent in meeting the needs of children. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing regular one-to-one meetings and supervision sessions to reflect on practice, identify areas for development, and offer emotional and professional support.
- Ensuring staff have access to relevant training opportunities tailored to their roles and the needs of the children they support.
- Supporting staff in maintaining appropriate professional body registration and adhering to regulatory standards.
- Promoting a culture of continuous improvement and reflective practice within the team.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:

"I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14)

2. To ensure the service is compliant with relevant legislation and best practice guidance, the provider should lead a thorough and regular review of all policies and procedures. This review should be aligned with current legal requirements and best practice guidance that support the day to day operation of the service, ensuring that practice remains consistent and effective.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:

"I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11) and "I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources" (HSCS 4.27).

3. To support and sustain high quality service delivery, the provider should embed robust quality assurance systems that monitor and evaluate all aspects of practice.

This is to ensure management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

"I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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

Children demonstrated ownership of their play and were fully engaged across a variety of activities. Children were observed using their imagination and creativity in spaces that encouraged discovery and supported learning through play. The play areas were thoughtfully arranged to promote curiosity and independence with staff referencing best practice guidance such as "Space to grow and thrive".

Staff carefully considered children's interests and extended thinking through open-ended questions and the use of considered resources. For example, when children showed interest in measuring their height against the wall, staff expanded the experience by introducing a variety of measuring tools and mathematical language, deepening the learning opportunity. Children confidently requested resources and adapted play spaces to suit their ideas, showing growing independence and creativity. These practices empowered children to take ownership of their learning and fostered flexible thinking, contributing to a rich and engaging learning environment.

Children moved freely between indoor and outdoor spaces, expressing excitement about their new environment and sharing ideas for its use. Outdoor areas, including the playground and forest, were utilised to enrich learning experiences. Staff engaged in ongoing reflection about the use of space and resources, actively involving children in evaluating their environment through sticker-based feedback. This ensured children's voices were heard and supported the creation of high-quality play experiences.

Planning was flexible, responsive, and based on children's interests and needs. Staff and the head teacher spoke passionately about their ongoing development of planning and recording systems, demonstrating a strong commitment to getting it right for the children. Planning effectively captured children's voices and linked clearly to learning intentions and children's rights.

Staff were open to feedback and keen to simplify their planning processes. We suggested consolidating next steps into one location and streamlining documentation. Staff spoke knowledgeably about each child's development; however, observations were primarily based on the children's evaluations. We suggested using skilled observation to evaluate children's development and inform next steps and planning, ensuring that provision is supporting children to reach their full potential. See area for improvement one.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's play and learning and enable them to reach their full potential, staff should carry out skilled observations to evaluate each child's development. From these observations, they should consider how individualisation is captured within planning, ensuring that opportunities are created and facilitated for children to achieve their identified next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity". (HSCS 2.27)

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

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

Children's emotional wellbeing was consistently supported by responsive and nurturing staff. Children were treated with warmth and compassion, and secure attachments between staff and children were evident. These relationships contributed to a strong sense of emotional safety and wellbeing across the setting.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected during personal care routines. Staff created a calm and positive atmosphere, and children were often heard singing in the toilet area. This supported children's emotional security and demonstrated their comfort and confidence within the setting.

Mealtimes were relaxed and positive, providing valuable opportunities for children to develop independence and social skills. Children were supported to self-serve food, which promoted confidence and fine motor development. Staff demonstrated a commitment to best practice, referencing guidance such as "Setting the Table". They also sought clarification on hygiene expectations, showing a proactive approach to maintaining standards. Hygiene and infection prevention were embedded in daily routines, with children consistently washing their hands after personal care, before eating, and when returning indoors.

Children's wellbeing was further supported through effective personal planning. Staff worked closely with families to gather and regularly review information about individual needs, ensuring plans remained current and relevant. Although no children required medication at the time of inspection, the medication policy and associated forms require further development to align with the updated guidance: "Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services". See Area for Improvement two under the quality indicator: "Leadership and management of staff and resources".

A cosy indoor space was thoughtfully created to support children's right to rest and relax. This area featured soft lighting, plants, fairy lights, and inviting materials, contributing to a calm and nurturing atmosphere. Staff also shared plans to develop a similar outdoor space, which would further enhance opportunities for rest and emotional wellbeing.

Accident and incident forms were in place to support monitoring and ensure children's safety. Staff discussed transitioning these records to a folder system for improved organisation. We suggested that procedures in practice align with the setting's policy, including clear processes for auditing, secure storage, and guidance on when to notify the Care Inspectorate. See Area for Improvement two under the quality indicator "Leadership and management of staff and resources".

Strong, respectful, and meaningful relationships with families were a key strength of the service. Staff and parents highlighted effective communication and inclusive practices that supported positive engagement. An information area in the nursery foyer provided leaflets on social work contacts and complaints procedures, helping families access relevant support. Parents spoke positively about attending monthly Bookbug sessions and feeling welcomed into the nursery, which promoted a strong sense of belonging and partnership working.

Partnership working with other local schools helped build a sense of community and connection with the wider world. Collaborative projects such as beach cleans and conservation activities fostered environmental awareness and a shared sense of purpose. These experiences supported children's sense of belonging to their local and wider community.

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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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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