

# St. Peter's Primary School Nursery Class

## Day Care of Children

South Isle Road  
Ardrossan  
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Telephone: 01294 462 554

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 December 2025

**Service provided by:**  
North Ayrshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003327

**Service no:**  
CS2003016039

## About the service

St. Peter's Primary School Nursery Class is attached to St. Peter's Primary School and is located in Ardrossan, North Ayrshire. The service is provided by North Ayrshire Council.

The service is registered to provide a daycare of children's service for a maximum of 34 children aged from two years old to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 24 will be aged 3 years to those not attending primary school and no more than 10 will be 2 to 3 years only. At the time of the inspection, 31 children were registered with the service.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8 & 9 December 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
- received electronic feedback from 10 parents/carers
- spoke with staff and the leadership team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

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

- Positive relationships had been established with children and families.
- Children were happy and engaged in play, exploring resources and activities with confidence.
- Confident, skilled staff planned and provided play and learning experiences that supported children's curiosity, creativity and imagination.
- Staff knew children very well and responded to their individual needs and wishes.
- Children had opportunities to explore outdoors freely at a time that suited their individual preferences, helping to support their social, physical and emotional skills.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation approaches had been developed and should continue to be embedded to support continuous improvement within 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	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 both quality indicators 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 service had clear vision, values and aims in place, which reflected a whole-school approach. The early years team had successfully used these principles to develop an early years charter that was meaningful and aligned with the aspirations of the team. Their commitment to fostering a positive and joyful environment was evident in daily practice, and experiences offered to children were fun. As a result, children benefited from an ethos that promoted happiness and wellbeing, enabling them to feel secure and confident.

The service had a clear improvement plan aligned with the National Improvement Framework, with a focus on improving attainment and wellbeing. The identified priorities were relevant and demonstrated a commitment to improving outcomes for children. There was early evidence the team were making good progress. For example, the well-planned implementation of the Zones of Regulation framework was having a positive impact on children's mental health and wellbeing, supporting them to develop emotional regulation and resilience. Priorities were displayed within the setting, ensuring transparency and promoting a shared understanding among leaders, staff, and families.

Leaders and staff had a shared understanding of improving outcomes for children and families. This was evident through newly developed self-evaluation processes and distributive leadership approaches. Staff told us they felt empowered to lead change and demonstrated confidence in initiating improvements. For example, they successfully led environmental projects and community Bookbug sessions. This collaborative approach promoted staff wellbeing and professional confidence, enabling improvements that strengthened children's experiences and family involvement in the service.

Quality assurance systems had recently been developed, including the introduction of formal monitoring and audit processes. These processes strengthened leadership oversight across the service and supported staff to reflect on practice, ensuring that children consistently experienced high-quality, well-planned care, play and learning opportunities. The leadership team should continue with their plans to fully embed these approaches to help sustain progress and drive further improvements.

Leaders responded positively to suggestions for improvement and demonstrated commitment to aligning practice with current guidance. For example, when we highlighted that the service's child protection and complaints policies could be updated to reflect current national expectations, this was acknowledged promptly and the leadership team agreed to take action. This proactive approach helped to ensure policies remain relevant and supports transparency.

### **Quality Indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment**

Staff were recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance and were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), ensuring children's safety and wellbeing. An induction process for introducing new staff and students to key policies, procedures and the service ethos was in place. This supported a culture of belonging within the team.

All staff were appropriately deployed according to their knowledge, skills and experience, ensuring children's individual needs were met. The allocation of lunch staff was well organised, allowing staff breaks to be planned without disrupting children's care routines. This approach supported continuity of care and maintained a calm, consistent environment for children.

Parents spoke positively about the staff team. Comments made included, "The staff are excellent!," "Every member of staff is friendly and approachable" and "All of the staff are very patient, caring and understanding. They are always willing to talk and help where they can." This demonstrated that staff consistently applied their knowledge and values to build trusting relationships with families and that their approachable and caring manner contributed to a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Staff communicated effectively within the team in a manner that was respectful, professional and nurturing. Clear communication was evident when staff needed to leave their designated area, ensuring colleagues were informed and supervision of children remained safe and consistent. This approach promoted teamwork and contributed to a secure, well-managed environment where children's safety and wellbeing were prioritised.

Staff demonstrated commitment to their professional development by attending relevant training and sharing their learning within the team. For example, following participation in enabling environments training, staff worked collaboratively to apply their knowledge, resulting in noticeable improvements to play spaces. These enhancements created more stimulating and engaging environments that supported children's curiosity, creativity and overall learning experiences. Staff spoke about their plans to build on these improvements by introducing additional resources to further enhance children's experiences, which we supported and encouraged.

## 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

Children were happy and engaged in the play and learning opportunities available to them. Their right to play was prioritised, and they expressed enjoyment through smiling, laughter and singing during play. Parents told us, "The nursery offers a varied range of different types of play" and "Children take part in lots of fun activities." Indoor and outdoor environments were thoughtfully organised to enable children to independently select materials and lead their own learning. As a result, children experienced a sense of autonomy and developed confidence in leading learning.

Children were supported to identify and manage risks during their daily play routines. The use of the 'Safety SIMOA' teddy provided a meaningful way for children to learn about risk management. Children used appropriate language to discuss safety, including when climbing ladders, building dens and balancing bricks at height. These approaches helped children to develop an awareness of potential hazards and consider safe choices within their play.

New planning processes had recently been introduced to support a balance of responsive and intentional experiences for children. Staff expressed confidence in the new approach and demonstrated commitment to embedding them in practice. The senior leadership team were monitoring progress, and staff were making

adaptations as required to ensure the child-centred processes become fully embedded. Over time, this should lead to improved engagement and consistently rich play and learning experiences.

Staff worked collaboratively with children, valuing their play ideas and using these to shape experiences, promoting choice and independence. For example, In response to a child's request to feed their babies, staff created a food preparation activity that encouraged exploration and the development of life skills. Concepts such as chopping, peeling and mashing were introduced in a playful, hands-on way, with staff modelling techniques before stepping back to allow children to lead. By the second day of inspection, children demonstrated independence and growing confidence. Their repeated visits to the play area demonstrated sustained engagement and highlighted how responsive experiences supported children to consolidate learning and develop practical life skills.

Staff interactions were warm, responsive and demonstrated kindness and care. They offered meaningful praise and encouragement, telling children they were proud of their efforts, such as attempting to write or settling well after drop-off. Staff used developmentally appropriate strategies, including commenting and explaining, to extend children's thinking and support problem-solving. For example, when children built a home outdoors, staff engaged in discussions about space, safety and security, helping children to explore ideas and make decisions. As a result, children developed confidence in their abilities and were supported to think critically during play.

Processes were in place to track children's progress in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Recent assessment data highlighted a gap in numeracy attainment, and staff had recently introduced targeted activities to support children in developing mathematical concepts in meaningful contexts. These experiences were tailored to individual needs, and some children demonstrated confidence in skills such as counting and subitising. Staff planned to continue monitoring progress and adapt approaches as required through ongoing tracking and evaluation. This should help to ensure children make steady progress.

## 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 experienced warm, nurturing care from staff who knew them well and responded to their individual needs. Positive relationships supported a strong sense of security and belonging. Parents spoke highly of the quality of care, telling us, "Staff are always attentive" and "I love the bond my child has with staff and his peers." Families also highlighted the strong knowledge staff had of their children, with one parent commenting, "All the staff know my child really well." Staff's nurturing approaches contributed to an environment where children felt valued, respected and confident in their relationships.

Personal plans were in place for all children attending the service, and the plans we sampled reflected children's individual preferences and health and wellbeing needs. As a result, children experienced care tailored to their unique needs. Families strongly agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing personal plans. While parents were encouraged to share suggestions for their child's progress and development, we discussed with the leadership team how these could be more consistently incorporated into support strategies to ensure plans fully reflect individualised approaches. The service agreed to consider how parental input is used to ensure personalised support as part of their ongoing monitoring and review of personal plans.

Working relationships with external agencies were valued and children requiring enhanced support had detailed individual support plans in place. These had been developed in partnership with families and lead professionals, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children. This collaborative approach ensured that children's support needs were identified and strategies implemented promptly, to support inclusion.

Daily verbal updates, consultation questionnaires, newsletters and Learning Journal messages contributed to the improved communication with families. Parents told us they felt well-informed about their child's experiences, which strengthened partnerships between the service and home. This approach built trust, ensuring parents were confident and actively involved in their child's care.

The service actively promoted community involvement through initiatives such as the PEEP Learning Together programme. Staff worked collaboratively with parents and community partners during these sessions, sharing strategies to enhance communication, social inclusion, and play experiences. These opportunities encouraged families to engage in their child's early learning and supported the development of positive home learning environments. This approach strengthened community relationships, built parental confidence, and contributed to improved outcomes for children and families.

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

To improve the quality of children's experiences, staff should ensure that children are meaningfully involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences. Children's choice should be promoted, and their learning and development extended through skilful staff interactions.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors" (HSCS 1.25).

**This area for improvement was made on 27 February 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The leadership team and staff had recently reviewed and improved their processes for planning for play and learning. As a result, a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences were offered, and children were leading their own play.

This area for improvement was met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The management team should continue to support improvement in the service by implementing quality assurance processes that involve, staff, parents and children.

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 use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

**This area for improvement was made on 27 February 2023.**

## Action taken since then

The leadership team had reviewed and improved their approach to quality assurance and self-evaluation. These processes involved staff children and families and were at the early stages of supporting service improvements.

This area for improvement was met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children are safely supervised, the provider and management team should ensure that staff are deployed across the service to meet the individual care needs of children. In addition, staff deployment should consider tasks relevant to the job role staff have been recruited to, as well as their knowledge, skills and experience.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15) and 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well' (HSCS 3.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 10 September 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The leadership team had reviewed and improved the deployment of staff. This included having two staff responsible for out doors at all times. As a result, children were safely supervised and their needs were met by staff who knew them well.

This area for improvement was met.

## 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
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	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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