

Madras Family Centre Day Care of Children

Madras Family Centre
43 High Street Neilston
East Renfrewshire
G78 3HJ

Telephone: 0141 570 7480

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 November 2025

Service provided by:
East Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003372

Service no:
CS2003014618

About the service

Madras Family Centre is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 115 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

- no more than 15 children are aged 2 to under 3 years;
- no more than 100 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school full time.

The service operates from a purpose built facility in Neilston, East Renfrewshire. The service is close to local shops, parks and other amenities. The building has a secure entrance, spacious playrooms, dedicated 2-3 room and access to additional spaces within the campus. Children benefit from direct access to a secure outdoors garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24th and 25th November 2025. The inspection was carried out by three 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
- Gathered feedback from sixteen families through online questionnaires
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with 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 the 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

- The senior leadership team and staff shared a clear vision and values based on the nurture principles and children's rights.
- The team continued to embed their culture of self evaluation to support improvement planning.
- Children were having fun and engaged in a variety of play experiences at the family centre.
- The team continued to develop their approach to consistently tracking children's achievements and next steps.
- Children were supported by a warm, responsive and nurturing team.
- Innovative approaches to supporting children with additional support needs were having a positive impact on children's wellbeing and growth.

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	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The senior leadership team and staff shared a clear vision rooted in the nurture principles and values, aiming to provide a safe, caring, and inclusive environment where every child and family were respected and supported to reach their full potential. The service promoted children's rights through initiatives such as "Right of the Month," which supported children's engagement and understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. While these values were evident in most practice, some observations during the inspection highlighted further areas of development. Strengthening consistency across all staffs' interactions will ensure the vision and aims are fully embedded in daily practice supporting a positive environment for all children.

The senior leadership team engaged well during the inspection; they demonstrated reflective practice and an awareness of areas requiring development in the service. The senior leadership team shared ongoing improvements within the service and recognised the importance of these on outcomes for children. Actions identified, such as staff development initiatives, indicated a strong capacity for change and commitment to continuous improvement.

The service had experienced significant changes, including relocation to a new building, increased enrolment, and staff turnover. Self-evaluation and improvement planning were at an early stage, with limited opportunities for whole-team reflection. Staff, with support from the senior leadership team, had begun utilising "the quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sector" to evaluate aspects of the service. This is a positive step to encourage a culture of self reflection and evaluation. Continued engagement with these tools and establishing purposeful opportunities to reflect as a team will help embed a robust improvement cycle that brings about positive change. We encouraged the service to continue to evaluate the impact of changes with staff and children.

Children's voices were captured through floorbooks and discussions with staff. Parental feedback was gathered through questionnaires and conversations. The service had identified strengthening parental engagement in shaping service delivery within their own improvement plans. We agreed and encouraged the service to expand opportunities for families to influence improvements in the service. This would ensure families were meaningfully involved in the self evaluation and improvement plans, strengthening connections to their child's setting.

A distributed leadership approach to quality assurance had been developed to include audits of key practice areas. For example, accident and incidents, medication, and monthly monitoring of playrooms. These enabled the senior leadership team to identify where improvements could be made. While monitoring had occurred, we discussed some approaches that could be further enhanced to ensure gaps were consistently identified and actioned. The senior leadership team agreed to review the current process to ensure effective monitoring and quality assurances were established.

Recruitment processes adhered to safe practice standards. A thoughtful and innovative approach to involving children in interviews ensured that their perspectives and values were central in evaluating candidates' suitability for the role. The service used the national induction resource to help new staff build confidence in their roles. The senior leadership team acknowledged challenges in providing continuous professional learning beyond in-service days, where training was tailored to meet the team needs. To address this, an online platform, "Madras Masters," was developed to offer additional resources for staff to enhance their skills and knowledge. Moving forward, the service should establish methods to evaluate the impact of training on staff practice and outcomes for children.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning, and developing.

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.

Children were happy, settled, and actively engaged in play. They demonstrated independence and choice, leading their own learning. Many children sustained engagement in activities for extended periods, such as block play, playdough, climbing wall, and role play. A variety of resources supported exploration and engagement. The deconstructed role-play area was particularly stimulating, encouraging creativity and collaboration among peers.

On the first day of inspection access to the outdoors was limited due to a fault in the heating system. This impacted children's ability to lead their play and self regulate. We observed improvements on the second day of the inspection as free-flow access was available to the enclosed outdoor space which promoted children's choice and independence. Children enjoyed some outdoor experiences, including building a dam, exploring the mud kitchen, water play, and riding bikes. Staff identified the outdoors as an area they continued to develop to ensure they provide a rich and varied environment that sparks children's curiosity and provide challenge.

Most staff were actively engaged in play with children, with many interactions demonstrating responsive and a genuine connection. However, we observed missed opportunities for deeper engagement and sustained interactions for children in their play. Some staff should continue to develop their skills and confidence in extending children's learning through meaningful conversations, understanding when to step into play to support and challenge, and when to step back to allow children autonomy. The senior leadership team were aware of this current development need and continued to support staffs understanding of being partners in play.

Planning approaches included online floorbooks and intentional planning linked to literacy and numeracy experiences. While children's voices were evident, next steps were not always clear, and links between Opal reviews, Seesaw observations, and floorbooks were inconsistent. Planning meetings occurred between small staffing groups, which provided opportunities to recognise children's current interests and record experiences in response to children's play. However, we asked the team to consider how they captured the breadth, depth, and challenge for each individual child, including opportunities for revisiting and consolidating their learning.

Experiences were shared digitally with families and at six monthly review meetings with key workers. This enabled staff to share children's achievements with families.

There was scope to develop this approach further as some observations did not capture children's skills as effectively and lacked meaningful next steps for children's learning. Further monitoring of the new planning approach and reflection time would support staff to develop their skills in observations to enhance gathering children's progress over time. Parents who responded to our questionnaire told us they would like to be provided with more regular updates on children's progress and achievements.

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.

There was a nurturing ethos in the service which promoted inclusion, and a rights-based approach. Positive relationships between staff, children and families were evident throughout, contributing to a warm and welcoming setting. One parent told us, "The staff are so kind and caring, they really care about my children and treat them as their own in such a professional but also nurturing way." Children were cared for by patient, kind practitioners who offered comfort and reassurance when needed, helping them feel safe and valued.

Relationships with families were strong, respectful, and meaningful. Families praised the nurturing approach and positive connections with staff. One parent told us "Staff are always friendly and approachable and make such an effort to know and support my child whilst in their care." "We observed families to be warmly welcomed into the playrooms to drop off and collect their children. Initiatives such as stay-and-play sessions, Book bug, and the lending library provided opportunities for parents to participate in their children's learning and strengthen connections with the service.

Children were settled and confident in their environment and had made natural friendships which supported their growth and development. We observed children being caring, affectionate and reassuring to each other. Hand holding when moving between spaces and checking in with their friends if upset. This showed us children were learning to develop social skills and understanding theirs and other emotions well at nursery.

Care routines were flexible and adapted to individual needs and preferences. Sleep routines in the sleeping room were well supported, with a calm space, personal bedding, and gentle reassurance during sleep and waking times, contributing positively to children's wellbeing. Staff were aware of children's individual medical needs, with medication stored and administered safely.

Mealtimes were respectful of cultural and dietary needs, foods on offer were nutritious and in line with setting the table guidance. We observed the rolling snack times to be a positive experience for children as they could prepare, self select and self serve healthy fruit choices. Staff interactions were warm and supportive, promoting independence and self-help skills. Lunch on the second day of inspection was a relaxed, sociable mealtime experiences for all children. Staff sat with children to supervise and engaged in meaningful conversations to support social development. We encouraged the team to continue to reflect on mealtimes to ensure children received a consistent, rich experience.

Personal plans contained detailed information gathered from families, and staff demonstrated a very good knowledge of children's needs. Opal plans noted children's strengths and identified targets to be focused on

by the team. This was discussed and agreed with families six monthly. We observed some staff using agreed strategies, which helped ensure children received support that was right for them.

However, consistency for all plans should be the focus for the team, as we found some plans did not have clear strategies to support children to continue to grow and develop. We encouraged the team to review "All about me" information with children to ensure they remained meaningful, suitable, and supportive.

Children with additional support needs had robust plans that identified clear strategies and targets. The team engaged with a range of professionals to create tailored plans and innovative approaches to ensure a child-centred approach to personal plans. Weekly, targeted support such as the sunshine and shoots group, which promoted engagement and inclusion through developing social and communication skills, ensured children were receiving the right support to help them reach their full potential. Links with other professionals supported holistic approaches to meeting children's needs. Staff were confident in child protection procedures and attended regular training to ensure their knowledge remained in line with current local and national guidelines.

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	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	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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