

Sgoil-araich Ghlinn Urchadain/ Glenurquhart Primary Gaelic Nursery Day Care of Children

St. Drostan
Drumnadrochit
Inverness
IV63 6UT

Telephone: 01456450458

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 November 2025

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2022000046

About the service

Sgoil-araich Ghlinn Urchadain/ Glenurquhart Primary Gaelic Nursery is located within Glenurquhart Primary School in the Highland village of Drumnadrochit. The nursery has a reception area as well as an indoor playroom with their own kitchen and toilet facilities. The playroom opens directly onto a small fully enclosed outdoor play area.

Sgoil-araich Ghlinn Urchadain/ Glenurquhart Primary Gaelic Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children's service for up to 16 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery provides Gaelic Medium Education for all of the children attending and is provided by the Highland Council. Three children were in attendance at the time of the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 November 2025 between 08:45 and 16:15. Feedback was shared with the service virtually on 27 November 2025 between 11:00 and 11:45. 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 three children using the service;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from one family;
- reviewed online questionnaire feedback from three staff;
- spoke with two staff and the manager;
- observed practice and children's experiences;
- 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 experienced warm, responsive care that supported their wellbeing.
- Staff created a nurturing environment that supported children's communication and engagement in learning.
- Planning and assessment supported positive experiences, with clear priorities identified to further strengthen outcomes.
- Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes were robust, supporting continuous improvement and high quality care.
- Families were engaged in the service through regular communication and involvement, strengthening consistency of care and enhancing outcomes for children.

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	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 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, values and aims of the service had been clearly articulated and consistently embedded in practice. The manager had demonstrated a strong focus on improvement, ensuring that shared values promoted wellbeing, collaboration and teamwork across the staff team. These values had been evident in the daily experiences of children, creating a nurturing and inclusive environment. As a result, children had benefited from a positive ethos which supported their confidence, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes had been purposeful and well-structured, with priorities identified and addressed in line with best practice guidance. Safeguarding procedures had been strengthened, staff knowledge and skills had been regularly assessed, and families' views had been sought to inform developments. Staff had engaged in professional reading, reflective tasks and training opportunities, which had led to improvements in areas such as risk assessment, snack provision and personal planning. Consequently, children had experienced safer, healthier and more responsive care that reflected their individual needs.

Quality assurance activities had been systematic and had supported continuous improvement across the service. Monitoring of practice and children's experiences had been aligned with agreed standards, and staff had been supported to develop skills in literacy, STEM and play pedagogy. Language progression trackers had been incorporated into practice, and observations had shown that children benefited from regular opportunities to extend their literacy learning through the resources offered. The service had recognised the need to further develop and embed Literacy and Gaelic progressions within sgoil-àraich, while also acknowledging that staffing changes had impacted capacity for continuous improvement. As a result, children had experienced positive learning opportunities, and effective leadership ensured that clear priorities were identified to further strengthen outcomes for children in the future.

The management of staffing had been effective, with a clear understanding of the importance of recruiting and retaining a stable and skilled team to support the wellbeing of both children and staff. New members of staff had been welcomed into the service, and the manager had ensured they were fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, including within safeguarding, supervision of children, planning and observation. A personalised induction programme, linked to national guidance, had been implemented, and mentoring arrangements had been clearly established. As a result, children had benefited from a consistent and knowledgeable staff team who were well prepared to meet their needs.

The manager had fostered a supportive and approachable culture, with staff reporting that their wellbeing needs had been recognised and that they had been encouraged to access relevant training opportunities. The manager had been clear about their responsibilities mentoring staff and had undertaken accredited training to support this. Families had been introduced to new staff through a range of communication methods, ensuring transparency and trust. As a result, children had experienced continuity of care supported by a confident and well supported staff team.

Children play and learn 4 - Good**Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing**

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

Staff interactions were consistently warm, respectful, and responsive, creating a nurturing environment that supported children's wellbeing and communication. For example, during meal times, adults encouraged conversation about pets, supporting children to share experiences and develop Gaelic language skills. As well as this, staff created natural opportunities to develop and consolidate Gaelic language during day to day routines and play experiences by adding words and repeating key phrases to describe and clarify what was happening for children. As a result, children were gaining confidence understanding and using simple Gaelic words and phrases.

Intentional planning was structured to consider the environment, experiences, and interactions and provided opportunities for children to lead their own learning. When learning about shapes, children asked if their 'shape scavenger hunt' could be in 'big playground'. Children had been harvesting potatoes and planning provided opportunities to create two dimensional shapes from these. These experiences allowed children to connect learning with real-life experiences, promoting curiosity and sustained engagement.

Staff had responded well to children's requests, and there was scope to further enhance child led experiences by increasing the use of open ended resources and effective questioning. This would build on the strong foundations already in place and provide additional opportunities for children to develop independence and problem solving skills. Opportunities to support children's learning were sometimes missed when staff became task-focused. This reduced potential for children to develop problem-solving skills as they played.

Planning was responsive and linked to children's interests. Children's learning journey folders included observations related to curriculum experiences and outcomes, and some next steps had been developed to support progress. While these had been completed to varying degrees, staff had acknowledged the value of embedding this approach more fully to ensure all children received appropriate challenge and support. As a result, children had benefited from engaging experiences, and the service had identified clear priorities to further strengthen planning and assessment systems to enhance outcomes for all.

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 had experienced warm, responsive and consistent care from staff, which had fostered their wellbeing and supported their independence. They had been kept safe at all times, with staff sensitively responding to their needs and listening to their preferences for play and resources. The service had regularly assessed individual needs and evaluated transition strategies, offering opportunities for children to become familiar with the setting and staff before starting.

Families had been involved in personalising transition experiences, and staff had worked with other services to support children with split placements. As a result, children had settled confidently into the service and had developed positive social skills and secure relationships.

Mealtimes had been well managed and offered children meaningful opportunities to develop independence and responsibility, such as setting tables, serving food and clearing plates. Staff had sat alongside children, promoting safety, social interaction and Gaelic language development. Food provision had been aligned with national guidance, hydration had been supported, and dietary needs had been carefully considered. As a result, children had experienced safe, healthy and inclusive routines which promoted their wellbeing and learning.

The safe administration of medication had been carried out effectively in partnership with families and health professionals, ensuring children's individual health needs were consistently met. Safeguarding had been a regular focus of staff meetings, and staff had demonstrated confidence in responding appropriately to child protection concerns. As a result, children had benefited from care that was safe, well monitored and underpinned by clear safeguarding practices.

Personal planning had been effective in supporting children's wellbeing, with staff demonstrating a strong knowledge of individual needs and implementing tailored strategies to meet them. Staff had worked closely with families to review plans, ensuring consistency of care, and had liaised with other agencies to incorporate strategies that promoted children's overall support. This approach had been underpinned by wellbeing indicators, which had guided assessment and planning. As a result, children had experienced care that was responsive to their health, transition and developmental needs, fostering security and confidence. Self evaluation and monitoring had highlighted the need to strengthen reviews of some aspects of personal planning information, although this had not negatively impacted outcomes for children and plans were in place to address this.

The staff team had provided a warm and welcoming environment which fostered positive relationships with families and encouraged their engagement in the service. Children's care had been influenced by the insights shared by families, with staff seeking further opportunities to involve them through initiatives such as stay and play sessions, questionnaires and community events. Families had been offered regular opportunities to discuss their child's care and development through daily handovers and meetings, supported by clear communication channels both verbal and written. As a result, children had benefited from care that was consistent, responsive and strengthened by meaningful family involvement.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very 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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