

Rockfield Primary Pre Five Unit. Day Care of Children

Oban Primary Campus
Lower Soroba
Oban
PA34 4SB

Telephone: 01631 568 091

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 November 2025

Service provided by:
Argyll and Bute Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003373

Service no:
CS2007157135

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 Oban primary campus in the town of Oban. It has an English and Gaelic unit. The conditions of registration include: 1. To provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children. 2. The age range of the children will be from three years to those not yet attending primary school.

At the time of the inspection, there were 14 children present in the English unit and seven in the Gaelic unit.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by two early learning and childcare inspectors, which took place on 26 and 27 November 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.
- Collected survey feedback from parents.
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- Spoke with the staff and management.

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 were knowledgeable and passionate about their role in helping children to achieve positive outcomes.
- Children enjoyed a range of activities and had access to the school gym, library, sports pitches and music room.
- Children benefited from mealtimes that were calm and sociable, promoting choice, independence, and wellbeing.
- Self-evaluation was taking place but required a more robust approach to achieve sustainable improvements.
- Children were making good progress within literacy and numeracy.
- Staff and management had developed positive relationships with parents and carers.

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

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 setting demonstrated a clear vision, values, and aims, which included kindness, friendship, inclusion, and respect. Our observations confirmed that values were strongly reflected in practice. Children's voices influenced planning and the environment, and daily routines consistently demonstrated kindness and empathy, supporting children's wellbeing.

All staff engaged positively throughout the inspection. Staff were responsive to ideas and shared their passion and dedication for ongoing improvement and supporting quality play and learning experiences for children. The service benefitted from a stable and consistent staff team that were able to communicate well with one another and drive forward ideas. All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and staff professional development records were accurately maintained using an online system and audited annually. Staff reported feeling supported in their professional development and spoke passionately about training they had attended, such as Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS). This contributed to a strong team ethos and a positive working environment that enhanced outcomes for children.

There was clear evidence of ongoing evaluation, and the team demonstrated commitment to improvement through various approaches, including wall displays, team meetings, peer observations, parent meetings, and staff supervision. A process for self-evaluation against core assurances had also taken place, reflecting a proactive approach towards development. Recent changes in the leadership team temporarily reduced the leadership presence, creating some inconsistencies in quality assurance. Documenting and reviewing action points from evaluative activities, and embedding these within a systematic and robust cycle, will help ensure consistency and support sustainable improvements. See Area for Improvement 1.

Risk assessments were in place for the setting, outings, and travel. Children were given opportunities to identify potential risks, supporting their involvement in managing risk and promoting independence and wellbeing. We suggested that the environmental risk assessments be more reflective of the current environment and resources and consider adopting a risk-benefit approach. This would enhance children's play experiences, enabling staff to manage risk confidently while offering rich, challenging opportunities that help children reach their full potential.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receive high quality care and learning and to support a culture of evaluation which identifies action areas for improvement, the provider should ensure a systematic process of self evaluation and quality assurance is in place to support sustainable improvement.

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).

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 had access to a range of facilities within the school grounds to enhance their play and learning opportunities. One parent told us "There is always lots of activities for [them] to choose from and they spend lots of time outdoors which we love. We also like that there are different areas outdoors for them to access and also that they get to use other school facilities such as the gym hall, music room and the library". Furthermore, children can take part in local Mod performances, visits to a local play area and trips on the train to nearby villages. This was supporting children's sense of belonging to their local and wider community.

Children had access to a wide range of resources supporting different types of play indoors and outdoors. They engaged in activities that promoted language, literacy, and numeracy, with staff in the Gaelic unit immersing children fully in the Gaelic language through both written and verbal communication. Staff in both units demonstrated confidence in the curriculum and held high expectations of children's abilities. One parent told us "My child is involved in a range of opportunities having access to outdoor spaces...and a wide range of resources that enhances their development, such as play dough, arts and crafts, role play and construction".

Outdoor play opportunities encouraged children to explore and investigate, developing imagination and promoting their sense of curiosity. Children in the English unit accessed free flow play outdoors, which supported choice and independence and provided some opportunities for them to lead their play and learning. We suggested offering further engaging activities and resources within free flow play to promote increased engagement. This would encourage children to lead their own play and learning both indoors and outdoors. Further evaluation of the balance between adult-led group activities and child-initiated play was suggested to ensure children experienced a broad and varied curriculum. At times, adult-led activities dominated, limiting opportunities for children to make choices and follow their interests. Increasing the proportion of free flow play would better support creativity, independence, and deeper learning.

Staff interactions were sensitive and respectful, and children approached staff confidently for help or reassurance. For example, seeking comfort through a hug or receiving some kind words of encouragement. We observed shared joy and laughter during activities such as magic tricks, which was further supporting the development of positive relationships.

Staff worked hard to develop a child-centred planning approach, and we observed positive elements of this in practice, including some child-led activities. For example, during the inspection, the children were enjoying learning about buildings and role playing as building inspectors. However, further development was required to ensure all individual children's needs, interests, and next steps were consistently captured in planning and reflected in the provision offered. Observation and tracking systems were developing, and staff discussed plans to streamline these further, creating a clear progression pathway. This would ensure the golden thread of learning was evident from observation through to planning and assessment.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

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 consistently treated with warmth and compassion. Staff knew children well and responded to their needs with sensitivity and care. Staff spoke confidently about children's personalities, likes, and interests and articulated how they supported individual needs effectively. For example, one child with an emerging need was supported through a proactive plan developed in partnership with the parent, reflecting a collaborative and responsive approach. Secure attachments and trusting relationships between children and staff were evident, contributing to a strong sense of emotional safety and wellbeing within the setting. One parent told us, "The staff are amazing. They have a great relationship with the kids and really get to know them. They are observant of the children and their personalities, which is lovely to see. I have complete trust in the staff and know they will get a hold of me if needed".

Children experienced relaxed and positive mealtimes where they were supported to be independent. This provided opportunities to socialise with peers and chat with staff, promoting language development. Children had opportunities to be independent, for example self-serving fruit, which supported confidence, independence, and fine motor skills. The table was carefully set with a tablecloth, and staff spoke about the current Setting the Table guidance updates, showing their continued commitment to best practice. One parent told us, "Every day there are healthy snacks for my child. [The child] loves that [they] are given independence to get [their] own snack and pour [their] own water or milk. The lunches that are provided are great and there is a super variety of healthy foods".

We observed good hygiene practices, such as hand washing when coming inside from outdoors, after using the toilet, and before meals. We encouraged staff to continue reinforcing good hygiene habits, including being consistent when cleaning their nose and then washing their hands afterwards. This would help reduce the spread of germs and promote children's understanding of personal care routines.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning. Each child had a consistent folder of contents, including "All About Me" and "More About Me", linked to wellbeing indicators. Furthermore, there were information sheets to record comments and dates from parental reviews. Staff could describe strategies used for each child, and we discussed documenting these as part of their personal plans, shared with parents, to ensure there is a consistent and collaborative approach, supporting children to reach their full potential.

Parents engaged in activities such as Bookbug, Zumba, and parent groups, and viewed their child's day through a digital application. One parent told us, "We love all the updates that we get through Seesaw of what our child is up to during their day. Seeing pictures of them so happy and enjoying their day is so reassuring that they are in a safe and healthy environment". Parents were regularly consulted in all aspects of the service through surveys and discussions with staff. One parent told us, "We feel that we have a good relationship with all members of staff. They are approachable and friendly and help make our child feel safe and happy". To strengthen this partnership with parents further and align with best practice, we discussed the importance of inviting parents into the setting regularly, where they can view displays, children can share their learning and reinforce their sense of belonging.

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	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is càinain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلؤں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جا سکتی ہے۔

ਬਿਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.