

Gallowhill Early Learning and Childcare Class Day Care of Children

Gallowhill Primary School
Netherhill Road
Paisley
PA3 4SF

Telephone: 03003 000 154

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 December 2025

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003014757

About the service

Gallowhill Early Learning and Childcare Class is registered to provide a day care service to a maximum of 50 children: ten children aged from two years to under three years and 40 children aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is situated within Gallowhill Primary School and is provided by Renfrewshire Council. The accommodation offers two age defined playrooms as well as fully enclosed outdoor play areas accessed from the playrooms.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 3 December 2025 and Thursday 4 December. We gave inspection feedback to the management team on Thursday 4 December.

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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with some of the children, reviewed survey responses from 15 parents and 9 staff
- spoke with the manager and staff
- observed practice and staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

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

- Children were settled, engaged and having fun both indoors and out.
- Literacy and numeracy were naturally embedded within daily routines and the environment.
- Management and the staff team worked well together, with a collaborative approach to the continued improvement of the service.
- Quality assurance and self evaluation systems should be further developed and embedded.
- Children experienced warm, nurturing interactions from staff who knew them well, helping them feel secure and supported.
- Planning and floor books should be further developed to continue to support positive 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	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 management team showed a strong commitment to continuous improvement and creating a culture of positive change. Staff spoke highly of the leadership team's visibility and accessibility, highlighting their open-door approach and daily presence, which promoted trust, transparency, and effective communication. Staff felt well supported and valued by a caring and responsive leadership team. Comments included: "The management team doors are always open and are available for support and guidance" and "The senior leadership team are very approachable and fully supportive of staff and their individual needs".

The service's vision, values, and aims centred on creating a fun, secure, and happy environment, were embedded in the everyday life of the setting and informed staff practice.

Children were observed to be safe, happy, settled, and actively engaged in play, reflecting the ethos of the setting.

A positive staff ethos was evident across the playrooms. A written statement outlined expectations around communication, teamwork, respect and reflection. This ethos was clearly demonstrated in practice, with staff working collaboratively, supporting one another, and maintaining professional, caring relationships with children, families, and the management team. This ensured a positive and respectful environment where staff worked effectively as a team to deliver high-quality care and learning.

A monitoring calendar was in place, outlining key quality assurance tasks such as auditing learning journals, care plans and accidents and incidents. These processes were currently carried out informally. We advised the manager to further develop systems for recording the processes and impact of quality assurance activities. Collecting clear evidence will enable more informed decision-making and demonstrate the effectiveness of improvements. (see area for improvement 1).

Staff were encouraged to take on leadership roles and contribute to improvement activities, including leading literacy initiatives through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and nurture walks. This approach promoted shared responsibility and strengthened leadership skills across the team, supporting continuous improvement including increased family engagement and strengthened community connections.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for children, the service should implement formal quality assurance and monitoring processes.

This is in order 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: Children play and learn.

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 having fun and were engaged in their play. Play was child-led. We observed children choosing where they wanted to play and who they wanted to play with. We saw children engaged in different activities for long periods such as jigsaw play, imaginative play with dolls and building in the block area. This supported their concentration, imagination and problem solving skills. A range of open ended materials such as guttering, shells, acorns and wooden log pieces were available across playrooms. This supported children's curiosity and creativity.

Play experiences supported children's language, literacy, and numeracy skills, which were naturally embedded into daily routines and staff interactions. Children enjoyed listening to stories, writing their names, and counting with staff. A nursery rhyme and maths programme further enhanced these skills and provided structured opportunities for children to develop early literacy and numeracy in fun, engaging ways, building confidence and supporting future learning.

Staff within the 3-5 playroom were responsible for planning experiences for children within designated play areas on a termly basis. This approach ensured that the environment was well-organized and offered varied opportunities to support children's interests and developmental needs. Staff worked collaboratively to review and refresh these areas regularly, ensuring resources remained engaging and responsive to children's needs and choices.

Floor books were used to capture experiences and opportunities throughout the term. We discussed with the management team ways to further strengthen planning and floor books to ensure they clearly capture children's voices, reflect responsive and intentional experiences, and demonstrate the impact on learning and development.

Younger children in the 2-3 years playroom engaged in a variety of experiences, including Spanish, singing, colour recognition and water play. Planning was documented on a "learning wall," with key focuses such as developing independence at snack time, building vocabulary, supporting sharing and turn-taking, and promoting self-help skills like toileting and dressing. These approaches encouraged early language development, problem-solving, and independence, while fostering social skills and confidence.

Children benefited from daily opportunities to play and learn outdoors, promoting their health and wellbeing. Free-flow access to the outdoor area allowed children to make choices supporting their independence. We observed children enjoy a variety of play experiences including using bikes, making recipes in the mud kitchen, water play and climbing equipment. The space provided experiences that encouraged positive risk-taking and offered challenging play, helping children build confidence, physical skills and problem-solving.

Parents had regular opportunities to learn about their child's progress through stay, play and chat sessions and use of a digital platform. All parents agreed they were involved in their child's care and learning. One parent commented "Staff are able to update me on my child daily. The communication is fantastic" and another shared "I'm always kept informed and involved in my child's care. The staff regularly share updates and ask for my input".

Digital learning was actively promoted through the use of iPads, laptops, and a smartboard, which offered interactive opportunities for children to engage with songs, jigsaw games, and other educational activities. These tools supported the development of early literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills in a fun and engaging way.

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 experienced warm, positive, and consistent interactions that reflected strong, nurturing relationships. Parents told us "The staff are always welcoming & attentive to the kids" and another shared "Staff genuinely care about the children and make the effort to know about each child's family."

Staff demonstrated a deep understanding of individual needs, responding with patience, gentle tones, smiles, cuddles, and reassurance. For example, children who were upset on arrival were comforted sensitively, helping them feel secure. Children were relaxed and confident around staff, often seeking them out for play, sitting on their knees, and looking for comfort. This meant children felt valued, included, and emotionally secure. One parent commented "Always feel like my child's needs are being met and always a staff member on hand if I need to discuss anything".

Personal plans were developed in partnership with families and reflected children's health, safety and wellbeing needs, helping maintain strong continuity between home and nursery. Where additional support was needed, the service worked proactively with families and professionals to identify support needs and implement clear strategies, including contributions from multi-agency partners when required to ensure individual needs were met effectively. Tracking systems were in place to monitor children's progress across the curriculum and regular wellbeing meetings took place, providing opportunities for staff to review progress, share observations, and plan targeted support where required. These systems ensured children received support that was right for them.

Children and families were at the heart of the service. The team demonstrated a strong commitment to family wellbeing, helping beyond the nursery environment and fostering strong community connections by providing practical support such as toys, food and clothing.

Mealtimes were calm and enjoyable, with appetising meals provided in line with nutritional guidance. Breakfast was served in the playroom at the start of the session, ensuring children were well-nourished and ready to learn. One parent commented "My child is offered a good variety of healthy meals and snacks that suit their preferences and dietary needs" and another parent shared "My child will come in from nursery & educate their family on what's healthy & what's not".

Children selected meals using a digital smart board with visual prompts to support choice. Lunch took place in the school dining hall, helping children become familiar with their school environment and supporting smooth transitions. Opportunities for independence were evident as children carried their trays and cleared their plates. Allergies and preferences were managed well and staff sat with children, chatting to them and supervising them closely. This contributed to a safe and sociable mealtime experience.

Individualised strategies were consistently embedded in practice to meet children's needs. Staff used a range of communication approaches, including visual supports and objects of reference, and introduced a "play box" to encourage shared engagement and interaction.

Child protection procedures were in place, and all staff had completed training to strengthen their understanding of safeguarding. They were clear about their responsibility to protect children in their care, ensuring children were kept safe from harm.

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

The provider should review and develop their personal plans and planning for learning paperwork so that it is reflective of children's support needs.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 20 February 2019.

Action taken since then

We were satisfied with the progress the service had made for this area for improvement. Personal plans and planning systems were in place which reflected children's needs.

This area for improvement has been met.

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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