

The Glasgow Academy - Milngavie After School Care Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 December 2025

Service provided by:
Glasgow Academics War Memorial
Trust

Service provider number:
SP2003003598

Service no:
CS2004077305

About the service

The Glasgow Academy - Milngavie After School Care is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 32 children aged three years and over. It is one of several services operated by Glasgow Academicals War Memorial Trust. The service is based within their school in the Milngavie area of East Dunbartonshire. It operates Monday - Friday from 3pm - 6pm, term time only. The accommodation is comprised of a main playroom and two outdoor zones including an enclosed soft surfaced play area and a natural forest garden. The service is close to primary schools, a local park and main transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 December 2025 between 15:15 and 18:30. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children attending the service
- received electronic feedback from nine families whose children attended the service
- received electronic feedback from three staff who worked in the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- 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.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care that promotes wellbeing and emotional security, with staff creating a safe and supportive environment that balances independence and responsive care.
- The setting encouraged healthy lifestyles and emotional resilience through varied play spaces, nutritious snacks, and practices that empowered children to make positive choices.
- Children benefitted from rich, stimulating play experiences that foster creativity, independence, and confidence, supported by staff who responded to their interests.
- Strong relationships and partnerships with families ensured inclusive, responsive care, underpinned by clear communication and policies that safeguard health and wellbeing.
- Effective leadership fostered a culture of quality, inclusion, and safety, supported by clear communication and robust improvement processes.

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	5 - Very 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 leadership approach we observed in place was clearly founded on principles of high-quality care and learning and active engagement with children and their families. The manager was committed to providing the highest standards for children, and families. The manager and staff were committed to including all stakeholders in the design and review of their vision, values and aims. We discussed how these might be regularly reviewed and adapted to highlight key aspirations of the children and families who currently use the service.

The manager had gathered feedback from parents and children to help change and inform ongoing improvements to the service. Effective communication between the manager and the staff team ensured an understanding of the service's improvement goals. Staff told us how they engaged meaningfully with self evaluation and used team meetings to discuss and reflect on their practice. We highlighted practical consultation strategies for widening family engagement in the improvement planning process. The manager agreed these would enhance communication with parents and help strengthen the capacity of service to deliver care and support tailored towards children's and families' particular needs and choices.

The manager ensured staff had a clear understanding of the importance of maintaining a safe and secure environment for children. Comprehensive risk assessments were in place for all indoor and outdoor play areas, and these were regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in activities, equipment, and environmental conditions. Staff conducted daily checks before children arrived, ensuring that any potential hazards were identified and addressed promptly. Children were encouraged to participate in safety routines, fostering their awareness and understanding of personal safety. The service also maintained detailed records of incidents and near misses, which were used to inform future planning and improve safety measures. We found auditing and monitoring processes were in place that covered key areas such as personal plans, medication, accidents and incidents. These processes promoted children's safety and staff accountability across the service.

The importance of recruiting and retaining a stable and skilled team was recognised by the manager as essential to the wellbeing of children and staff. Safe recruitment practices were in place, ensuring all staff were appropriately vetted and suitable to work with children. We highlighted the value of adapting current induction procedures to reflect best practice approaches outlined in the Scottish Government's national induction resource. This can help to enhance the systems in place for ensuring newly recruited staff have the knowledge and skills necessary for providing high-quality care for children and that they fully understand their responsibilities within the team.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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.

Staff promoted a strong culture that upheld children's right to play through diverse creative, imaginative, and physical experiences. Children were actively consulted, and their ideas informed daily, weekly, and monthly play plans. During the inspection, we observed children enjoying freedom to pursue their own play ideas, which promoted choice and independence. Displays and personal plans captured examples of these experiences, evidencing that children were happy and confident in their play. Children had access to a wide variety of creative and active play experiences, including trips to the moor, bird watching as part of an RSPB survey, tree climbing, mud kitchen play, balloon keepie-uppie, pumpkin lantern making, baking, loose parts play, den building, arts and crafts, board games, loom bands, dance, Lego, doll play, shop play, and construction activities of different scales. These opportunities supported children's curiosity, imagination, and physical development.

Staff encouraged positive interactions among children and recognised the role of peer relationships in enriching play. They demonstrated a sound understanding of playwork principles and used this knowledge to enhance children's experiences. Observations of play were used to identify opportunities for independence and creativity, and staff were receptive to additional approaches that could help them identify the experiences that children found most engaging and involving. This reflective practice ensured play opportunities remained responsive, challenging, and tailored to children's interests.

Staff understood that interacting and exploring alongside children helped foster understanding and a sense of wonder about the world. All the parents who complete our survey agreed their child could "always" or "very often" be involved in a range of opportunities and fun experiences to meet their individual needs and support their development. One parent told us there was a "strong emphasis on outdoor play". Another parent commented: "There is woods attached to the school that allows them to play safely. In the summer months the staff make sure the kids are outside. Our child gets to play on the moor while the teachers stay with them." Staff facilitated children's play in a manner that enabled children to make the most of their experiences and deepened learning through play. By valuing exploration and curiosity, staff created an environment where children felt supported to take risks and develop an appreciation for the natural world.

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, consistent, and responsive care that fostered their wellbeing. Staff created an environment where children felt safe, valued, and confident in expressing their play needs. Staff understood that nurturing relationships, including the development of friendships, were essential for children's healthy growth. Staff balanced promoting independence with providing support where needed and reflected on their approaches to ensure they were adapted to children's evolving play needs. This supported children to thrive in a setting that prioritised emotional security and development through shared play experiences.

The environment offered diverse spaces that supported social interaction, small group play, or solitary activities, enabling children to make choices that suit their preferences. These spaces positively impacted children's ability to regulate emotions and build social skills. Snack choices were nutritious, culturally appropriate, and safely prepared, taking account of allergies and dietary needs in line with national guidance such as Food Matters and Healthy Eating in Schools (2020).

Fresh water was readily available throughout the day. As a result, children were empowered to make healthy choices and engage in play that supported both physical wellbeing and emotional resilience.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning approach that recognised each child as a capable individual whose voice was valued. Plans promoted children's rights and individuality while ensuring continuity and progression in care. The manager worked closely with children and families to include key information about medical needs and play interests. We discussed opportunities to make planning more forward looking by incorporating children's own play goals and creating space for regular review. This approach can strengthen the systems already in place that ensured children experienced care and play experiences that reflected their aspirations and support ownership of their development through play.

Policies for medication storage and administration were updated to reflect current good practice, providing assurance that health needs are met safely. Staff knew children and families well, creating a warm and welcoming environment where relationships are central. Families had regular opportunities to discuss children's care and development, supported by clear communication systems. Staff worked collaboratively with families to respond sensitively to individual needs and circumstances. This helped to ensure children and families felt respected and included. This built trust and ensured care remained responsive and effective. One parent commented: "The staff are engaging and clearly have a good relationship with the children, which extends to the children and offers strong feedback on how they've been doing, and specifically how our own child has participated".

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	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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