

Machrie Nursery School Day Care of Children

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Castlemilk
Glasgow
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 January 2026

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2006137040

About the service

Machrie Nursery school is a day care of children service located in the Castlemilk area of Glasgow. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council and is registered to provide a care service to maximum of 50 children aged three to five years. At the time of inspection there were 41 children present.

This is a purpose built setting situated within a wider school campus. There are three main playrooms for children and a secure garden. The service is located close to local amenities such as, schools, shops and local woodland areas.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 and 21 January 2026. 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 children using the service
- reviewed electronic feedback from 27 parents/carers
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

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.

During this inspection we 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

- Management and staff were committed to ensuring they were a highly skilled and confident team, that worked well together to deliver positive outcomes for children.
- Quality assurance, self-evaluation and improvement planning were meaningful and having a positive impact on outcomes for children and families.
- Children were nurtured, deeply engaged in quality experiences and having fun.
- Staff knew children well and responded to their individual needs with kindness and respect.
- Rich family engagement opportunities supported strong relationships with children and their families.
- Children's play, learning and development was enhanced through access to natural spaces and groups in the local community.

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

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

Leaders were friendly, approachable and engaged well with the inspection process. A new manager had been in post since August and had developed positive relationships with the team. Leaders were highly motivated, committed and proactive in implementing change and progression to ensure very good outcomes for children and families. Staff told us they found leaders to be supportive and approachable. One staff member commented "I feel very supported by the senior leadership team." This ensured staff felt supported and motivated to provide consistently high quality care to children and their families.

The setting promoted a shared vision that reflected high standards, for children, families and the community. The underpinning themes of inclusion, partnership working and wellbeing were reflected in the ethos and practice of the setting. This created a nurturing and respectful learning environment which valued children and families. Parents all strongly agreed they were very happy with the service and one commented, "the service provides a nurturing and engaging environment where my child feels safe, supported and excited to learn."

Ongoing self-evaluation was taking place against national frameworks and guidance. This provided opportunities for staff to reflect on practice and enabled the setting to identify meaningful areas for development. This informed clear priorities to ensure positive outcomes for children were at the heart of planning for improvement. For example, indoor and outdoor environments had been reviewed and developed to meet children's individual needs and stages of development. Staff shared this had impacted positively on children's play, learning and emotional wellbeing. We agreed and observed children to be happy, calm and deeply engaged in play.

The pace of change was carefully considered, ensuring all staff were included and contributed to the improvement journey together. Staff agreed they felt included and told us "I am listened to at staff meetings and my opinions are respected and given feedback on." This allowed for meaningful reflection, deeper engagement with improvement priorities and continuous progress.

A collaborative approach to self-evaluation meant children and families were encouraged to help shape the service. Feedback from children and families was routinely gathered through ongoing consultation such as, questionnaires, mind maps and conversations. One parent commented, "The manager is excellent and makes sure as parents we are really involved. They are interested in our views." This strengthened the quality culture and ensured the service remained responsive to the needs of children, families and the community.

The staff team were skilled and experienced in their roles. Induction processes supported new staff to develop their awareness of the setting and needs of the children. This provided a clear overview of their roles and responsibilities and helped them to meet children's needs. Staff were committed to their continued professional development and this was actively encouraged within the service. Staff had attended training that built on and enhanced their practice such as, embracing neurodiversity, nurturing my

potential and Makaton signing. Staff spoke positively about their training opportunities and shared how this had enhanced their knowledge and skills to help them meet children's individual needs.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator: Play, learning and developing

Children were happy and having fun as they independently explored the wide range of experiences on offer. Careful consideration had been given to the layout of the rooms to offer a range of spaces for children to make choices, support their interests and develop their ideas. Children had access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem solving. For example, magnets were available, which encouraged children to use creative thinking and problem solving strategies as they developed their ideas through play. They chose to explore the playrooms and were delighted when they found items that the magnets would stick to. This supported children to be curious, motivated and purposeful in their play. One child was eager to share their learning with us and told us, "look at the magnets. They stick to things that are metal, but not all things. They stick together because magnets have electrons."

Play opportunities supported children's development of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, children were excited to mark make in different ways, such as, writing letters in porridge oats and using big chalks to write numbers on a wall. In addition, language, literacy and numeracy were promoted through continuous opportunities throughout the day by sharing stories, singing and children counting each other at times of transition.

The outdoor area offered natural, loose parts and open-ended materials that supported curiosity and imagination. Children were confident in leading their own play outdoors and were deeply engaged in play. For example, three children spent time in the mud kitchen making courgette soup, mashed potatoes and tea, and some other children used a piece of hose to pretend to be firefighters running around the garden putting out fires. A wooden climbing frame and loose parts obstacle course supported risky and challenging play. This supported children's physical development as they practised skills and movements such as climbing, balancing and jumping.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child development which enabled them to offer challenge and support to children. This was further enhanced through staff responding to children's interests and facilitating their play choices throughout the day. Staff skilfully engaged with children using a balance of comments and questions, such as, 'what else do you need' and 'what will happen if'. This encouraged children's creative thinking and sustained interest in their learning. As a result children were deeply engaged in play for prolonged periods of time.

Planning approaches were informed through observations, information from parents and what children said, to provide a balance of responsive and intentional learning experiences. This ensured learning was meaningful for children and based on their interests and stage of development. Children's learning was recorded and shared through online learning journals, which meaningfully involved parents, supported learning to be continued at home and celebrated children's achievements.

Children's play, learning and development was enriched through strong connections to the local community. Children accessed the library, the community centre for giggle and grow sessions (a programme that supports literacy, music, movement and play) and the local woodland space. This supported children to connect with others in their community and feel a sense of belonging in their local area.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the settings work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Nurturing, care and support

Staff demonstrated warm, respectful and caring interactions with children. Relationships were strong and consistent, with staff using gentle tones, showing patience and kindness, and supporting personal care with sensitivity, privacy and dignity. Consent was routinely sought from children, reinforcing a culture of respect and trust in line with respecting the rights of children. Parents valued the care their children received and shared that staff were, "loving", "caring" and "treat everyone equally." This helped to build a respectful and inclusive environment.

The ethos of the setting promoted children's wellbeing and sense of belonging, with supportive approaches to helping children regulate their emotions and connect with peers. Staff regularly checked in with children, encouraged kindness and supported conflict resolution. All interactions were consistently attuned to individual children's needs. For example, a variety of communication friendly approaches including visuals and signing were used to support children's preferred method of communication. This created a nurturing environment where children's voices were heard and respected.

Each child had a personal plan that contained important information that supported staff to meet their needs. For example, their likes, dislikes, dietary needs and language spoken. Plans were regularly updated in collaboration with parents and carers to reflect progress and changes in children's lives. This helped identify strategies to support children's progression in their development. Staff worked closely with families and other professionals to identify strategies and goals to support children with additional support needs. This supported staff to provide care and support that was right for all children. As a result all children were making progress at a pace that was right for them and supported them to flourish as individuals.

Children accessed the adjoining school's dinner hall for lunchtime. Staff were mindful of children's individual needs during this transition and used an individualised approach to support their wellbeing. For example, children that became upset were able to return to the playroom to eat their lunch. Some children had opportunities to demonstrate responsibility and independence as they took on the role as lunchtime helper. They were beaming with pride as they showed inspectors their helper badge and carefully handed out cutlery and napkins to their friends. Further opportunities for children to develop their independence skills included, pouring own drinks and tidying away items when finished. The manager shared discussions had taken place with the team and catering staff, and within the next week children would be encouraged to self-serve their own food. We agreed this would be beneficial to provide further opportunities for children to develop their independence skills.

Children and families were at the heart of the service. Staff took time to get to know children and their families well, promoting positive relationships. This was enhanced through meaningful approaches which included, stay and play sessions, parents coming in to cook, read stories and play musical instruments. Transitions, both from home to nursery and between playrooms, were managed sensitively and thoughtfully.

Staff planned these transitions on an individual basis to ensure they met the specific needs of each child and family. This supported parents to feel valued and contributed to trusting relationships between them and staff.

Families were supported more widely to access a range of support services within their local community that improved family life and ability to deal with challenges. This contributed to supporting positive outcomes for children and their families.

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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