

Sunnyside ELC Day Care of Children

Erskine Street
Alloa
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Telephone: 01259 452319

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 January 2026

Service provided by:
Clackmannanshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002713

Service no:
CS2003043743

About the service

Sunnyside ELC is a day care of children service provided by Clackmannanshire Council and is located within Alloa. The nursery is situated within Sunnyside Primary School building with access to their own enclosed outdoor space and the school grounds. The nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 66 children not yet an age to attend primary school at any one time, of those 66 no more than 15 children are aged two to under three.

The service is situated close to some local amenities such as, local shops, parks and nature walks. Children are cared for in a designated space, they have access to the dining hall, their own toilet facilities, large open plan playroom with a kitchen area, office space and additional rooms for group activities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 January 2026 between 09:10 and 16:15. Feedback was shared with the service on 22 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 complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received five completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with staff and the management team
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- 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.

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

- The service had an established vision, values and aims that were reviewed within the past year in collaboration with children, families and staff.
- Most children were engaged in high-quality play and learning experiences across the setting.
- Staff knew children well and had developed trusting relationships with children and their families.
- Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were threaded naturally throughout play spaces. Some visual strategies were used to further support children's communication.
- The nursery offered a warm and welcoming environment for children and families.
- Children were beginning to be actively involved in shaping their learning environments.
- Infection prevention and control measures were in place and effective in supporting the staff team in reducing the spread of infections.
- Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive interactions that promoted their wellbeing.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	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 service had a vision, values and aims in place which were reviewed within the past year with children, families and staff. One child shared "we do not kick or hurt our friends in nursery". This meant that one of their values 'kind feet and hands' was reflected within the service and meaningful to all.

An improvement plan had been developed that was linked to A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: early learning and childcare. Key priorities had been identified that were relevant to the nursery. The service had begun to make improvements within these key priorities, such as developing outdoor learning and physical play opportunities. The service should continue with their improvement priorities, for example, the 'Two and Beyond provision'. This would support the service to ensure all learners achieve and benefit from child-led high-quality play and learning experiences.

Quality assurance processes were in place that helped the service to ensure they were on track with actions and tasks that were required to be completed. This included highlighting self-evaluation processes. There were a variety of different ways self-evaluation was taking place within the service. Staff and children's views were beginning to be sought and influence positive change within the service. Staff shared that they were becoming more confident in being part of these processes, which is supporting them to improve their practice through professional dialogue.

Monitoring and auditing systems were in place. These supported the management team with an overview of the nursery. This meant that they were able to identify what systems worked well and highlighted gaps and trends. We discussed ways these could be further strengthened, such as ensuring information gathered in accident and incident forms were accurate.

Policies and procedures were in place that supported the management team with the running of the service. We discussed with the service where some policies could be enhanced to further support the staff team in emergencies, such as flow charts or step by step procedures. This would ensure all staff were confident in emergency procedures, such as missing child, in the event of staff absences.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 4 - Good

Quality Indicator - Children experience high quality spaces.

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 service was warm and welcoming. The use of low lighting, real and natural resources helped to create a homely and calming feel to most play spaces. Children had areas to keep their personal belongings and had access to their learning journals. Children proudly showed off their drawings and where they kept their journals. This gave children the message that they mattered and a sense of belonging.

The environment had been developed since the last inspection. Comfortable areas for children to rest and relax had been created with the use of cushions and blankets. Children were seen to be laying down and reading books in these areas. Children had been involved in developing the outside play areas. A parent told us, "my children are always involved in the development of areas". This meant that this space gave them a sense of ownership and was of interest to them. Careful consideration had gone into placements of resources within outside areas. As a result, children were kept safe while they played and explored the outside play spaces.

Additional spaces were available for the service to use, such as a smaller room. The staff team had recently been trialling this area as a flexible space, to help some children with emotional regulation and focused activities. Throughout observations on the first day of inspection, it was observed children were spending extended periods of time within smaller play spaces in the morning. This included having snack and no free flow access to the garden. We discussed with the management team to consider how these spaces could support all children with their choice and pace of day. The staff team were proactive and had identified that further work on how to use these areas was required. On day two of inspection, new processes supported children with free flow access to different areas, such as the garden, free flow snack and physical play. This meant that all children's morning experience was enhanced to support them with making choices that interested them.

Risk assessing was beginning to be embedded across the service, including children taking part in risk benefit. These were supported by appropriate risk assessments that helped the staff team review areas and walks regularly. The Care Inspectorate SIMOA (safe, inspect, monitor, observe, act), Keeping children safe - look, think, act campaign was used throughout the service. Register boards were displayed within the main room which staff used to identify how many children were attending throughout the day. We discussed with the service to ensure that regular head counts were completed and communicate when children were leaving rooms with staff. This would further support the staff team with keeping children safe throughout the day.

Infection prevention and control measures had been improved throughout the service. Areas had been deep cleaned, repainted and broken resources replaced. Children were seen to be washing their hands at appropriate times of the day, supported by staff. Toilet areas were regularly checked with cleaning schedules in place to support the staff with good infection, prevention and control practices. This helped to reduce the spread of infections and keep children safe.

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.

Most children were engaged in quality play and learning experiences throughout some areas of the setting. The service were reviewing their play spaces and trialling new processes to help support children with their experiences. At times, these processes restricted children's choice and flow of the day. We discussed with the service different ways this could be developed. On day two of the inspection, the service had adapted their processes. This meant that all children were given the opportunity to choose where to play and use areas that helped them to achieve and thrive.

Children's play and learning needs were mostly met by a staff team who knew them well and understood their cues. A variety of approaches supported the staff to recognise early signs in children who might be feeling overwhelmed. This helped children transition to other activities. Soft toys were used to help children understand their daily routines and emotions. As a result, children were beginning to understand how to regulate their emotions and their experiences enhanced.

Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were threaded throughout the service. For example, the use of loose parts, different sized resources, books and mark making objects meant that children could explore these opportunities while they played. Bookbug sessions had begun to take place where families were invited to sing songs and read books with their children. Some signs and symbols were used to support children with their daily routines. Some staff were more confident in using signing to support children with their communication. The service should continue to embed these strategies within daily practice to enhance children's experiences.

Children's interests were used to support the service with their planning approaches. These processes had been recently developed by the team, they continued to review the impact it had on children's experiences. We discussed ways the team could develop these further to ensure planning was responsive to children's interests in the moment. This would help the service to develop resources and activities that were meaningful to children at that time.

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 experienced warm, nurturing, and responsive care that fostered their wellbeing. Staff knew children well and had a good understanding of how to support their individual needs. Parents had shared that they had a good relationship with staff. One parent told us, "all staff are approachable". Another parent shared, "when an issue is raised, the staff very quickly put in place a plan to ensure the child is heard and safe". This contributed to building positive relationships between staff, children, and their families.

Personal plans were in place that supported the staff team to meet children's needs. These gathered important information, such as medical needs, dietary requirements, likes, dislikes, and emergency contacts. Children were further supported with individual risk assessments or care plans when needed. A parent told us, "I regularly speak with the teachers to check how my child is performing including their personal development plan". Another parent shared, "I am regularly updated about their progress and asked to update their personal plans". We shared with the service that it was not always clear when reviews with parents had taken place. Information within some parts of individual plans did not always reflect current needs. We advised the service to review their personal plan cycle to ensure they reflect current and relevant information. This would ensure children's changing needs were clear, and strategies identified were consistently used.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected, and additional measures had been put in place to support this further. For example, large wipeable curtains had been positioned around nappy changing areas. This meant that children received intimate care in a way that protected their dignity.

Consistent strategies were in place that further supported this for individual children, for example getting down to their level asking if they would like their nappy changed and respecting their answers. As a result, children's rights were respected and helped them to feel valued.

Most children experienced relaxed and sociable mealtimes throughout the day. Children's individual needs were considered, and different lunchtime options were available to support them. This meant that some children went through to the large school dining hall, and others stayed in a smaller, quieter space within the playroom. Most children were able to self-serve their main meal, pour their own drinks, and clear their spaces away. This meant that children were able to build life skills in a way that was meaningful to them.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 01 December 2025, the provider must ensure that appropriate and effective infection prevention and control measures are in place. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that:

- a) Staff support children with handwashing
- b) effective cleaning of environments are carried out daily and toilets are appropriately cleaned after use
- c) environment quality assurance systems are put in place to support infection prevention and control monitoring
- d) appropriate storage and labelling of children's belongings within the toilet area is in place
- e) appropriate storage of personal protective equipment and cleaning equipment is in place
- f) broken or damaged resources and equipment are promptly replaced or fixed including flooring and walls.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) and (d) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

This requirement was made on 4 February 2025.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service had completed works to their environment, this included fresh paint in areas such as the toilets, rusted areas cleaned and repaired, appropriate storage of children's personal items which included soiled clothing and broken and damage resources removed and replaced.

There were cleaning schedules in place that helped the staff team to reduce the spread of infection throughout the service. Protective clothing was stored out of reach of children which helped to ensure children were kept safe when using the toilets independently.

Inspection report

Staff were observed to be regularly checking the toilet area and supporting children when they needed it.

Met - within timescales

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

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development the provider should ensure children's needs are consistently met.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- A) Ensuring staffing levels are appropriate and meet the needs of children in their care
- B) strategies set out in children's personal care plans are consistently used
- C) staff feel supported and listened to.

This is in order to comply with section 7 of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which stated that:

'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).

This area for improvement was made on 4 February 2025.

Action taken since then

Children's wellbeing, learning and development opportunities had improved. The service had appropriate levels of staffing to meet children's needs. Staff worked together to support each other when observing other staff supporting individual children. Strategies were identified throughout personal plans that helped the staff team to support children in the moment. Staff shared that they felt like they were getting more support from management with meetings and different training opportunities.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Staff should continue to work together to ensure the environment is safe for all children including, for example, giving consideration to the placement of loose parts in the garden.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19):

And

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

This area for improvement was made on 14 June 2023.

Action taken since then

Environmental reviews have taken place throughout the service, including consideration to where loose parts are stored in the outside environment. Loose parts were stored away from fencing. Children took part in risk benefit to help them to begin to understand how to keep themselves and their friends safe while they played.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children are kept safe the provider should ensure consistent effective and robust quality assurance processes are in place.

This should include, but is not limited to, monitoring and auditing of policies, procedures, risk assessments and accident and incident:

- A) monitoring and auditing of policies and procedures
- B) monitoring and auditing of risk assessments
- C) monitoring and auditing of accident and incident procedures to ensure they are followed correctly.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 4 February 2025.

Action taken since then

Quality assurance systems were in place that helped the management team carry out effective auditing throughout the service. This helped the team to identify gaps, trends and how to improve systems to help keep children safe.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
Children experience high quality spaces	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

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