

Cloan Nursery School Day Care of Children

45 Cloan Avenue
Drumchapel
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
12 March 2026

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003014865

About the service

Cloan Nursery School is registered to provide care for 61 children aged 0 to those not yet attending school. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council and is located in Drumchapel, Glasgow. The accommodation comprises playrooms for each age range located within a purpose built single storey building with access to a large, secure outdoor play space.

The service is conveniently located on public transport links and is close to other schools, nurseries and green spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 9 and 10 March 2026 between 09:00 and 17:00. Feedback was given to the service on 12 March 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 attending the service
- spoke with staff and the management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received electronic feedback from five families.

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.

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

- The service's clearly embedded vision, values and aims created a consistently nurturing, inclusive environment where children felt valued, secure and confident in their play and relationships.
- Quality assurance was still in its early stages, with limited implementation and impact, so improvements were not yet making a consistent difference for children.
- Children consistently enjoyed high quality, engaging play and learning, supported by warm and skilled staff who helped build their confidence, motivation and sense of belonging.
- The service was managing a transition to new digital systems, and despite delays in recording, children continued to make strong progress because staff remained committed, knowledgeable and focused on high quality daily interactions.

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	5 - Very 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's vision, values and aims were clearly visible throughout the nursery and were well understood by staff. They were reflected consistently in day to day practice and demonstrated a strong commitment to children and families. As a result, children experienced a warm, nurturing environment where they felt valued, secure and included, which supported positive relationships and confident engagement in play. One parent who provided feedback told us "My child and I are meaningfully involved in the development of the service because our opinions and feedback are listened to."

Quality assurance processes were in place; however, their implementation was at an early stage. Staff had begun to use challenge questions and identify areas for improvement, but some documentation remained incomplete and there was limited evidence that actions were leading to sustained change. Although actions such as updating personal plans and developing more robust observations had been identified, they were not yet embedded enough to influence children's daily experiences or ensure consistent approaches across the staff team.

Improvement planning was underway, with a focus on outdoor learning, planning approaches and the transition to a new digital learning platform. Significant progress had been made outdoors for the 3-5 age group, and this had a clear and positive impact on children. They demonstrated high levels of engagement, confidence and curiosity when using the enriched outdoor spaces, and staff reported improvements in wellbeing, behaviour and peer interactions. Children benefited from more opportunities for physical activity, independence and exploration. The outdoor champion played a key role in supporting these improvements, creating a consistent, highly engaging outdoor learning environment. Outdoor lunch was observed to be a calm, enriching experience that promoted social skills, independence and enjoyment.

Monitoring of playrooms and planning was taking place but was not yet robust or systematic. Evidence within monitoring folders was limited, and staff were not consistently involved in improvement planning or self evaluation. Staff were committed and reflective, but the absence of a clear, shared understanding of priorities meant that changes were not always implemented in a way that directly improved children's experiences. A more embedded culture of self evaluation would have enabled staff to adapt practice more consistently, contributing to clearer planning for children's learning and more responsive approaches.

Staff reported feeling well supported by management and demonstrated enthusiasm for their champion roles, including PATHS, phonological awareness, outdoor learning and Eco Schools. These roles contributed positively to children's experiences, offering a wider range of purposeful learning opportunities. However, because the impact of these roles was not yet evaluated systematically, it was not always clear how these initiatives were improving outcomes for children or where further development was required.

Management recognised that monitoring, tracking and quality assurance systems were at an early stage of development. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the improvements required. The service had a strong, stable staff team with potential to lead change effectively. With more consistent and rigorous implementation of quality assurance processes, the service was well placed to strengthen children's learning, safety and overall outcomes.

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.

During the inspection, children consistently experienced very high quality play and learning across both playrooms. Staff interactions were warm, responsive and skilled, leading to children who were deeply engaged, confident and enthusiastic in their play. Parents who provided feedback were very happy with the quality of experiences and learning their children engaged in. Some of their comments included, "My son has the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities including creative and artistic activities, crafts, outdoor play, and simple educational activities and the most positive aspects include the variety of play and creative activities, interaction with other children, and opportunities to develop social skills and independence."

Children benefitted from an environment that promoted independence, curiosity and high levels of purposeful learning. In the 3-5 room, staff used open ended questions and high quality dialogue to extend children's thinking and build their problem solving, communication and early literacy skills. For example, during a playdough activity, a child commented she had no money to pay for her pretend pizza. Staff used this naturally occurring moment to link play to real life experiences, discussing Apple Pay. This helped children make meaningful connections and supported their understanding of the world beyond nursery.

Staff working alongside children provided rich opportunities for language development and early scientific thinking. Questions such as "What do we need to add to make it less sticky?" encouraged children to experiment, observe changes and describe what they noticed. As a result, children were developing confidence, creativity and independence in their learning.

Children were highly motivated and engaged during block play. Staff supported their ideas sensitively while ensuring safety, allowing children to fully lead their play. This resulted in rich conversations about light, dark and space as children transformed their structure into a den. Emotional wellbeing was supported very effectively when staff managed turn taking sensitively, helping children feel heard, valued and reassured.

The sand play area further demonstrated the depth of children's engagement. Children negotiated roles, shared tools and created their own songs while exploring weight, temperature and texture. This play promoted cooperation, imagination and early numeracy skills. The carefully organised and labelled resources supported children's independence and choice, contributing to sustained, purposeful play.

Across the room, resources and materials were of a very high standard. Loose parts, real life items and storytelling provocations were thoughtfully positioned to inspire creativity and rich imaginative play. Children engaged confidently in cooking, caring for babies and hairdressing, demonstrating strong social skills and secure relationships with staff and peers.

In the 2-3 room, children had access to a broad range of high quality sensory and heuristic materials that encouraged exploration and discovery. Staff created a calm, nurturing atmosphere where children felt safe to try new things. Children showed curiosity and joy during sand, small world and construction play, and staff supported their ideas in a gentle, responsive way that respected each child's pace and choices.

Early literacy and numeracy were supported well through magnetic number boards, books, mark making and opportunities for children to match colours, explore shapes and develop coordination. Staff celebrated children's achievements, no matter how small, which helped build self esteem and a strong sense of belonging.

Planning approaches were responsive and child centred. Floor books clearly showed children's voices, group learning and links to Realising the Ambition. Staff carefully considered children's interests when planning both activities and changes to the environment, such as repositioning the home corner to deepen engagement. The focus child cycle ensured that each child's development was observed and supported across key areas, including communication, creativity, confidence and early numeracy. While some targets could have been more detailed, children still benefitted from thoughtful, well-informed planning that supported progression in learning.

Floor books captured rich group learning and children's voices, showing the depth of engagement across the playrooms. However, they did not yet show individual progression over time. The temporary gaps caused by the platform change meant that some children's learning profiles were incomplete, and families did not always receive fully up to date information. Staff recognised this and had clear plans to rebuild comprehensive digital learning journals.

The service was in a planned period of transition as it changed online platforms for recording and tracking children's progress. Staff responded positively to this change and continued to prioritise high quality interactions and children's wellbeing. Although observations had not been updated since August and recording was not yet consistent, children continued to make strong progress because staff knew them well and supported learning effectively through daily practice.

Despite the challenges of changing systems, staff showed strong commitment, teamwork and resilience. The service was well placed to strengthen assessment and tracking as new digital processes became embedded, ensuring even clearer evidence of children's progress and continued positive outcomes.

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.

Staff interactions with children were warm, responsive and nurturing. Staff were consistently kind in their approach and showed a strong understanding of children's verbal and non verbal cues. This allowed them to respond promptly and sensitively, supporting children to feel safe, reassured and emotionally secure. Parents who provided feedback were very positive about the nurturing care and relationships they and their children had with the staff team. Some of their comments included, "Teachers love our child and get to know each child and what works for them and staff are friendly with my child and she feels like home. They can motivate her to learn new things and play with new friends."

Staff positioned themselves well across play areas, ensuring they were visible and available whenever children needed support or comfort. Personal care was delivered with dignity and respect, with staff protecting children's privacy and ensuring they felt comfortable throughout.

Children's personal plans were stored securely, demonstrating respect for privacy and confidentiality. Initial information had been gathered effectively when children started at the service; however, plans had not been updated to reflect changes in children's needs or circumstances. As a result, personal plans did not always offer an accurate or current picture of each child. This meant staff could not consistently rely on them to guide individualised approaches or ensure children's evolving needs were fully supported. (See area for improvement.)

For children requiring additional support, staff provided nurturing and responsive care, ensuring their needs were met in practice. While written strategies were not always recorded or evaluated consistently during the transition, staff demonstrated a very good understanding of each child and adapted support effectively.

Wellbeing assessment plans were also variable in quality and did not always identify clear needs or strategies. While children received good care in practice, the lack of detailed written guidance limited staff's ability to plan and record wellbeing needs in a consistent and robust way. Children and parents had limited opportunities to contribute meaningfully to personal plans. Their voices were not well represented, and there was little evidence of ongoing collaboration or regular review. As a result, plans did not fully reflect what mattered most to children or their families.

The lunchtime experience offered nurturing interactions and opportunities for independence. Outdoors, a small group of children enjoyed a rich and engaging lunchtime experience. Staff made natural links to children's previous learning, and children were relaxed and confident in their interactions. Indoors, children were informed when lunch was ready and supported appropriately with handwashing. They could serve themselves from a choice of healthy options, promoting independence and choice. Seating was limited to seven children at a time, which occasionally disrupted the flow of the experience. Staff responded warmly and flexibly, such as finding an additional chair for a child who had joined the table, but the space constraints meant some children waited close by.

Families were welcomed warmly into the service each day. Staff greeted children and parents in a friendly, respectful manner, creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere at arrival times. Staff engaged naturally in conversation with families, showing genuine interest in children's wellbeing and building trusting relationships.

The service made some efforts to involve families more directly, including parents' evenings, afternoon events and stay and play sessions. However, attendance was often low. Exploring more flexible or varied methods for involving families would support stronger partnership working and ensure parents' contributions were meaningfully reflected in improvement planning.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that each child has a personal plan that supports delivery of their care and development.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that personal plans:

- (a) Are developed in consultation with the children and their parents/carers.
- (b) Clearly set out how children's health, welfare and safety needs will be met.
- (c) Are individualised, taking into account children's preferences, strengths, routines and support networks.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15).

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	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
Safeguarding and child protection	4 - Good

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