

# Clarkston Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
5 March 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Clarkston Nursery

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000781

**Service no:**  
CS2003003859

## About the service

Clarkston Nursery is run by a voluntary management committee which is assisted by a qualified staff team.

They are registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 31 children, from age 2 to those not yet of an age to attend primary school, at any one time. Of those 31 no more than 15 are aged 2 to under 3.

The service operates from accommodation within Williamwood Church in the Clarkston area of East Renfrewshire. The nursery works in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council.

The service's aims and objectives are to "place the child at the centre of all we do and recognise the individuality of each child and meet their needs on an individual basis".

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 4 and Thursday 5 March 2026. We gave inspection feedback to the manager on Thursday 5 March.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 12 parents and four staff
- spoke with some of the parents' committee
- 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**

- The service was committed to recognising each child as an individual, meeting their needs and ensuring all children were meaningfully represented in the environment.
- Children experienced warm and nurturing care from staff who knew them well and who were responsive to their individual needs.
- Children were happy, confident and having fun.
- Quality assurance approaches had been developed and were supporting continuous improvement within the service, we discussed the addition of a quality assurance calendar to further strengthen this.
- Parents spoke about the staff team's welcoming, nurturing and "family like" ethos.
- Some health care plans would benefit from being further developed to ensure they are individualised.
- The service valued partnership with parents and offered a variety of opportunities for parental involvement.

**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 vision, values, and aims were clearly embedded and reflected in practice. The setting focused on building a welcoming community resource where parents felt valued and included. This was evident through the active parents' committee, regular family engagement opportunities, and the open approach to welcoming parents into the centre each day. One parent commented "It's the heart of our community and we have greatly benefitted from their knowledge and support" and another shared "I feel the nursery works hard to create not just a childcare setting but a community".

The setting also aimed to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment, which was also evident in practice. Staff were nurturing in their interactions, and children benefited from a wide range of opportunities to learn through play. The service was committed to recognising each child as an individual and meeting their needs; this was demonstrated through the careful selection of resources and books that ensured all children were meaningfully represented within the environment.

The manager was visible, friendly, and approachable to children, families, and staff. A range of communication methods were used, including daily conversations and weekly emails that shared information about experiences, learning, family support, and health promotion. Informative notice boards and newsletters further supported effective communication. One parent commented "We get weekly emails from key workers with what they have been doing that week." and another shared. " There is always someone at the door to discuss anything as I enter as well as a member of staff in the room who feeds back daily". This created a positive environment which focused on relationships and effective communication.

Families' views were valued and used to inform developments within the setting, with contributions encouraged through an active parents' committee, formal questionnaires, and daily informal conversations. All families reported feeling meaningfully involved in the service; one parent commented, "Always have the opportunity to put your ideas forward and get involved." A range of events, such as coffee mornings, stay-and-play sessions, Burns Night activities, and seasonal celebrations including the Easter "Bunny Bounce," provided valuable opportunities to strengthen relationships and promote parental engagement, resulting in increased participation.

The management and staff team demonstrated a strong commitment to providing a good quality service for children and families. An improvement plan had been developed in line with local authority priorities, with a focus on enhancing provision for under-3s, particularly by strengthening the learning environment for two-year-olds. Staff had also visited other nurseries to engage in professional dialogue and share effective practice.

Quality assurance processes were in place, including the use of monitoring checklists to review children's profiles, environments, and experiences. The service had begun to use both the new quality improvement framework and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) to support reflection and drive environmental improvements, this work was still at an early stage and the manager had plans to further embed this. We recommended that the service continue to build on this approach and suggested developing a quality assurance calendar to further strengthen these processes.

Regular team meetings, planning meetings, and daily dialogue between staff fostered open communication and collaboration, ensuring a coordinated approach to supporting children's learning, development, and wellbeing. One staff member shared, "We have monthly staff meetings, where we discuss planning and learning for each group." Staff reported feeling supported by the management team, with comments such as, "My manager is very approachable and supportive," and "The door to management is always open, and I feel I am listened to." This contributed to a positive and respectful working environment, where staff felt valued and motivated to ensure positive outcomes for children.

## 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 happy, motivated, and engaged in play. We observed them confidently directing their own learning and participating in experiences that encouraged curiosity and imagination. Children enjoyed exploring sand using ladles for filling and emptying, creating models using Lego, and developing their creative skills at the art table through painting and glue pictures. These experiences supported the development of fine motor skills, problem-solving and imaginative thinking.

The hall was set up and arranged with clearly defined play areas including arts and crafts, imaginative play, construction and tabletop activities which featured a discovery table with mirrors, magnifying glasses, and kaleidoscopes, supporting children's exploration, observation, and problem-solving skills. Rugs and cushions provided a comfortable, homely environment, while small tents created a quiet area that supported emotional regulation and provided a space for children to rest. We discussed with the manager the need to consider how resources are presented and reset throughout the day to ensure all play spaces remain well-organised, engaging, and supportive of continuous learning, including extending resources to further support schematic play.

Planning processes were in place and were mainly adult-led, including a weekly playroom planner outlining resources in each area and key group planning identifying opportunities and experiences linked to children's individual next steps. We discussed with the manager how planning could be further developed to ensure a responsive, child-centred approach that builds on children's interests and incorporates clear evaluation of experiences and outcomes.

A range of opportunities were provided to support the development of children's language, literacy, and numeracy skills. A well-resourced writing area, with a variety of mark-making materials such as clipboards, post-it notes, pens, and paper, promoted early writing. Wooden letters and alphabet sheets supported letter recognition, and children were observed independently finding their printed names to add to their artwork.

Number lines and jigsaws supported early numeracy skills. Singing was incorporated into daily routines, with parents reporting that children continue to sing these songs at home, reinforcing learning and enjoyment. Digital technologies were also used, with children engaging in educational games on tablets to support learning.

The service had a dedicated outdoor garden which promoted active play, with a large climbing frame that was popular with children. Sheltered areas, such as a playhouse, encouraged role play, alongside a mud kitchen and sandpit to support exploration. Children enjoyed role playing by making "soup" using water, sand, pots, and pans, as well as drawing with chalk on the ground and playing with large trucks. These experiences supported the development of imagination, social skills, communication, and physical coordination.

Children were involved in risk assessing the garden during the inspection, supporting their understanding of safety. We suggested the service review the planning and set-up of the outdoor area to maximise opportunities for outdoor play, for example by ensuring staff prepare and resource areas in advance so they are inviting and provide appropriate challenge for children. We also highlighted the need to review the height of the rear gate to further ensure safety, and the manager agreed to take this forward.

Play and learning experiences were enriched through links with the local community. Children visited the local care home and participated in activities such as jigsaws, colouring, and singing alongside residents, with residents also attending the children's graduation. Children accessed local parks and wooded areas, supporting outdoor learning and developing their awareness of road safety. The service maintained strong links with the church, using the space for seasonal activities such as Christmas carol singing. These experiences strengthened children's connection to their community.

## 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.

The team created a warm and welcoming atmosphere. One parent shared "it feels like family" and another commented "It is such a welcoming environment, the staff are all experienced". Children received warm, positive, and consistent interactions from a stable, experienced staff team, reflecting strong, nurturing relationships.

Staff consistently used praise and encouragement to support children's confidence and self-esteem. They sensitively supported children to share, gently redirecting them to alternative resources when needed. This approach helped children develop positive relationships, cooperation skills, and an understanding of turn-taking.

Children and families were welcomed into the service and greeted daily in a friendly and relaxed way, helping to build strong relationships. Children arrived confidently and settled quickly, showing they felt safe and comfortable in the environment. One parent shared "Always welcomed by a number of the staff everyday and listened to with any queries you may have" and another commented "the setting is so welcoming, and I've really felt listened to".

Staff showed a strong awareness of each child's needs, responding with patience, gentle tones, smiles, and comforting support. For example, a child who was settling received cuddles and reassurance, helping them feel safe and secure. One parent commented "All staff know my child not just key worker".

Personal plans were in place for all children and developed in partnership with families. These included key information to support routines, preferences, and health needs, tailored to individual needs and interests, and were regularly reviewed with parents. The service had recently introduced a new personal plan to streamline information gathered, which included a section to document strategies and targets for all children to ensure a consistent, individualised approach to supporting their development and wellbeing. All parents agreed they were fully involved in developing and reviewing personal plans. One parent commented "One to one planning with parents to get to know my child".

Staff recognised and celebrated children's successes in partnership with parents through an interactive display located at the main entrance, highlighting milestones such as "I can go to the toilet by myself" and "I read the word zoo." Children's individual learning journals further supported this through "What I Can Do" sheets that celebrated progress. Journals were easily accessible, and children shared these with pride; they also included comments from parents, supporting strong partnership working and a shared understanding of children's learning, development and wellbeing.

Children had individual pockets to store their artwork, supporting a strong sense of belonging and ownership over their creations. Children's artwork was also displayed on playroom dividers at their level, highlighting their efforts and progress. This supported children's self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of pride in their learning.

Staff had completed child protection training and understood their responsibilities in keeping children safe. Policies and guidance supported this practice. Risk assessments were in place and children participated in garden checks which promoted shared responsibility, for example children participated in looking for "hazards" in the outdoor play area.

Medication procedures were in place, with safe storage and administration records maintained. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's individual health needs. We discussed with the management team the need to review the medication administration form to better align with best practice; this was actioned on the second day of the inspection. We also highlighted the need to review some children's healthcare plans to individualise the information documented.

Mealtimes were relaxed and sociable. Staff sat with children ensuring their safety, encouraging conversation, offering praise and chatting about favourite food. This supported children's wellbeing and social development. There were opportunities for children to be independent, for example by self-serving their lunch and pouring their own drinks, promoting independence and confidence.

Parents had regular opportunities to learn about their child's progress through informal chats, coffee mornings and formal parents meetings to share written progress reports. All parents agreed they were involved in their child's care and learning. One parent shared "Staff discuss informally regularly how my child is getting on at Clarkston and recently had a coffee and chat where I could look at his learning and add comments" and another commented "Always kept up to date with my child's learning and development".

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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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