

Hutchesons' Pre-School Day Care of Children

44 Kingarth Street
Glasgow
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 March 2026

Service provided by:
The Governor's of Hutchesons'
Educational Trust

Service provider number:
SP2017013040

Service no:
CS2017363014

About the service

Hutchesons' Pre-School is a day care of children service located in Hutchesons' Grammar School in the south side of Glasgow. The service operates a satellite site at Hutchesons' Pollok Park. Children attend both services for five days on a two week rotational programme. The service is in partnership with Glasgow City Council to provide commissioned places for children aged between three and five years.

The service can accommodate a maximum of 64 children aged three to not yet attending primary school. Of those 64, 32 children will attend the pre-school at Kingarth Street and 32 will attend the satellite setting at Hutchesons' Pollok Park (H@PP). At the time of inspection 50 children were in attendance.

The accommodation at Kingarth Street consists of two play spaces and a snug room. Children have access to a secure garden for physical play and outdoor learning and can access the school gym hall, lunch hall and playground.

The accommodation at Hutchesons' Pollok Park consists of five camp sites and a large open grass area. The sports hall can be accessed for shelter, warmth and activities during times of inclement weather.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 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 using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received electronic feedback from parents/carers

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.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and having fun indoors and outdoors.
- Staff were kind, warm and nurturing in their interactions with children.
- Staff knew children well and were responsive to their needs
- The provider, management and staff should develop monitoring and auditing procedures to support children's wellbeing
- The manager was visible, friendly and approachable to children, families and staff.

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	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 were several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed the areas for improvement.

The service's vision, values, and aims reflected the nursery's ethos and individuality while remaining connected to the wider school community. For example, children benefitted from outdoor, play based learning through woodland sessions, and staff had developed positive relationships with families, as outlined in the vision, values, and aims. We discussed with management that, moving forward, reviewing these statements with families, staff, and children would help ensure they reflect current views.

The service had a well understood and meaningful improvement plan that clearly identified areas for development. Progress was evident in several areas, including the establishment of literacy working groups and staff training focused on observations. Self evaluation processes were embedded and informed the identification of improvements and ongoing developments across the service. Staff and families contributed their views through questionnaires, which led to changes for example, enhanced communication methods for staff to share information as a team. Children's feedback was also regularly used to shape resources and experiences within the playrooms, helping them feel included and involved in the service.

Monitoring and auditing processes were in place to support development and improvement. Some changes had been made to the use of outdoor areas, with certain camps closed to support children's safety and wellbeing. While staff had engaged in training and development, we discussed with management that staff would benefit from more in depth training related to outdoor learning and additional support needs. To further support children's health and wellbeing, a more robust approach to monitoring and auditing, including staff development and assessments of the outdoor environment, should be implemented. An area for improvement has been identified to address this (**see Area for Improvement 1**).

There had been recent changes in management and staffing. Despite this, staff worked well together and communicated effectively, particularly regarding children's numbers and transitions between areas. Regular team meetings provided opportunities for staff to reflect on practice, discuss plans for children's experiences, and address issues as they arose. Staff also held champion roles in areas such as children's rights, outdoor learning, toothbrushing, and literacy. They spoke confidently about these roles and how they contributed to children's development for example, supporting children to learn about and grow fruit and vegetables in the outdoor garden.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should develop their auditing and monitoring procedures to include, but not limited to identifying and accessing suitable training and development for staff, particularly in regards to supporting children with additional support needs and outdoor play, medication and safety of outdoor camps. The provider must ensure staff are trained, competent, skilled and in their practice.

This is to ensure the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:

"I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

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.

Children were happy, having fun and fully engaged in their play across both settings.

They spent prolonged periods engaged in activities, both on their own and alongside their peers. Children were supported to take the lead in their play and make choices throughout the day, including deciding when they wanted to go outdoors. During lunchtime indoors, children were gathered as a large group to sing songs and listen to a story, which interrupted their ongoing play. We discussed with management that enabling children to finish their play naturally before lunch would support their right to choose when and where they engage in play.

Children's play and learning were enriched through high quality, carefully arranged experiences designed to inspire curiosity and imagination. These included an extensive block play area, creative spaces, and a house corner equipped with real life materials. At H@pp, the outdoor setting, children were offered opportunities to collaborate with their peers, and natural groupings formed as they explored the camps. Children spent sustained periods engaging in shared activities such as number games and transporting leaves in a wheelbarrow. Some parents provided positive feedback on the experiences offered to children. One parent commented, "My child is allowed to be curious and explore these curiosities. I think the most resounding thing to me is how many of the teachers are just purely passionate about early childhood and early childhood education. They really care for the children but on top of that are curious about their curiosities."

Staff interactions at H@pp encouraged children to explore at a pace that suited their needs. Staff demonstrated an awareness of when to step back and when to intervene to enhance children's play and learning. Opportunities for risky play were supported, and children confidently described their boundaries and evaluated their own play choices. Children also contributed to risk assessing the camp and helping to establish boundaries, which promoted their safety and wellbeing.

Children's language, literacy, and numeracy development was strengthened through responsive, meaningful interactions across both environments. Staff consistently modelled rich language and used developmentally appropriate questioning to expand vocabulary and deepen understanding. Everyday routines and experiences, such as lunchtime conversations or working out how to free an item stuck in a toy toaster, were used as opportunities to build counting, reasoning, and problem solving skills.

New planning approaches had been introduced to create a balance between responsive and intentional planning. Although still in the early stages, once fully embedded these approaches have the potential to support staff to record more individualised play, learning, and development. This will help staff to more clearly track and document children's progression.

Online learning journals were used to share children's individual play experiences and learning with families. Staff were supported through training and development that focused on high quality observations, and this was already having a positive impact on the quality of their practice. Children's voices were incorporated within the journals, and we noted parents responding to observations as well as contributing

posts to share home experiences. Management agreed that continual monitoring of these journals would help identify where further individual support or additional training may be required.

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.

Staff demonstrated a warm, caring, and nurturing manner in all interactions with children. They knew the children well and responded sensitively to their needs, offering reassurance and comfort whenever it was needed. One parent shared, "My son and I have built a very good relationship with the teachers at this nursery. They are all so kind and supportive, really bringing my son on in his early learning days." The environment offered cosy, relaxing areas where children could relax and unwind, helping them feel safe and settled. A dedicated snug space was also available for quiet time, further supporting children's emotional wellbeing and sense of comfort.

Transition arrangements within the pre school were well established. Children and families were welcomed into the environment prior to confirming their place, and home visits were made available, with the manager and, when possible, the keyworker attending. Children received a home visit bag containing a book, a photo of their keyworker, and information about the service. Settling in sessions were personalised to meet each child's specific needs. The preschool also maintained close links with the primary school to support smooth transitions. Children visited teaching staff and had opportunities to join the current primary one class during sessions at H@PP.

Personal plans were in place for every child and included essential information required to support their individual needs. Targets and developmental strategies had been identified, and clear approaches were in place for children requiring additional support. Staff worked in partnership with families to ensure continuity of care and consistency across settings.

The service recognised the value of positive, trusting relationships with families. One parent commented, "The staff are all very friendly and approachable; they have a great relationship with my son and provide updates on his development." Families were frequently invited into the setting for stay and play sessions, to share lunches, and to participate in cultural celebrations. Parents were warmly greeted at drop off and collection times, and staff took time to speak with them about their child's experiences that day. This contributed to parents and children feeling welcomed, included, and secure.

Mealtimes were calm, unhurried, and enjoyable for children. Independence and self help skills were encouraged by supporting children to serve themselves and tidy away their dishes. Outdoors, staff remained close by to ensure safety and engaged in relaxed, meaningful conversations with children. Indoors, staff sat alongside children and contributed to discussions. However, the layout of the tables meant that some children were not always fully involved in these interactions. We discussed with management the need to continue reviewing the indoor lunchtime routine, as this would help ensure all children experience a more inclusive and social mealtime.

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	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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