Portree Nursery Ltd
Day Care of Children

Camanachd Square
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9BW

Telephone: 01478 612 127

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 July 2026

Service provided by:
Portree Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003001848

Service no:
CS2003008673

About the service

Portree Nursery Ltd is situated in a dedicated building within the town of Portree in the Isle of Skye area of Highland. The nursery premises consists of a reception space, three interconnecting playrooms, two kitchen areas, toilets and nappy changing facilities and an office space. Two of the nursery playrooms have direct access to an enclosed outdoor area.

This service is provided by Portree Nursery Ltd and is registered to provide a day care of children's service to a maximum of 27 children not yet attending primary school at any one time of whom no more than 11 are aged under 2 years and of whom no more than 16 are aged 2 to under 3.

The manager is also the manager of Portree Nursery CS2019378120.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 20, Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 July 2026, with feedback on Friday 24 July 2026. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke/spent time with the children present during the inspection
- reviewed eight questionnaires completed by parents
- spoke with staff and the management team
- 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.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident.
- Children were cared for by staff who knew them well and were nurturing and sensitive in their interactions.
- Strong partnerships with families supported children's individual needs and wellbeing.
- Planning approaches could be further developed to add greater depth to children's learning.
- Management demonstrated a clear commitment to continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children and their families.
- Quality assurance processes should now be embedded into practice to secure sustained improvements across the service.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We made an evaluation of adequate/satisfactory for this quality indicator, as several important strengths taken together just outweighed areas for improvement.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The management and staff promoted a positive attitude to change and continuous improvement and were reflective in their approach. They were all friendly, approachable and engaged well with the inspection process. Staff confidently discussed the changes they had already introduced in the playrooms and outdoors to improve outcomes and experiences for the children. Management had a clear vision for the service, and were receptive to feedback and willing to make improvements to support positive outcomes for children. They recognised the importance of working in partnership and involving all relevant stakeholders in self evaluation processes. Parents and staff told us, "We are asked for feedback often", "Nursery asks for input on this regularly", and "there are often opportunities to be involved".

The management had recognised that the vision, values and aims for the service did not fully reflect the ethos or aspirations of the service and needed to be updated. The service were reviewing their vision, values and aims in consultation with children, families and staff. We were able to to see how families had been involved and the suggestions they had put forward. Having shared vision, values and aims has the potential to further strengthen a sense of belonging and ownership and supports the service to remain responsive to the needs and aspirations of children and families attending.

The management and staff actively listened to and respected the views of children and their families and acted on their feedback. Working in partnership with families continued to be a priority. They recognised the importance of having strong partnerships with families and having opportunities for parents to visit the setting and share in their child's care and learning. There was an open door policy, regular open evenings and good use was also being made of an online app to share information and maintain links with families. Parents commented that they were invited to offer their views and feedback and felt involved in a meaningful way to help development the service.

The management team understood the importance of self-evaluation for continuous improvement. Since the previous inspection, management and staff were becoming more confident in implementing relevant quality assurance and self evaluation processes and being more reflective in their practice.

Outcomes for children were supported by a relevant and achievable improvement plan. This was aligned with key priorities identified at the previous inspection. The areas for development the service had been working on included improvements to safer recruitment, quality assurance and resources readily available to children. We were able to see the improvements which had been made since the previous inspection and how they had impacted positively on children's experiences, their play, learning and development.

Quality assurance processes had been developed and supported children's wellbeing. There were quality assurance systems in place including audits for accidents, incidents and medication, alongside some formal monitoring of practice. These helped to identify what was working well and areas for development to support improvement of the service. We discussed with the management team how they could continue to develop auditing processes so that they were more robust and the evidence they produced was sufficient to draw conclusions about the quality of the provision and identify suitable approaches to improvement.

The management demonstrated a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the management of staffing and resources. At the previous inspection we made a requirement in relation to recruitment procedures and processes to ensure children were safe and protected from harm. Management had responded immediately they became aware that a member of staff had not been registered with the relevant professional body. Robust recruitment processes were now in place ensuring staff were safely appointed with appropriate checks completed. All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council, supporting safe practice and ongoing professional learning across the setting. (see section 'What the service had done to meet any requirements made at or since the previous inspection')

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children in each of the playrooms were happy, confident and having fun as they played. They had freedom to choose where they played and what they used, which supported their independence and choice. This meant that children had opportunities to lead their own play and follow their interests. For the majority of the time, children benefitted from uninterrupted play, allowing them to be engaged in their play in a purposeful and meaningful way. For example the youngest children enjoyed playing with sand. This helped develop their fine motor skills as they scooped, poured and manipulated materials.

Parents commented positively about the range of activities and opportunities available to the children. Comments made included, "the setting always provides a variety of experiences for our children, appropriate to each child, allowing them to develop so many different skills and gaining wonderful memories", "my child has come on so well with her skills in painting, pouring, waiting her turn and speech" and "lots of opportunities to play in different environments, like home corner, sand pit, cosy corner, climbing soft play etc".

Staff confidently got down to children's level, picked up on children's verbal and non verbal cues, showed interest and enthusiasm, gave praise and celebrated children's achievements. Some staff used effective questioning and extended children's learning, for example open ended questions and 'I wonder' statements, and allowed enough time for children to think and respond. However, there were also missed opportunities when skilled interactions and effective questioning could have further extended children's curiosity, problem-solving skills and promote development of imagination.

Staff were able to confidently discuss the improvements they had made to the layout and range of resources available to children since the previous inspection. In each of the playrooms there was a good range of real life resources, loose parts, open ended resources, mark making, construction, role play and messy play activities. There were some books readily available and we saw children going to staff and asking for a book to be read to them. Children had opportunities to develop their language and communication skills through songs and rhymes. The service should continue to develop the range of literacy and numeracy resources and experiences available and give consideration to more intentional planning for literacy and numeracy. For example, although there were books available, the choice was limited and did not reflect current interests within the playroom. At the time of the inspection, work was ongoing to make improvements to the outdoor spaces.

Online learning journals were used to support communication and share information of children's play, learning and development. We recognised some quality play, learning and development was taking place in each of the playrooms. However, there was scope to continue to develop the quality of written observations of children's experiences to ensure they were evaluative and focus on children's learning. Some contained only limited evaluation of children's progression and achievements. As a consequence, information was not effectively being used by staff to plan appropriately to meet children's individual needs, show progression in learning and identify next steps. The manager and senior staff should support staff to develop their skills and understanding in relation to monitoring and tracking children's learning and progress. This would add value to the children's experience and ensure they are fully supported and challenged.

Approaches to planning, assessment and recording children's learning were not yet consistent across the service. Planning was in place and focused on children's interests. While staff responded to children's ideas and interests, experiences did not always offer sufficient challenge or depth. Strengthening the use of observations and tracking would support more targeted planning and enable staff to better monitor children's progress.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

Children and their families all received a warm welcome when they arrived. Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from staff, helping them to feel safe and secure. Staff knew the children well and recognised their cues and responded sensitively, providing comfort, cuddles and reassurance when needed. This showed positive relationships and supported children's emotional wellbeing. Parents valued the positive relationships that had been formed. Their comments included, "The staff are always friendly and make me feel comfortable leaving my son in their care", "The staff are excellent. They are what make the place so good. They work so hard to create a warm, safe, welcoming and nurturing environment", and "Great relationship with staff, good communication and all very friendly".

Establishing strong and effective connections with families was a priority for the service. Positive working relationships with parents promoted and supported good communication and information sharing which in turn supported consistency and continuity of care for children. We observed parents being provided with good levels of feedback about their child's day during pick up. Parents commented, "They always have opportunities for parents to be involved or give feedback, we are very much a part of it too", "We really enjoyed the open evening to look around" and "Feedback is sought during open days/evenings on how to improve the service and both the manager and deputy are approachable and willing to listen to feedback".

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning approaches. As part of the inspection, we looked at a random selection of personal plans for children. Each child had a personal plan that was individual to them. It set out how the staff would meet their individual health, wellbeing and safety needs. Personal plans were reviewed regularly with parents, which ensured information was kept up to date and relevant. Staff were able to confidently discuss the care and support needs of the individual children in their care.

Across the day transitions were well supported. Embedded routines created predictability, helping children to understand what to expect. Children were appropriately prepared for transitions between areas and activities, supporting smooth, calm movement throughout the setting.

Children's sleep and rest times were responsive to their needs and reflective of their personal plans. Children were provided with a calm, quiet space that followed safer sleep guidance, ensuring their comfort and wellbeing. Individual beds, bedding and comforters were available to children ensuring their sleep and rest was comfortable. Sleeping children were supervised and regular checks were made and recorded. Changes to sleep routines were communicated to parents during the day.

Personal care needs were carried out by nurturing staff who respected children's dignity and privacy. Younger children were invited calmly and sensitively to have their care needs met. Staff gently supported handwashing, nose wiping and cleaning after meals. This approach helped children to feel respected, valued and comfortable within the setting.

Children experienced calm and unhurried snack and mealtimes. They were positive, social experiences where children were able to enjoy eating and chatting with friends. Staff sat with the children which provided opportunities to form and maintain relationships, and support the development of language, communication and social skills. Children could choose from a variety of healthy snacks and a packed lunch policy was in place to promote healthy eating at lunch. Fresh water was available to the children throughout the session and they were encouraged to keep hydrated. Older children were supported to make choices and develop independence through self-serving food, pouring drinks and clearing away their lunch items.

Medication processes were in place that supported staff with the safe administration of medication. Forms were in place which gathered appropriate information with parent signatures and dates. Medication was stored in line with good practice guidance, ensuring it was secure but accessible. Regular audits and reviews were completed to ensure that records were up to date. This meant staff had the information they needed to promote children's health and safety.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 6 February 2026, to keep children safe, the provider must put effective systems in place to ensure that only staff who are appropriately registered with a professional body carry out work in the service in a post for which registration is required.

This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011(SSI 2011/10) Regulation 9(b).

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

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This requirement was made on 9 January 2026.

Action taken on previous requirement

The manager responded immediately they became aware that they had made an error and had employed a member of staff who was not appropriately registered with a professional body.

They had reviewed and updated their recruitment processes and there is now a thorough system in place in relation to safer recruitment which includes checking that staff are registered with or applying to become registered with the appropriate professional body should their role require this.

This requirement has been met.

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

The provider should ensure that children are safe and protected and their wellbeing needs are met. To do this, the provider should, at a minimum ensure:

a) all staff are competent and confident implementing child protection procedures; and
b) chronologies are used effectively to identify and support children's wellbeing and safeguarding.

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

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 2 December 2024.

Action taken since then

Following the previous inspection, the service had addressed this area for improvement as a matter of priority. They had reviewed and updated their policies and procedures in relation to child protection and safeguarding.

All staff had attended face to face child protection training. Staff spoken with were confident and knowledgeable in relation to the service's child protection procedures and what they should do should the need arise.

Management were now fully aware of when and how to notify relevant agencies, for example Care Inspectorate and Scottish Social Services Council.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To promote children's continued learning, development and enjoyment, children should have access to a wide range of literacy and numeracy resources and experiences which are challenging and suitable to their individual interests and stages of development. There should be a sufficient number of resources to enable children to make independent choices and engage in deep and meaningful play.

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27).
Area for Improvement Category

This area for improvement was made on 2 December 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the previous inspection, management and staff had reviewed the layout of the playrooms and the range of resources available to children. They had introduced more loose parts, real life, natural and open ended resources. These sparked children's curiosity and imagination, offered challenge and encouraged them to explore their ideas.

The service should continue to develop the range of literacy and numeracy resources and experiences available as well as continue with the development of the outdoor play area.

This area for improvement has been partially met and will be continued.

Previous area for improvement 3

To improve outcomes for children, the provider should further develop and implement an effective system of quality assurance to monitor and improve practice. At a minimum, the provider should:

a) ensure effective systems are in place to identify, monitor and review the impact of improvements;
b) carry out effective monitoring of the service including the quality of children's play and learning experiences; and personal planning; and
c) ensure staff have the right knowledge and skills to meet the safety needs of children at all times.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19); and
'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 2 December 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, the management had continued to develop their systems and processes for quality assurance and self evaluation. Management and staff were becoming more confident in implementing these and being more reflective in their practice.

Regular monitoring and quality assurance audits were taking place including audits for accidents, incidents and medication, alongside some formal monitoring of practice. These helped to identify what was working well and areas for development to support improvement of the service.

These processes needed to be embedded to ensure continuous improvement and a positive impact on outcomes for children.

This area for improvement has been partially met and will be continued.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.scot.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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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