Dunard Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Dunard Primary School
65 Dunard Street
Glasgow
G20 6RL

Telephone: 01419 462 808

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 May 2025

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
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About the service

Dunard Nursery Class is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 30 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council from premises within the grounds of Dunard Primary School in Maryhill. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area and use of the school gym. The service is close to public transport routes and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place between 12 and 15 May 2025. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:
- spoke with 15 children and received survey responses from nine parents or carers
- spoke with six staff including the senior leadership team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

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

• Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment.

• Positive working relationships between the management team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.

• Children experienced interesting and motivating play and learning opportunities within a creative outdoor space.

• Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.

• The senior leadership team's approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care.

• Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes enabled the service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families particular needs and choices.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We looked at how the service's planning approaches for children's care, learning and development ensured they experienced positive outcomes. Children benefited from a skilled staff team who worked very well together and had created a welcoming, inclusive environment. Their sound knowledge of child development, GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) and the well-being indicators resulted in children's individual needs being met. We observed staff being responsive to children's changeable interests and demands. Children were spoken and listened to in ways that encouraged them to feel valued and included.

Staff worked closely with families, involving them in decisions about their child's care and development. This enabled the relevant staff to respond quickly, sensitively and compassionately to changes in a child's life. Staff were skilled in using the information in children's personal plans to meet their needs. We discussed with staff how personal planning approaches could be enhanced by extending the use of SHANARRI wellbeing indicators to provide an up to date summary of ongoing key support, care and learning needs for every child. Plans and records for children with identified additional support needs took account of multidisciplinary assessments and inputs. One parent commented: "My child when he first entered the nursery was quite difficult due to his needs , I worked closely with certain teachers on his behaviour and speech. My child has been there nearly a year and his speech has improved so much , he's more social, likes people being round him now loves all the teachers and kids." A second parent told us: "At parents evenings my son's personal plan is discussed with me to inform me how he is getting on. I have been asked if there is anything I would like them to focus on with him during his day that he may struggle with at home. He now is confident in learning his numeracy skills which he struggled with before." The personal planning approach followed by the staff team helped promote children's all round wellbeing by being solution focussed. It promoted shared discussions with parents and carers about children's strengths, personal challenges and development outcomes. A third parent commented: "The place is very friendly and I can always share my concerns about my son. They help to incorporate ways in which he can improve or help him grow better. They also have special days each term where we can address the issues together."

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We found that staff promoted a culture within the service that focussed on promoting the children's right to play, have fun and experience challenge. Staff worked hard to provide high quality learning experiences by continuously promoting choice, children's interests, as well as tracking and reflecting on individual achievements. Both indoors and outdoors there were many examples of well considered open ended materials and creative approaches that engaged children's imagination and enriched their play and learning. One parent commented: "My child has enjoyed taking part in sponsored walks in the park, crazy hair day, meeting Santa, days out of nursery with his friends in a different environment. He now loves drawing in lots of detail. He had the opportunity to take Bertie the bear home which he loved being able to show everyone what he got up to over the weekend." Another parent told us: "My child has been involved in a summer trip, local art galleries trip. He often plays in the nursery garden which he loves with all his friends. There is loads of imaginative and problem solving play. He has also joined in with sports day using the sports equipment."

A third parent said: "I think my son's experience at nursery has made him feel more confident in playing with others and making new friends. He also loves dancing in nursery and is very outgoing." Through discussion, it was evident that staff had a shared understanding of child development and early years pedagogy and used this to scaffold and shape the breadth and depth of children's learning.

The management staff team had developed a variety of strategies for widening family engagement in children's play and learning. This included: family learning workshops; a PATHs café which provided parents with opportunities to discuss strategies that support children's self regulation of their emotions; English as an Additional language (EAL) chat mornings and workshops; parental "Stay and Play" sessions; transitions meetings; and a family engagement newsletter. The overall approach helped to engage families in understanding how to support learning in the child's home environment. It promoted a partnership based approach to play and learning that strengthened children's overall health, wellbeing, and resilience.

We found that children's voice was highly valued. Staff took time to extend conversations with children about their play and used well-timed open ended questioning to further extend and challenge thinking and learning. We found that staff used observations of children's significant play interests to adapt their support for and resourcing of play experiences. We highlighted to staff the value of ensuring written comments on potential lines of development for children's play and related future play challenges are set out clearly as part of each learning journal observation.

Staff had high aspirations to enable children to be successful. As a result, children were confident, happy and motivated to learn. We discussed with staff strategies and observation approaches for developing children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self chosen collaborative play projects. Staff agreed that more flexible use of planning tools based on observations of children's most engaging and involving play experiences could strengthen existing opportunities for children to shape their play environments. This can extend opportunities for staff to reflect on when children display deep level engagement in their play and support them to provide greater autonomy and choice as to how this will be taken forward.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator as we found performance where identified strengths had a significant positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The service made good use of available resources to create a motivating environment for children to play together. Play spaces included a range of open-ended and natural resources to stimulate children's creativity and problem solving. Staff ensured spaces were set up in ways that were adaptable and had potential to encourage children's sustained thinking. We found that staff shared their reflections on how setting up and monitoring of each play area can lead to challenging and engaging play opportunities for children. This helped to ensure that all play environments offered excitement, were richly resourced and appeared attractive to children. It supported children to use resources to extend and develop their play in line with their own ideas. Wall displays contributed to a stimulating environment that celebrated children's creativity and achievements.

Staff told us that since their last inspection they had worked on improving the quality, breadth and depth of children's outdoor play resources and opportunities. Staff had reflected on and developed the limited outdoor play space. Children had freedom of movement between each area of play within the nursery classroom while outdoor play was generally organised by adults in groups. We found it now included opportunities for children to experience: curiosity based play; cosy spaces for reading; creative and transient art; painting with foam; play with malleable materials; constructive play; problem solving; mud kitchen play; experimenting with sound; planting and growing; loose parts play; experimenting with transporting objects; small world play. We highlighted and staff agreed that more regular planned outdoor play and forest kindergarten opportunities within parks or woodland spaces beyond the setting would further increase opportunities for children to experience fresh air and enjoy challenging play. The management teams agreed to make this a focus of future improvement and professional development planning.

Children's safety was promoted through detailed risk assessments for all environments and activities accessed by them. These were regularly reviewed and staff were aware of their responsibility to identify and remove any new hazards in the way of children's safety and wellbeing. We discussed strategies for monitoring children's food handling at meal times that would enhance the robust infection control practices that were in place within the setting.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We found that staff were highly motivated, very well led and passionate about improving outcomes for all children. Positive working relationships between the senior leadership team and staff promoted a collegiate approach to providing high quality play experiences for children.

Through consultation with all stakeholders the senior leadership team were developing a shared vision for the setting that reflected the aspirations of children, families and the wider community. They had created conditions where all staff felt confident to initiate changes and share responsibility for the process.

Staff told us how the senior leadership team provided a clear focus for their shared team work including setting out clear responsibilities and expectations. We found that this leadership approach had helped build, maintain and strengthen the capacity of the team to deliver continuity in children's care. It had contributed to children's emotional health and wellbeing being a central feature of transitions into the setting. This ensured the care children experienced was delivered by familiar key adults who were perceived as consistent, reliable, trustworthy, and responsive to their needs.

We found that strong leadership of the service supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their capacity to help children to reach their full potential. Staff were familiar with national quality frameworks for early learning and childcare. The management team followed an inclusive and supportive approach to quality assurance and improvement. We found that team meetings took place regularly and staff had the opportunity to take part in one to one meetings with management. These provided an opportunity to discuss any improvement ideas and identify any related training needs. We found this helped to channel each staff team member's enthusiasm for taking forward current ideas and developing and implementing best practice guidance. It helped to ensure that care, play and learning experiences were consistently meeting the needs of children.

The senior leadership team told us how they dedicated time to analysing children's, staff and parents' contributions to any consultations and extracting the key messages or themes. This feedback had been used to support the development of an improvement plan that clearly set out the nursery class's priorities and targets for change. We highlighted practical consultation strategies for widening family engagement in the improvement planning process. Staff agreed these would help strengthen the capacity of service to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children's and families' particular needs and choices.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good as we found performance demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and did not require any significant adjustment.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The importance of ensuring that the nursery call was appropriately staffed during the day was recognised by the senior leadership team as essential to the wellbeing of children. Effective staff deployment within the nursery class meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff throughout each element of the day. All the parents that completed our survey agreed that there were always enough staff in the service to meet their children's needs. One parent told us: "When dropping my son off and picking him up the building is secured. I can always see multiple teachers around the groups of kids at each times." Another parent commented: "I always see staff sitting with my children or with them outdoors."

The staff to child ratio allowed staff to be responsive to individual needs which enhanced children's experiences and ensured children had the right support at the right time.

Arrangements were in place to provide continuity of care across the day and support transitions and communication with families. Effective use was made of the differing experience, knowledge and skills of staff to ensure children's experience across the whole day was positive and that they were safe. Staff worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with the children across the day. Staff communicated very well with their colleagues when a personal care task took away from their play area based responsibilities. Staff supported children with additional learning needs to feel respected and included in daily experiences.

A robust induction process supported newly appointed staff to meet children's needs. The induction programme had helped new staff to settle into their role and become part of the staff team. As a result, they were clear about their roles and responsibilities which supported children's experiences.

The staff routinely engaged in a range of professional learning activities that built on and sustained their practice. We found staff were confident in discussing how they had improved their practice as a result of their own professional learning activities. Leadership roles in health and wellbeing, children's rights, literacy, numeracy and additional support needs had been distributed across staff team and links to related professional learning were evident. We found that the staff development programme had a positive impact on the quality of experiences for children, their progress and parental engagement in their children's learning.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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