Sandyford Day Nursery
Day Care of Children

St. Patricks Primary School
10 Perth Street
Glasgow
G3 8UQ

Telephone: 01412 215 502

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 July 2026

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003014840

About the service

Sandyford Day Nursery is provided by Glasgow City Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 72 children aged between birth and five years. The service operates from a single storey accommodation on the same grounds as St Patricks Primary School in the Anderston area of Glasgow. Children have access to three playrooms as well as direct access to an outdoor play area.

The service is close to other schools, nurseries, green spaces and transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 and 29 July 2026. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. There were 23 children present on the first day of our inspection, and 16 on the second day. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received electronic feedback from two families whose children attended the service
- received electronic feedback from 13 staff who worked in the service
- spoke with staff and management
- 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, one area for improvement was identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, responsive and individualised care from staff who knew them well and worked effectively with families and other professionals.
- Strong leadership, reflective self-evaluation and meaningful involvement of children, families and staff had driven continuous improvement.
- Children experienced high-quality, play-based learning in a stimulating and nurturing environment.
- Children benefitted from regular play and learning opportunities outdoors and in their local community.
- Children's safety could be further enhanced as toilet cisterns remained insecure and this area for improvement had not yet been fully addressed. Prompt action was needed to ensure toilet facilities were safe, secure and fit for purpose, reducing the potential for harm to children.

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	5 - Very Good
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	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 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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 service had a clear vision, values and aims which had been reviewed in consultation with children, families and staff in December 2025. These had been agreed and were found to accurately reflect the ethos of the setting and the experiences provided to children currently attending the service. This collaborative approach helped ensure that the service remained responsive to the needs and aspirations of children and their families.

The service had identified clear improvement priorities focused on creating nurturing, enabling and calm environments for children. Priorities included strengthening partnerships with families and ensuring children experienced high-quality care that promoted wellbeing, secure attachments, inclusion and positive outcomes. This demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement and to enhancing children's daily experiences within the setting.

Management demonstrated a very good understanding of the service's strengths and areas for further development. An action plan had been established to monitor progress against previous improvement priorities and identify areas requiring ongoing attention. Evidence showed that positive improvements had been achieved, including notification processes, sleep arrangements and access to toilet facilities. These changes had contributed to a safer, more comfortable environment and improved children's daily experiences.

The management team had used audits, monitoring activities and regular discussions with staff to evaluate the quality of the service and identify priorities for improvement. Staff had been actively involved in discussions about service development, helping them to feel valued and encouraging a shared responsibility for achieving positive outcomes for children. Areas identified for further development included refreshing the indoor environment, enhancing outdoor resources, reviewing medication systems, strengthening care planning arrangements and reconfiguring playroom spaces. These developments had the potential to further improve children's experiences, wellbeing and opportunities for learning and play.

There was a reflective approach to self-evaluation. The service had consulted with parents regarding proposed changes to room structures and had carefully considered their views before decisions were made. Staff were also consulted and provided thoughtful feedback regarding children's wellbeing, safety, developmental needs and staffing arrangements. As a result, decisions about service delivery were informed by those who knew the children best, helping to ensure that children's individual needs remained central to planning and improvement activities.

The service had responded positively following a previous incident in the outdoor area. A comprehensive review of outdoor safety had been undertaken, with children actively involved in identifying potential risks and discussing how they could keep themselves safe. Children's views had been meaningfully recorded and used to inform changes to the environment and the development of risk assessments. This helped children feel listened to and supported their growing understanding of personal safety and risk awareness.

As a result of this review, the outdoor environment had been reorganised into distinct play zones to provide children with a wider range of experiences, including opportunities for physical play, creative exploration and sensory engagement. Additional supervision measures had also been introduced, helping to promote children's safety while maintaining opportunities for exploration, independence and managed risk-taking. These changes had supported children's confidence, enjoyment and overall wellbeing outdoors.

Ongoing self-evaluation was also evident through playroom audits which reviewed the quality of learning environments and resources across a range of curriculum areas. These audits identified strengths, resource requirements and priorities for future development, with some actions already completed through the purchase of additional resources. This approach supported the continuous enhancement of children's play and learning experiences.

To further strengthen quality assurance processes, the service should ensure that audit reviews and improvement actions are consistently dated so that progress and impact on outcomes for children could be clearly demonstrated over time.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces — 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Children experience high quality spaces

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 layout of playrooms provided children with a variety of spaces for play, relaxation and exploration. Furniture, rugs, cushions and soft lighting helped create a more homely environment where children appeared comfortable and settled. This supported children's sense of security, independence and engagement in play.

Children benefitted from regular access to outdoor play, with all playrooms having direct access to spacious outdoor areas. The outdoor environment provided opportunities for physical play, exploration and quieter experiences. Children had been involved in developing aspects of the garden, including a planting and growing area. This promoted children's sense of ownership, responsibility and understanding of the natural world.

The service had made progress in maintaining the environment through the appointment of a janitor who worked five days per week. Staff reported that maintenance issues were generally addressed promptly, helping to ensure children experienced a safe and well-maintained environment.

At the time of the inspection, a skip had been delivered to support the removal of broken and potentially hazardous outdoor equipment. This demonstrated that action was being taken to improve the quality and safety of children's outdoor play experiences.

The service had carefully considered proposed changes to the use of internal spaces. Consultation with families and staff had informed plans to create separate rooms for children aged 2-3 years and 3-5 years. Management demonstrated a thoughtful approach, recognising that environmental changes, resource development and ongoing consultation were necessary to ensure the needs of all children were met. These planned changes had the potential to provide children with more age-appropriate experiences and learning opportunities.

Children's personal records, wellbeing assessments and sensitive information were stored securely within a locked cabinet. Management had identified opportunities to make Personal Plans more accessible to staff within playrooms so they could be used more effectively as working documents to support children's care and learning, while ensuring confidentiality arrangements remained in place.

Following a previous outdoor incident, the service had undertaken significant work to improve safety. A Health and Safety review had been completed, resulting in recommendations relating to door security, garden storage, visibility of safety features, padlocks, risk assessments and staff training. All recommendations had been actioned. These improvements helped create a safer environment while continuing to support children's opportunities for outdoor play and exploration.

Children also benefitted from a range of experiences within the wider community, including visits to parks, playgrounds, community groups and the cinema. Risk assessments demonstrated that appropriate consideration had been given to public spaces and transport arrangements. These experiences helped children develop confidence, social skills and an understanding of the world around them.

An area for improvement identified at the previous inspection had not yet been fully addressed. Toilet cisterns remained insecure, with some cisterns missing screws and others fitted with screws but lacking mechanisms to secure them properly. As a result, this aspect of the previous action for improvement had not been met. The service should take prompt action to ensure toilet facilities are fully safe, secure and fit for purpose to minimise potential risks to children.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health, wellbeing, and safety, the provider should ensure they are cared for in a well-maintained, and safe environment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment". (HSCS 5.22)

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 experienced a well-resourced play environment that promoted curiosity, creativity and independent learning across a range of curriculum areas. Resources were thoughtfully organised and accessible, enabling children to make choices and follow their interests throughout the day.

At the sand area, children independently selected and used a variety of open-ended materials to explore and experiment. Staff effectively extended learning through open-ended questioning, encouraging children to investigate, problem-solve and use descriptive language. This supported children's confidence, communication skills and early scientific thinking.

A wide range of literacy and numeracy resources, including books, puzzles, story props, letters and numbers, supported children's learning through play. Mark-making materials were available throughout the playroom, encouraging children to develop early writing skills in meaningful contexts. Natural and open-ended resources further enhanced opportunities for imaginative play, exploration and discovery.

Children accessed a dedicated block play area containing construction materials, vehicles and technology resources. Children used the space independently and incorporated a range of materials into their play.

Children were observed using programmable toys with staff who introduced mathematical and directional language. These interactions extended children's problem-solving, numeracy and early technology skills through enjoyable and engaging experiences.

Children benefitted from free-flow access to the outdoor environment, allowing them to make choices and move freely between indoor and outdoor play. Opportunities to independently manage jackets and footwear promoted confidence and self-help skills. The outdoor environment offered a wide range of experiences, including physical play, creative activities, loose parts play and opportunities to explore the natural world.

Children were highly engaged outdoors and demonstrated confidence, cooperation and enjoyment. They negotiated roles, took turns and organised their own games, supporting the development of social skills and positive relationships. Natural resources encouraged children to assess and manage risk, helping them build resilience and confidence. Numeracy skills were also embedded in play, with children naturally counting and using number concepts during activities.

Group experiences were flexible and responsive to children's interests. Children selected songs and chose whether to participate, promoting choice and respecting their rights. Staff interactions were warm and nurturing, supporting children's engagement, wellbeing and learning throughout the session.

Planning was based on children's interests and developmental needs, with children actively involved in influencing experiences. Recent changes to planning processes helped staff make clearer links between children's interests, learning and development.

Learning was shared with parents through an online platform, promoting continuity between home and the setting. The service had appropriately identified further development opportunities in the quality of observations to strengthen how children's learning and progress were captured and evidenced.

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 knew children very well and demonstrated a clear understanding of their individual needs, strengths and family circumstances. This helped to ensure that children received care and support that reflected their unique situations. Discussions with staff confirmed that important information about children's needs was accurately recorded within Personal Plans and Wellbeing Assessment Plans. This supported consistent and informed care.

Children benefited from strong partnership working between the service and other professionals, including Health Visitors and Social Workers. Effective information sharing and coordinated support helped to ensure that children and families received the right assistance at the right time. Staff understood safeguarding and wellbeing processes and were confident in making referrals when concerns or additional support needs were identified. This contributed to children being protected and supported to achieve positive outcomes.

Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from staff. Interactions were gentle, kind and respectful, helping children to feel valued, safe and secure within the setting. Staff responded promptly to children's needs and offered reassurance when needed, supporting their emotional wellbeing. Personal care routines were carried out in a dignified and respectful manner, promoting children's comfort, privacy and sense of security.

Children's health and wellbeing needs were well supported. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of individual medical and dietary requirements and the measures needed to ensure these were met safely. Effective medication management procedures, including administration, recording and storage arrangements, helped to ensure that children received the care they required and reduced the risk of errors.

Mealtimes were positive experiences for children. They received a hot lunch and were offered choices, supporting their preferences and encouraging independence. Children were supported to develop self-help skills, such as serving themselves and managing their own eating where appropriate. Staff engaged positively with children during meals, creating a relaxed and sociable atmosphere where children appeared comfortable and enjoyed their food.

Arrangements for sleep and rest had improved and positively impacted on children's wellbeing. Children were able to rest when they wished in comfortable and nurturing environments that met their individual needs. Effective supervision and monitoring during sleep helped to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. These arrangements supported children to feel secure, relaxed and cared for throughout the day.

Home visits carried out by key workers before children started nursery had a positive impact on children's transitions. These visits enabled staff to develop an early understanding of each child's needs, interests and home experiences, while also strengthening relationships with families. As a result, children were supported to settle more easily into the nursery environment, helping them to feel secure, valued and ready to engage in learning and play.

The service had recognised the importance of continuing to strengthen engagement with families and had identified this as an area for development within its improvement plan. Consultation with families regarding proposed changes to playroom arrangements demonstrated a commitment to involving parents in decisions that affected their children. Feedback from staff and families informed plans to develop separate 2-3 and 3-5 playrooms to better meet children's developmental needs. The manager explained that changes would be introduced gradually following further consultation, environmental audits and resource planning. This approach was intended to ensure that any changes resulted in positive outcomes for children and reflected their individual needs.

While key information was recorded within Personal Plans, opportunities remained to further improve their quality and individualisation. More personalised planning would help to ensure children's voices, preferences and views were consistently captured and reflected in their care and support. Plans would benefit from containing clear, child-specific targets, evidence of progress, meaningful next steps and contributions from parents. Further development of these records would strengthen partnership working with families and provide clearer evidence of how children's individual outcomes were being identified, monitored and achieved.

Management reported that Personal Plans were being reviewed to ensure they were shared with parents at least every six months, with systems introduced to support regular reviews and updates. This had the potential to further enhance children's experiences by ensuring that care planning remained current, collaborative and responsive to changing needs.

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

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children the provider should ensure notifications are submitted and approved by the Care Inspectorate prior to changes to service delivery.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with 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 23 December 2025.

Action taken since then

The service had implemented systems to ensure that notifications relating to changes in service delivery were submitted to the Care Inspectorate and approved prior to changes being introduced. This helped to ensure that changes to the service were appropriately reviewed and authorised, supporting children's safety, wellbeing and the delivery of care that was consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's health, wellbeing, and safety, the provider should ensure they are cared for in a well-maintained, and safe environment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment" (HSCS 5.22).

This area for improvement was made on 23 December 2025.

Action taken since then

While the service had taken steps to improve aspects of the environment, toilet cisterns remained insecure, with some missing screws and others not fitted with appropriate securing mechanisms. As a result, the environment was not yet fully maintained to the standard expected and potential risks to children's safety remained. We have therefore repeated this area for improvement under the children experience high quality facilities section of this report.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
Children experience high quality spaces	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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