Cathkin Community Nursery
Day Care of Children

Community Nursery
Langlea Road
Whitlawburn, Cambuslang
Glasgow
G72 8ES

Telephone: 01416 433 484

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 May 2026

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2003015283

About the service

Cathkin Community Nursery is a purpose-built daycare of children service provided by South Lanarkshire Council, located within the grounds of Cathkin High School.

The service is registered to care for up to 72 children at any one time, including 6 children aged 0-2 years, 10 aged 2-3 years, and 56 aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

Children are accommodated across three main playrooms. The layout allows easy access to toilets, changing facilities and a sensory room. All playrooms have direct access to enclosed outdoor spaces, supporting free-flow play between indoor and outdoor environments.

The setting is well located, with access to local amenities and public transport links, supporting accessibility for families.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 and 14 May 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 a small number of children using the service
- spoke with staff and management present on the days we visited the service
- gathered feedback from two family members using a questionnaire
- observed staff practice and children's experiences
- 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 engaged in their play. They experienced nurturing care from staff who knew them well and responded to their needs.
- A wide range of loose parts, both indoors and outdoors, supported children's creativity, imagination and problem-solving.
- Literacy and numeracy were well embedded across the environment through resources, displays and staff interactions, supporting children's learning in a meaningful way.
- The management team should re-establish and further strengthen quality assurance and self-evaluation processes to support ongoing improvement.
- At times, staff deployment limited opportunities to extend children's learning and support sustained engagement in play.
- Well-planned home visits, settling-in arrangements and transitions supported the development of trusting relationships and helped children to feel secure.
- Management and staff demonstrated a commitment to improvement and should continue to build on this through the service improvement plan.
- Positive relationships with families were evident, with families being warmly welcomed and included in the life of 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	4 - Good
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 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.

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service's vision, values and aims were clearly displayed throughout the setting and shared with families through visual displays and digital communication. The vision, "to ensure everyone is part of our family", promoted an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, nurtured, happy and supported.

This had recently been reviewed with staff and was reflected in the positive atmosphere, warm relationships and caring interactions observed during the inspection. The service's ethos of fun, kindness, love, friendship and challenge was evident across the environment and in the way staff, children and families interacted. We discussed the benefit of reviewing the vision, values and aims with families and children to ensure their views continue to shape the service ethos.

Management and staff were welcoming, approachable and professional throughout the inspection. They engaged positively in the process, openly sharing experiences of recent service changes and reflecting on the impact on staff and the nursery. They were receptive to discussion and feedback, demonstrating a reflective approach and commitment to ongoing improvement to enhance outcomes for children.

Leadership roles and key areas of monitoring were still in the early stages of development following recent changes within the management team. Responsibilities were being shared across the team, supporting developing accountability and a growing sense of shared ownership for improvement.

Champion roles had recently been introduced for staff, providing opportunities to build confidence and develop skills in specific areas of practice. For example, one team member had taken on the role of medication lead. Continued support and guidance from the management team will help to strengthen these developing roles and contribute to improved outcomes for children.

A quality assurance calendar had been developed, with some monitoring in place, including planning and lunchtime routines. Approaches such as personal plan audits and peer observations had previously had a positive impact on practice. These had been paused, following changes in management arrangements and priorities. There was discussion about re-introducing these to further strengthen quality assurance across the service. As a result, oversight had reduced and some gaps were identified in practice such as, staff deployment, personal plans and medication management. Strengthening these approaches would better meet children's needs and support their wellbeing and development.
(See area for Improvement 1).

A range of policies and risk assessments supported safe practice. Accident and incident records were completed and shared with parents. Monthly audits were carried out to identify potential risks or areas for improvement. Management reviewed these finding and worked with staff to make improvements where needed, helping to maintain a safe environment and support children's ongoing safety and wellbeing.

An improvement plan was in place to support ongoing development, with key priorities including children's rights, literacy, numeracy and creative experiences such as woodwork. These were beginning to have a positive impact, enhancing children's opportunities for meaningful learning and skill development. Positive progress was evident, and continued focus will support these approaches to become further embedded and sustained across the service.

Staff were encouraged to reflect on practice daily and at team meetings, with minutes showing a range of topics discussed and contributions from the team. This supported ongoing reflection, shared learning and clear communication, helping to promote consistent approaches to practice across the service. Staff feedback was valued and used to inform discussions and ongoing improvements.

Feedback from families was gathered through daily conversations and nursery events, with comments shared and displayed within the setting. We discussed how the service could further develop its approaches to gathering and using parents' views to inform improvement. Children's voices were valued through a children's committee and mind maps, with actions identified and followed up. Recently, children shared ideas about keeping themselves safe in the nursery, supporting them to take ownership of their environment and contribute to the development of rules.

Staff felt confident and well supported by both management and colleagues, contributing to a positive and collaborative team culture. Management were regularly present within the playrooms, modelling good practice and responding supportively to the needs of both staff and children.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and development the provider should ensure quality assurance systems are used to maintain and improve practice. This should include, but not be limited to:

- staff being deployed to meet children's needs
- ensure personal plans are kept up to date, to reflect children's individual needs and preferences
- when children require rescue medication it should be available for staff to administer.

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

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.

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were happy, settled and actively engaged in their play. They were confident, made independent choices and led their own learning. Positive interactions between staff and children created a welcoming environment where children felt encouraged to explore, investigate and express themselves.

A well-organised environment, with low-level storage and access to a wide range of resources, supported children's interests, stage of development and learning through play. Experiences encouraged curiosity, exploration and engagement, including the use of loose parts to promote creativity and problem-solving.

Babies and toddlers experienced a range of age- and stage-appropriate play opportunities that supported their learning and development. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child development and provided resources that supported emerging interests and schematic play. Children showed curiosity as they explored independently and alongside others. They engaged in meaningful play, including peek-a-boo games with fabrics, imaginative play with playdough, and early schematic play such as building towers, knocking them down and rolling balls down ramps. Children aged two to three particularly enjoyed Book bug sessions, joining in enthusiastically with stories, songs and rhymes, often requesting their favourites to be repeated. These experiences supported children's communication, confidence, creativity and early learning skills.

Children aged 3-5 years accessed a wide range of indoor play experiences. They explored block play, construction, jigsaws, water play and sand. Children were motivated and having fun as they participated in imaginative play, dressing up and role-playing with their peers. Creative experiences, including arts, crafts, playdough and sensory play, supported problem-solving and fine motor development. Free-flow access to the garden promoted independence and choice, while staff responded well to children's interests through open-ended questioning and by following their ideas.

At times, staff were not always able to consistently support and extend children's play. This was linked to staff deployment arrangements and daily routines. These arrangements should continue to be reviewed and monitored to help minimise disruption to children's play and support sustained, child-led learning.

All children accessed the outdoor environment, which was well used and highly valued. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the benefits of outdoor play across age groups. Babies and younger children explored natural resources and loose parts, supporting sensory exploration and physical development through climbing, crawling and movement. Staff offered positive praise and recognition to children, helping to build confidence and self-esteem.

Younger children particularly enjoyed imaginative play linked to familiar stories, such as creating butterfly wings inspired by The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Staff used these interests to extend creativity, communication and early literacy through connected play experiences.

Older children developed confidence, cooperation and problem-solving skills through a variety of outdoor experiences. The climbing frame was popular, offering opportunities to negotiate space, take turns and assess risks. Children also made good use of loose parts, including guttering and imaginative resources such as aeroplane seats, to share ideas and collaborate in their play.

The outdoor environment offered a wide variety of experiences, including water play, planting areas, music spaces and imaginative play areas, including a mud kitchen. Features such as a buddy bench provided children with opportunities to relax or spend time with peers, supporting wellbeing and a sense of belonging.

Literacy and numeracy were embedded throughout the environment through displays, resources and experiences. Children had access to books, songs, puppets and props that supported early language and literacy development. Staff used language to extend vocabulary, encourage communication and develop thinking. children benefited from a range of mark-making opportunities indoors and outdoors. We observed children using scissors and other tools to support fine motor skills and early writing. Staff training in Book bug further enriched opportunities for children to develop a love of stories, songs and rhymes.

Planning had recently been reviewed and management had begun supporting staff to strengthen planning and evaluation. Some positive progress was evident. While there was evidence of evaluation, links between experiences and children's learning journals were not always clear. Gaps in recording meant that children's learning and achievements were not always consistently shared with families, limiting opportunities for children to revisit and reflect on their learning. Parents' contributions from home were welcomed. Management should continue to work with staff to further embed planning processes to ensure children's learning is more consistently recorded and shared.

Children's learning was further enhanced through links with the wider community. They benefited from experiences within the shared school campus, including a dance programme and activities in science and home economics. Additional opportunities such as having use of the gym hall, sensory gym and links with United Sports. These experiences broadened children's learning opportunities, supported the development of new skills and helped build confidence within the wider community.

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.

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring relationships within a welcoming and nurturing environment. Positive interactions with staff and peers helped children to feel safe, secure and included. Friendships developed naturally through shared play and experiences, with children showing kindness towards one another and playing well together, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Positive relationships with families were evident. Families were warmly welcomed, and staff engaged in respectful interactions, taking time to discuss children's experiences at home and in nursery, demonstrating a genuine interest in their wellbeing and development. One parent commented, "I have a strong relationship with management and my child's key worker." And another said, 'I'm always welcomed each morning and asked how my child's night has been'. As a result , on-going communication and partnership working with families helped ensure children's individual needs were understood and met.

Personal plans were developed in partnership with parents and included important information about children's routines, preferences and healthcare needs. Staff spoke confidently about the children in their care and how they supported individual needs. Where children required additional support, staff worked closely with families and other professionals to ensure appropriate strategies, resources and equipment were in place. We discussed the importance of ensuring a consistent approach to reviewing, completing and updating personal plans to support continuity of care across the staff team.

Mealtimes were sociable, with staff sitting alongside children to support safety and engage in conversation. Babies and toddlers were supported to feed themselves, with assistance where required, while older children helped serve food, pour drinks and clear away, promoting independence. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of dietary needs and allergies. Children enjoyed lunch and ate well, with some younger children commenting "yummy, yummy." Older children also benefited from a rolling snack, allowing them to choose when to eat. Children were encouraged to access water throughout the day, supporting their health, wellbeing and independence.

We discussed opportunities to further review lunchtime arrangements and strengthen organisation to support calm, well-paced routines with minimal disruption. Management were receptive to this and confirmed this remained an ongoing area for review.

Sleep and rest arrangements reflected individual routines and preferences, with cots and rest areas available to meet children's needs. Staff were patient and responsive, offering comfort and reassurance through cuddles, stories and familiar comfort items. Practice was guided by safe sleep procedures, with regular safety checks carried out. As a result, children were settled, relaxed and well rested.

Personal care was carried out in a gentle and respectful way. Older children were supported to develop independence with handwashing and toileting, helping to build their confidence. For younger children, nappy changing was carried out with minimal disruption to play, maintaining their privacy and dignity.

Staff had completed child protection training and demonstrated a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Systems were in place and used to record and monitor children's wellbeing. As a result, children were kept safe and protected.

Settling-in and transitions were flexible and child-centred. Home visits and individualised approaches helped build relationships in the early stages, supported children to feel secure. Transitions between rooms were carefully planned and introduced gradually, enabling children to move at a pace that suited their needs. Younger children benefited from access to family photo books, which provided reassurance and helped them maintain a sense of connection between home and the nursery environment.

Family engagement was highly valued and actively promoted through stay-and-play sessions, Bookbug activities and an open-door approach. Families were warmly welcomed and encouraged to be involved in their children's experiences. The service benefited from a family room and a range of practical supports, including a sustainability swap shop, access to a community larder through partnership working with the local school, and family support programmes. These strengthened relationships and helped create a strong sense of belonging, connection and continuity between home and the setting, positively supporting children and families' wellbeing.

Parents shared some positive feedback about the service and the care provided by staff. One parent said, 'I'm so grateful for the support and kindness shown to us during this journey. I would highly recommend Cathkin Community Nursery to everyone'. Another shared, 'The staff are always empathetic and show kindness to my child, they go above and beyond'. These comments reflected the service's family-centred ethos and the warm, caring relationships that had been developed with children and their families.

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	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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