Tinto Primary School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

School Road
Biggar
ML12 6LT

Telephone: 01899 308 279

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 September 2026

Service provided by:
South Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003481

Service no:
CS2003015373

About the service

Tinto Primary School Nursery Class is located in the village of Symington, South Lanarkshire. The service is provided by South Lanarkshire Council.

The setting is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 45 children at any one time aged from two years to entry to primary school age, of whom no more than 10 children are under three years. There were 32 children registered during the week of the inspection.

Children are cared for across two playrooms and have direct access to a secure outdoor play area. Children also have access to other areas within the school grounds. The service is close to shops, parks and public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 2 and 3 September 2026 between 08:30 and 16:00. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. A second inspector was present for training and development.

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 group of children using the service,
- gathered the views of nine families using a survey, email and discussions on site,
- gathered the views of staff and management using a survey and discussions on site,
- observed staffs practice and children's daily experiences, and
- 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

- Fostering strong connections with families enabled staff to plan how best to support children's needs.
- Supportive transitions recognised children as individuals enabling them to feel safe, secure, loved and respected.
- Staff recognised the importance of creating nurturing relationships and that these were essential for children's growth and development.
- Children were having fun and were experiencing joy, participating in high quality play and learning.
- Staff were well informed about the children's needs and interests.
- Well established self-evaluation systems supported the staff [kb1.1] to help children grow and achieve their goals.

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 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

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.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources
The leader's vision for the setting focused on children receiving the highest quality care. The vision included everyone in the school community having a sense of belonging. We acknowledged the settings vision was being reviewed as part of the improvement journey. This was to ensure the vision reflected the school community for today and the future.

The settings values were well established and embedded within the staff's practice. Staff were skilled and competent practitioners. Their interactions were caring and respectful to children and each other. Children were persevering in tasks, caring for their peers and helping each other. Staff had worked hard to make the values real for the children. They had achieved this by using a favourite story book character to help the children understand the values and embed these into the daily practice. Having a clear vision and well established values supported children's growth and development.

The settings improvement plan and quality calendar helped them to successfully achieve their goals. They had been included in the school improvement plan in the early level stage. This enabled them to feel part of the school community and that they mattered. Sustainability, parental engagement, empowering staff and effective transitions all being part of the settings improvement journey. We found evidence that all these areas were well established and continually being monitored within the setting.

Staff had taken on roles and responsibilities to support the settings improvement journey. They had received positive support from the senior leadership team and their colleagues to achieve specific tasks. There were many positive impacts for children and families as a result of the improvements made. These included the supportive transitions for children when starting primary school. Which had resulted in, the children having a sense of belonging to the setting, the school and local community. Another being the increased parental engagement, fostering strong connections with families. Parents told us staff worked in partnership with them to meet their child's needs. With one parent sharing, "They have listened to us as parents, taken our concerns seriously and worked with us, which has made us feel very reassured and confident leaving [my child] in their care."

Leaders had created an environment where staff, parents and children felt confident to share their views and ideas. They valued the importance of staff skills, experience and love for the children. Parents were regularly consulted and their feedback was listened to. Children's voices were being used to influence the type of service they received. The service should continue with the plans to further enhance consultation with children when planning their care, play and learning. They had established a setting that truly supported the children to have the best start.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

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.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were having fun and were experiencing joy, participating in high quality play and learning. They moved freely within the setting with confidence, self-selecting to play either indoors or outdoors. The play spaces offered a wide range of play and learning experiences. Children were transporting materials challenging their own thinking and being curious about objects. Enabling children to learn and develop using their preferred behaviour of play. Well planned play spaces inspired and enabled children's natural curiosity to learn.

Staff were responsive to children's wishes, skilfully listening to their voices. They had created a daily routine that enabled children to lead their own play and learning, with minimal interruptions. Leaders along with staff used the approach of looking through the eyes of the child, to ensure children's experiences met their needs and interests. One child told us they had asked for more bikes, to reduce waiting times. The setting had listened and more bikes were now available, reducing the time children had to wait to ride bikes. This enabled children to recognise their voice mattered.

Staff supported children to recognise, enjoy and celebrate their successes. We observed children's reactions when doing tasks, there was a lot of proud and excited children. Children recognised their achievements and wanted to share their successes with others. We observed children being creative in the modelling area, with one child persevering making a boat and another a box. Through meaningful interaction using questions, offering ideas staff supported children's thinking and helped them achieve their goals.

Play experiences were planned to support children's growth and development needs. We observed a staff member skilfully supporting children to play side by side using the same piece of equipment. Their role was supporting the children to play whilst developing an awareness of others around them. The outcome was the children had fun playing and regulated their emotions smoothly, resulting in minimal interruption to their play and learning.

We discussed a few aspects within the setting that could be further enhanced with some minor changes. These included displays being clearer and easier to read, reducing the amount of furniture in some areas and creating more calming spaces, considering the sensory needs of children. Staff had acted on a few areas during the inspection. They had created more floor space in the building block area and for the children choosing to eat lunch in the playroom they had provided them with more space. In addition, we were told the office equipment was being relocated out of the playroom, to free up more play space for the children. We acknowledged that throughout our visit children were calm and relaxed with most of them choosing to play outside. The outside area was calm, spacious and looked out onto the fields and hills. Consideration could be given to reflect this calmness within the playrooms.

Staff were well informed about child development. We observed children were confident and successful learners. They were excited coming into the setting to get busy playing. Children had online learning journals to track their progress. We found these contained a lot of shared stories and observations for groups of children. To reflect children's learning journeys, we discussed how these could be more personalised. The learning journals could be enhanced by having more consistency in the quality of observations and learning recorded. We discussed with leaders to ensure the new approach to planning and tracking children's progress included monitoring of the learning journals. The planning process should support children's learning journey's and celebrate their successes.

Children are supported to achieve — 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support
Staff recognised the importance of creating nurturing relationships and that these were essential for children's health and wellbeing. Strong connections with families, helped staff to understand and get to know the children's needs. Children had a designated staff member that supported them and a group of their peers they interacted with daily. This helped them to build positive relationships and have a positive self-esteem to achieve their potential. Children told us they found staff funny and they really liked them.

Meaningful and effective transitions supported children and families through changes in their lives. These enabled staff to skilfully and with compassion support children when they started the setting or when they continued their journey into primary one. Parents shared their experiences during their child's transitions they could not thank staff enough for their support. Staff created as smooth as transitions, as possible. This resulted in children feeling safe, loved and respected.

Children's right to dignity and privacy was respected. Children were encouraged to be independent and learn new skills. There was a range of spaces for children to play together or on their own, with soft furnishings to relax and chill out. Children enjoyed cosying up, reading in the book area. If children needed to sleep, they were provided with a safe, comfortable bed in the 2-3 room. Staff were sensitive, kind and compassionate and skilfully helped children to express their needs.

Lunch times were a sociable part of the day. Children connected with their group and designated staff members. Staff and children sat together talking about their day whilst eating meals. Consideration should be given to lunch time and the use of the school dining hall, through the eyes of the child. The tables, stools and some materials in the dining hall were not the appropriate size for the children. For children choosing to eat lunch in the 2-3 room it could have been further enhanced by creating smaller numbers of children at each table and staff sitting with them. Staff had reflected on some of our discussions and changes were made. They agreed to reflect on these changes and to continue to improve outcomes for children during lunchtime.

Snack was provided in the playrooms, given children the opportunity to learn some life skills, preparing and self-selecting foods. Children got to choose when they had snack and who they wanted to sit beside. Snack time was a good opportunity for children to chat about their experiences, recalling stories that were important to them.

Each child had a personal plan in place. These informed staff about children's medical and development needs, including personal preferences. However, there was no clear written plan in place for each child that identified their needs and how staff were working alongside families to support these. We acknowledged that staff were doing this and we could see this was embedded in their practice. Parents told us of the support staff provided. Staff had worked closely with support agencies to ensure children with additional needs were being supported. The children's plans need to be further enhanced to include the children's identified needs and agreed strategies for staff to follow.

Parents were welcomed into the setting each day. Staff had successfully created an environment, were parents felt welcomed and respected. Parents found the stay and play sessions, parent's meetings and the daily chats beneficial. They told us they were well informed about their child's needs and development. They felt they could approach staff at any time to discuss their children's needs. They found staff approachable, friendly and as one parent shared 'Being part of Team Tinto is such a positive thing for my child and for us as a family.'

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 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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