# Allanton Primary School Nursery Class
# Day Care of Children

Dura Road
Allanton
Shotts
ML7 5AB

Telephone: 01501 826 703

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
20 October 2026

**Service provided by:**
North Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003000237

**Service no:**
CS2003015384

## About the service

Allanton Primary School Nursery Class is a day care of children service which is provided by North Lanarkshire Council. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 24 children at any one time, aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. The nursery is part of Allanton Primary School. The service operates Monday to Friday term time and children attend full day sessions.

The nursery consists of two playrooms, outdoor play space and toilet facilities. The nursery is close to a local woodland area, shops and park.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 October between 08:30 and 16:30 and 20 October between 08:30 and 15:30. Feedback was shared with the service on 20 October 2026. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received four completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with three staff and the manager
- received two completed questionnaires from staff
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- 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 experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care, which helped them feel safe, valued, secure and listened to.
- Policies, procedures and risk assessments were not consistently reviewed or updated, which reduced assurance that governance arrangements fully reflected current best practice.
- Effective contingency planning for snack was needed to ensure children consistently had access to suitable food and that their wellbeing was supported.
- Children were highly engaged in their play and learning, demonstrating sustained concentration, creativity and enjoyment across a range of indoor and outdoor experiences.

## 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

**Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources**

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 service has a vision to 'ensure within a curious environment, our goal is to enable children to wonder, imagine, investigate and explore providing each child with the opportunity to make choices within their learning. By doing so we aim to encourage the try it out, do it yourself character'. Staff shared that the vision was reviewed annually with families to ensure it remained relevant and continued to reflect the aspirations of the service community. This helped provide a shared direction for practice and supported children to become confident, independent learners.

Using the 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' cycle, the service had been developing the indoor environment to create a cosier and more curiosity-rich space for children. Specific actions and timescales had been identified to support this work and monitor progress. Staff had begun this improvement journey and were using self-evaluation to inform changes to the environment. This demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement and a focus on enhancing outcomes for children.

The service had begun to use the challenge questions from 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sector' to support self-evaluation and identify areas for development. This encouraged reflective discussion and helped staff evaluate the quality of children's experiences. Questionnaire responses showed that staff felt involved in this process. However, records were not consistently dated, making it difficult to clearly demonstrate progress over time. Moving forward, the service should consider involving children and families more fully in this process to gather a wider range of views and experiences. This would help strengthen self-evaluation and ensure future improvements are informed by the people who use the service.

A quality assurance calendar was in place, detailing monthly, termly and bi-annual monitoring activities. We discussed ensuring reviews take place in line with best practice including the reviews of medication every three months. These approaches would enhance oversight of key areas of practice and support ongoing service improvement.

Policies and procedures were in place; however, we identified gaps within several documents. Some policies were not available, while others had not been reviewed or updated for a significant period of time. We discussed the importance of ensuring all policies and procedures are current, reflect best practice guidance and are reviewed regularly. In addition, risk assessments were in place for the indoor and outdoor environments; however, these had not been reviewed for some time. We discussed the need to ensure risk assessments were in place for all areas of the service. Addressing these areas would strengthen governance, support consistent practice and provide greater assurance that children's health, safety and wellbeing are effectively promoted. (See area for improvement 1.)

Due to staffing challenges being addressed since the previous inspection, the service benefitted from a more consistent staff team. Staff used creative approaches to ensure regular staff meetings could take place, supporting collaboration. This improved communication, consistency of practice and ongoing service improvement.

The 'Early learning and childcare: national induction resource' (Scottish Government, 2026) was used with a new member of staff. This supported a structured and consistent induction process, helping the staff member to develop confidence in their role and gain an understanding of the service's policies, procedures and expectations. This helped ensure they were better equipped to meet the needs of children and families. One staff shared, 'New staff are given time to work through national induction resource as well as time to look at policies procedures resources and time to build relationships with both staff and children alongside a mentor'.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's safety and wellbeing, the provider should ensure risk assessments and policies and procedures are reviewed and updated. This should include but is not limited to:

Reviewing and updating all risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor environments to ensure they reflect current practice and identify any potential hazards.

Ensuring all policies and procedures are up-to-date, reflect current legislation and best practice guidance, and are reviewed within agreed timescales

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

'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS: 5.19).

## Children play and learn 4 - Good

**Quality indicator: Play learning and developing**

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.

Staff interactions were warm, nurturing and caring. Staff consistently got down to children's level, listened to their ideas and responded positively to their individual needs. For example, when a child was creating a bus at the woodwork area, staff used effective questioning and discussion to extend the experience, encouraging the child to think critically, solve problems and develop their ideas further. These interactions supported children's confidence, sustained engagement and learning through play.

Children were engaged in their play for sustained periods of time and demonstrated high levels of concentration and involvement. They remained focused on activities of interest, exploring resources, developing their ideas and persevering with challenges. Children shared, 'I like playing outside' while another shared, 'I like all the books and toys'. This reflected children's enjoyment of the environment and experiences available to them. As a result, children were developing confidence, creativity, problem-solving skills and a positive disposition towards learning.

Children were able to access both indoor and outdoor play experiences throughout the day. Outdoor play provided opportunities to develop their physical skills, curiosity, creativity, including access to a woodwork area. Parents spoke positively about these experiences, commenting, 'They are outdoors most day'.

Another parent shared, 'The outdoor area is fantastic. My child thoroughly enjoys it." These opportunities supported children's wellbeing, confidence and learning through active, outdoor play.

Planning approaches were informed by the Curriculum for Excellence and developmental milestones. Staff observed children's interests and used this information to plan learning experiences that supported their progress and development. Children's learning was made visible through displays in the main foyer area, enabling families to see learning within the environment. Moving forward, displays should be dated to clearly demonstrate when learning took place and evidence progression over time. This would support effective communication with families and promoted children's sense of pride in their learning.

Floorbooks captured children's voices and recorded their ideas about what they wanted to learn at nursery. This helped ensure children's interests informed planning and learning experiences. While some of this was reflected within individual learning journeys and wall displays, this was not yet consistent across all records. We discussed the importance of strengthening links between children's voices and planning. This would provide clearer evidence of how children's interests and ideas influenced learning experiences and informed individual progress.

Every child had a learning journal folder that captured observations across numeracy, literacy, and health and wellbeing. Observations included children's voices and identified next steps for both nursery and home, supporting a shared approach to learning. We highlighted the importance of ensuring next steps are meaningful, achievable and reviewed over time to demonstrate children's progress and inform future planning. This would help support continuity in learning and provided a clearer picture of children's development.

Tracking and monitoring systems were still being developed; and the impact of the new approach on children's progress was not yet evident. Management had undertaken relevant training and planned to hold individual meetings with staff to support the implementation of the new approach. This would help strengthen oversight of children's progress and ensure staff were confident and consistent in its use.

Forest Fridays took place in a local woodland area and provided targeted opportunities for children to engage in regular outdoor learning experiences. Children enjoyed lunch outdoors and participated in a variety of activities that promoted exploration, independence and connection with nature. Families were also invited to attend sessions, helping to strengthen partnerships and share in children's learning experiences. One parent commented, 'My child has just finished a block of visiting the forest, they provide Bookbug sessions, walks to the local shop, visits to the local swing park and lots more.' This supported children's confidence, wellbeing and sense of belonging within their wider community.

## Children are supported to achieve — 4 - Good

**Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support**

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.

Staff were warm, nurturing and responsive in their interactions, helping children feel safe, valued and well cared for. All families strongly agreed that they had positive relationships with the staff caring for their children. One parent described staff as, "very accommodating, knowledgeable and professional", and said

their child was "perfectly safe". This nurturing approach promoted children's emotional wellbeing and created a welcoming environment in which they appeared comfortable, valued and listened to.

Every child had a personal plan, and improvements had been made following the previous inspection. Plans had been reviewed and were up-to-date, providing staff with relevant information to meet children's individual needs. This helped ensure that children received care and support that reflected their circumstances and promoted their wellbeing. We discussed the importance of recording significant changes, events and support needs within children's chronologies to maintain a clear overview of their experiences. This would help staff respond consistently and ensure support remains responsive as children's needs change.

Medication was stored appropriately in individual, clearly labelled zip bags. We discussed ensuring that the relevant information leaflet and original packaging with the dispensing label were stored alongside each medication. This would support safe medication management and ensure staff had the information required to meet children's health needs.

Staff respected children's personal space and promoted their independence by asking before offering assistance and allowing children time to manage tasks for themselves. One child referred to the Keeping Children Safe campaign (SIMOA), demonstrating a developing understanding of personal space, consent and how to keep themselves safe. This reflected the positive impact of the service's approach to supporting children's wellbeing, rights and safety.

Transitions between home, playrooms and outdoor areas were smooth and responsive to children's needs. As a result, children felt secure, remained settled and moved confidently between experiences. The settling in process progressed at each child's pace, supporting trusting relationships and a strong sense of security and belonging. One parent explained that staff reassured families by showing how happy and safe their children were and welcomed parents to remain until their child had settled.

No morning snack was available on the first day of the inspection. We discussed the need for a clear contingency plan and a supply of suitable non-perishable food to ensure children's wellbeing was supported when planned arrangements were disrupted. Although children demonstrated independence at lunchtime, opportunities to develop these skills at snack time were more limited. We discussed involving children more fully in snack preparation and serving to further promote their independence, confidence and self-help skills.

Lunchtime was relaxed and unhurried. Children collected their plates and cutlery, served themselves and poured their own drinks, developing confidence, responsibility and practical self-help skills. Staff encouraged conversation and gave children time to talk, listen and enjoy eating together. This supported children to strengthen their relationships, communication skills and independence.

Positive relationships had been established with parents. Stay-and-play sessions offered meaningful opportunities for families to engage with the setting, while newsletters and daily conversations kept them informed. These approaches strengthened partnerships and supported a shared understanding of children's learning and experiences.

Links had been developed within the local community, including with a café that offered children a free weekly snack and through visits to nearby shops. These experiences helped children become familiar with their neighbourhood and develop a sense of belonging within their community.

## 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 support children's wellbeing, the provider should ensure effective systems are in place to manage staff absence. This should include clear arrangements that promote continuity of care for children and prioritise staff wellbeing.

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

'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15); and

'I experience stability in my care and support from people who know my needs, choices and wishes, even if there are changes in the service or organisation' (HSCS 4.15).

**This area for improvement was made on 16 March 2026.**

**Action taken since then**

Since the last inspection, the local authority had increased staffing levels within the service. This provided greater stability within the staff team and increased capacity to support children's care, learning and development.

This area for improvement has been met.

**Previous area for improvement 2**

To ensure children experience a safe and well maintained environment, the provider should address any identified maintenance issues. This will support effective infection prevention and control measures and enhance the quality of the environment.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the 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 5.24).

**This area for improvement was made on 16 March 2026.**

**Action taken since then**

Since the previous inspection, action had been taken to address the maintenance issues identified, and all areas had been satisfactorily resolved.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 3

To support children's wellbeing the provider should ensure that children's personal plans are consistently in place, up-to-date and contain clear, relevant targets that support children's progress and wellbeing. This should include but not be limited to: Personal plans should reflect children's individual needs, interests, and strategies for support, and be regularly reviewed in partnership with families.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15)

**This area for improvement was made on 16 March 2026.**

#### Action taken since then

All children had a personal plan in place, which had been reviewed and updated in August 2026. Management had streamlined previous documentation and introduced a new personal plan format to improve accessibility, consistency and the recording of information.

This area for improvement has been met.

## 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 | 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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