# Woodlands Primary School Nursery Class
# Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
28 May 2026

**Service provided by:**
North Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003000237

**Service no:**
CS2003015419

## About the service

Woodlands Primary School Nursery Class is a day care service operated by North Lanarkshire Council located within Woodlands Primary School. The service is registered to provide care for a maximum of 48 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school. It operates Monday to Friday during term time.

The nursery is situated in a quiet residential area of Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire, situated close to local shops, transport links and a range of community facilities. Children had access to one large, well resourced playroom and a secure outdoor garden area, supporting a variety of learning and play experiences.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 and 28 May 2026 between 08:45 and 16:30. Feedback was shared with the service on 28 May 2026. The inspection was carried out by three 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 since last inspection.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with 48 children using the service
- received nine completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with four families using the service
- 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 inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

## Key messages

- Children experienced calm, kind and warm interactions from staff across the service.
- Children were having fun and were engaged in quality play experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- Effective self-evaluation and reflection on practice enabled leaders and staff, to clearly identify what was working well and what could be improved.
- Quality assurance process should be further developed to ensure they are more meaningful and highlight the impact on outcomes for children and families.
- To ensure that children experience care that meets their individual needs, staff and management should continue to review and develop children's personal plans.

## 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.

Management and staff worked collaboratively to create and maintain a positive ethos within the setting. Children and families were actively involved in developing a shared vision and set of values centred on promoting positive outcomes. These values of being safe, proud, inspired, respected, independent and tolerant were reflected in the setting's approach.

An improvement plan was in place across the school and nursery and a session was held to share key priorities and planned actions. This supported families to understand how improvements could enhance children's learning. The nursery contributed to one main priority: strengthening literacy and numeracy skills. Progress was tracked using a colour coded system, giving a clear visual overview of completed actions and those still requiring attention. We discussed giving staff clearer responsibilities to strengthen ownership. Clearer links to evidence of progress would have ensured achievements and next steps were well signposted.

Families and children were supported to contribute to improvements and share their views. Child and parent friendly versions of key documents were created so information was accessible, engaging and meaningful. The setting explored different ways to gather feedback and moved to using QR codes, as this approach generated the highest response rate. This demonstrated responsiveness to families' preferences and a commitment to making feedback easy and accessible. The setting was in the process of sharing with families how their contributions had shaped positive change, which will encourage continued involvement and help families feel valued.

Weekly team meetings provided staff with valuable time to share information and reflect together. Reflective questions supported professional dialogue and helped sustain a culture of improvement. The setting were aware of their strengths and areas for development and recorded the evidence behind these judgements. We advised strengthening this by recording when identified actions were completed and evaluating their impact to inform future planning and improvement.

The setting recognised the need to improve personal plans and had begun initial work, including engagement with other nurseries to explore more effective recording approaches. Personal plan audits were in place but required strengthening to ensure they capture priority areas identified during inspection. Greater consistency is needed to ensure all plans are reviewed within six months and signed by families. Audits should consider the quality of information, ensuring plans clearly outline how children's needs will be met and changes are recorded over time. While staff knew children well, accurately capturing this in written plans should demonstrate how responsive the setting is to children's evolving needs (see area for improvement one).

Staff appraisals offered structured opportunities to discuss professional learning and development needs. Due to staffing pressures, the focus had largely been on mandatory training. This now needs to broaden to ensure access to wider professional learning that strengthens practice. New staff described a supportive

induction, including mentoring and use of the national induction resource. We suggested maintaining records of these processes on staff files to support ongoing reflection and development.

### Areas for improvement

1. Auditing and monitoring systems should be strengthened to ensure all children's personal plans are reviewed at least every six months, or sooner if changes occur. This will support compliance with legislation and ensure information remains meaningful and effective in meeting children's needs.

This is to ensure 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)

## Children play and learn 4 - Good

Playing, 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.

Children were happy and engaged in their play and learning experiences. Many spent extended periods in the construction area, working collaboratively to design and build towers. Throughout this play, they used mathematical language to compare size and height. At the playdough table, children developed critical thinking skills as they experimented with ways to change the consistency of the dough, supporting creativity, imagination, and problem solving.

Indoor and outdoor environments were thoughtfully designed to offer rich, hands on learning. Children explored numeracy, mathematics and health and wellbeing through meaningful, everyday play. Spaces were inviting, well-resourced and encouraged exploration and discovery. One parent commented, "My child is involved in a range of opportunities and fun experiences to meet their individual needs and support their development." Families also valued the free flow access to the outdoors, which supported children to make independent choices about where and how they wanted to play. Staff had recently completed outdoor learning training, strengthening their understanding of its importance, which was evident in the purposeful setup of environments.

Staff interactions were positive and encouraging, with praise and thoughtful commentary supporting learning. We discussed how more consistent use of open ended questioning, alongside staff reflecting on when to add appropriate challenge, would have helped extend children's thinking and deepen learning.

The setting had improved its planning approaches, making clearer links to where evidence of learning could be found. Staff had moved away from resource led planning towards a stronger focus on children's interests. Speech bubbles, mind maps and notes were used effectively to capture these interests, and children's ideas were clearly reflected in play spaces, such as Pirates, The Hungry Caterpillar, and Stick Man. While children confidently identified topics, there is scope to deepen learning by supporting them to express what they want to find out. Recording children's questions, how these were explored, and where information was sourced would strengthen planning, leading to deeper enquiry and clearer progression. The setting had already identified this as an area for development, reflected in next year's improvement plan.

A system was in place to monitor staff contributions to learning journals, helping ensure posts overtime focused on numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. However, the sharing of learning was inconsistent: some entries captured significant progress, while others were more descriptive. Quality assurance processes existed as the setting recognised the need for further improvement. Recording informal audits in writing would have helped evidence feedback, support consistency, and track improvement over time.

Floor books and group folders enabled children to revisit learning. We highlighted the importance of making significant learning and new skills more visible to show progress and next steps. Tracking systems were in the early stages and beginning to identify where individual children required support or challenge. Continuing to track learning over time, with clear evidence of actions taken and their impact, will help ensure all children's needs are consistently met.

## Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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.

Children were seen actively seeking adults for comfort and guidance, showing that nurturing, trusting relationships were in place. Their voices reinforced this, with one child saying, "I can ask for help," and another noting, "When I am feeling sad, a big cuddle helps." These warm interactions supported children's emotional wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Positive relationships between children were consistently encouraged. Staff recognised and praised cooperative play and shared problem solving. They created meaningful opportunities for children to work together, exchange ideas, and support one another. One parent commented, "The nursery provides a fun, engaging environment to make new friends and learn." This supported and strengthened children's confidence and sense of belonging.

Rolling lunches allowed children to eat at a time that suited them, ensuring play was not interrupted. Staff adapted this for children who found transitions challenging, demonstrating sensitive, individualised support. Records ensured all children received lunch. Introducing a system to note when children ate little or nothing would help staff respond promptly and support consistent communication with families.

At times, lunchtimes became task driven, with staff frequently moving around. Sitting consistently with children and engaging in conversation would have created a calmer, more social atmosphere. Positioning themselves closer would also encourage discussion and support social skills. We observed some positive self help skills, such as clearing plates and choosing vegetables. Expanding these opportunities would further build confidence and independence. We also discussed carrying out lunchtime observations, followed by constructive feedback and idea sharing, to enhance the overall experience.

Procedures for the use, storage and administration of medication were followed effectively. Three monthly reviews with parents ensured information remained up to date and reflective of children's needs. Improving consistency across documentation would provide further clarity. Adding an actions taken column to existing reviews would strengthen the system and show ongoing improvements that had been made in medicine management.

The service was taking steps to ensure a first aider is consistently available within the nursery. While first aid provision exists within the wider school, having a designated first aider based in the nursery would further support children's safety and enable a quicker response to medical needs.

Transition approaches were well established. Children spoke enthusiastically about their school visit. Access to wider school spaces helped them build early connections with the school environment. Families were supported through information evenings, contributing to smoother, more confident transitions.

Families were included through stay and plays, parent evenings, parent council meetings, coffee mornings and an online platform sharing photos and videos of play and learning. We identified that children would benefit from increased use of local community spaces to strengthen links between home and nursery.

Families had daily opportunities to speak with staff, with more formal consultation offered through parent meetings. One parent shared, "Staff are warm and welcoming, happy to receive and give updates both at drop off and pickup." This helped families feel informed and reassured, which supported children's wellbeing through consistency and strong partnerships with home.

## 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

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|---|---|
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| Children are supported to achieve | 4 - Good |
|---|---|
| Nurturing care and support | 4 - Good |

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