Kilmuir Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Kilmuir Primary School
Kilmuir
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9UB

Telephone: 01470 552 271

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 June 2026

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003017224

About the service

Kilmuir Primary school - Sgoil Àraich Chille Mhoire - is situated in purpose-built accommodation within Kilmuir Primary School - Bun-sgoil Chille Mhoire in a rural area on the Isle of Skye. The service is provided through the medium of Gaelic in a fully immersive approach. The service is registered to provide care for a maximum of eight children aged two to not yet attending primary school. Of those eight, no more than five are aged between two and three years. At the time of inspection, five children were registered with the service.

The manager of the service is also manager of Staffin Primary School Nursery - Bun-sgoil Stafainn and Sgoil-Àraich.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 June between 08:50 and 16:15. This inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 evaluations we:

- Spoke with or spent time with five children using the service
- received two completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with three families on the day of the inspection
- spoke with staff and the manager of 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. We identified an area to develop and have included that within the report.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care from staff who had developed strong, secure relationships with them.
- Children were confident and mostly engaged in their play as they explored the inside and outside learning environment.
- The leadership created a caring, inclusive ethos where children and families felt a strong sense of belonging.
- Staff promoted the Gaelic language in a full immersive approach, supporting children's communication and early language development.
- Self-evaluation processes were in place and beginning to drive consistent improvements for children.
- Planned routines could be further considered to ensure that children remain engaged in their play and learning.

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	5 - Very 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. Several strengths had a positive impact on children and families. These strengths clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children benefitted from a clear, shared vision centred on nurturing care and an immersive Gaelic language learning environment. This resulted in a calm and inclusive ethos. Children felt safe and valued in the care of staff in the service. Parents told us their child "feels safe and happy" and is "excited going" each day. This reflected a strong sense of belonging.

The leadership was visible, approachable and supportive. The head teacher worked alongside staff which strengthened professional relationships with the team. This supported consistent, caring experiences for children. Parents told us that staff were "warm, friendly and courteous" and said they felt "comfortable approaching them about anything". This built trusting relationships across the team.

Induction processes were effective and well planned. Staff quickly developed confidence in meeting children's needs. They accessed regular training to meet their qualification requirements, the individual needs of children and promote early language and communication. One parent shared that staff were "supportive... and open to recommendations" from professionals. This helped children to express themselves and feel understood.

Mostly effective quality assurance processes led to some improvements for families. For example, consultation with families had informed changes to service delivery. Self-evaluation was at the early stages across the team and not yet fully embedded. This limited how well improvements influenced positive outcomes for children. The service had plans to focus on their approach to self-evaluation as an improvement priority moving into the next year. We encouraged the service to continue with their plans as this would further promote a shared understanding of self-evaluation across the team.

Leaders engaged well with national guidance and external support. This strengthened Gaelic learning and improved children's engagement. The service had identified clear priorities for improvement within their improvement planning. For example, strengthening family engagement and promoting the Gaelic language with families. This meant that improvements were meaningful and focused.

Parents felt confident in the leadership of the service. Family engagement was positive and parents valued opportunities such as "Stay and Play" sessions and ongoing communication. Parents shared that they felt that the leadership team was approachable and welcoming. As a result, parents were confident in the quality of care their children received.

Leadership created a supportive and nurturing environment for the staff team. Staffing was stable, supporting continuity of care. Strong relationships helped children feel secure. Parents told us they felt like there were enough staff, with one noting there is a "perfect ratio." The staff had begun to take on leadership roles in the service. We suggested they continue with this as this would further ensure that improvements are sustained over time.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator - Playing, learning and developing

We made an evaluation of good for this quality indicator. Strengths supported positive experiences for children. Some improvements were needed to maximise learning outcomes.

Children were mostly engaged, confident and motivated learners. They felt secure and relaxed in the setting. One parent shared that their child "has had an incredible experience" and is "thriving". This showed that strong relationships between staff and children supported sustained engagement in play.

Children made independent choices about where they would like to play and what they would like to play with. This promoted their confidence and independence. Parents told us that they valued the "plenty areas of play to choose from" and "sensory activity set up each morning". For example, on the day of inspection children were exploring water play outside as they made potions. This promoted children's curiosity and enjoyment.

Interactions were warm and responsive. Staff listened carefully and promoted children's communication. Gaelic was used naturally throughout the session and in the correct context. This helped children develop understanding and language skills. Parents highlighted that children benefit from "interesting and enriching" activities in the service.

Story time supported strong engagement. Children joined in confidently with familiar words and actions. This strengthened early literacy skills. We suggested the service review the length time of adult led experiences to ensure that children remain engaged and continue to benefit from these experiences.

Planning approaches reflected children's interests and a balance between adult led and child led approaches. Floor books were beginning to show children's ideas and how these influenced their learning. One parent shared that staff "are very good at following their children's interests to scaffold learning". Staff used a range of approaches to assess children's individual learning and plan for next steps. Each child had a journal with observations of their learning. Staff spoke confidently about children's next steps. These approaches supported children to feel involved in their learning and make good progress.

Resources mostly supported sustained engagement in play. There were a few resources that were plastic and did not promote creativity and problem solving. We suggested the service further develop some resources in the environment to ensure that they are consistently open ended and more natural to strengthen children's creativity and problem solving. This would further support children to explore their ideas more fully.

At times, planned routines interrupted play. This reduced sustained learning. For example, during an adult led activity outside, some children became disengaged. We shared this with the service and encouraged them to ensure that children remained engaged in these experiences and that they are continually meaningful.

Children spent time outside and explored the large grounds. Children had fun as they played in the mud kitchen, the water tray outside and explored their natural environment. One parent told us that at times outdoor experiences were "weather dependent" and this could be increased. We shared this with the service who agreed to consider this moving forward. Extending outdoor play will support physical development and wellbeing.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator - Nurturing care and support

We found significant strengths in care and support, which had a very positive impact on children's wellbeing. Therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children experienced highly nurturing and responsive care from staff that knew them well as individuals. They were calm, settled and confident in the service. Parents told us that their child "feels safe and happy" and is "excited going". This showed children felt secure and emotionally supported.

Strong relationships supported children to form secure attachments with staff. One parent said their child was "very fond of the EYPs (staff)". Another described staff as "kind and supportive... and interested in them as a person". As a result, children felt valued, respected and understood.

Children made choices about where they would like to play and had opportunities to help prepare snacks. Parents shared that their child "has gained more independence with preparing his own snacks". This promoted children's independence and allowed them to influence daily routines.

Mealtimes were relaxed and social experiences for children. Gaelic was used consistently in a fully immersive approach, supporting communication at these key times. Parents valued mealtimes for children. One parent shared that children had "agency over what they want to eat" and healthy choices were available. As a result, children were developing a positive experience with food and enriching their language in the Gaelic medium.

Children's personal care was sensitive and respectful. Children's health was promoted as staff had developed good hygiene routines, for example prompting children to wash their hands at key times. Staff responded calmly to children's needs. Parents described staff as "incredibly attentive". This promoted children's dignity and wellbeing.

Children's personal plans were developed in partnership with families and reviewed regularly. Staff worked closely with professionals where beneficial to ensure that children's individual needs were met. Parents told us that they valued that staff were "supportive... and open to recommendations". As a result, children received tailored care which ensured that they were supported to achieve.

Partnerships with families were a key strength. Parents felt welcomed and involved in the life of the service. One parent said they were "invited in to review plans" and "collaborate on next steps". Families also valued regular communication and updates. This supported continuity of care.

Families spoke very positively about their experience. One parent said, "we couldn't ask for a better place for my child to learn and grow". Another described the service as "a testament to compassion and dedication". This strong feedback reflected the positive outcomes for children.

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	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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