St. Brendans Primary School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

45 Barons Road
Muirhouse
Motherwell
ML1 2NB

Telephone: 01698 274 914

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 September 2026

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2009229585

About the service

St. Brendans Primary School Nursery Class is provided by North Lanarkshire Council and is located within St. Brendans Primary School in Motherwell, North Lanarkshire.
The service is registered to provide care for up to 60 children at any one time, aged from two years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 20 are under three years of age.

Children have access to a bright, welcoming playroom with direct access to outdoor play spaces. The outdoor environment offers a variety of play experiences that support children's learning and development. Children aged two to three years have access to a small, secure, enclosed outdoor area, while children aged three to five years benefit from a larger outdoor space that provides increased opportunities for exploration, physical play and learning.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that took place on 29 and 30 September 2026 between 09:15 and 16:30. Feedback was provided to the service on the second day of the inspection. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

On the days of inspection, there were no more than 60 children in attendance.

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.

During the inspection, we:

- spoke with three children using the service,
- received feedback from four parents,
- spoke with leadership and staff team,
- observed practice and children's experiences,
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment, and
- reviewed relevant documentation.

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 care and a strong sense of belonging.
- High-quality play and learning experiences supported children's wellbeing, confidence and development.
- Effective partnerships with families and professionals contributed to positive outcomes for children.
- Leaders should strengthen checks and monitoring systems to ensure all statutory requirements are met consistently.

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	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 4 - Good

QIs inspected: 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 nursery's vision, values and aims were embedded in daily practice. They contributed to a positive and nurturing ethos. Children's wellbeing, inclusion and participation were promoted through rights-based approaches and respectful relationships. As a result, children experienced a strong sense of belonging. They felt valued and demonstrated confidence within the setting. Leaders recognised the need to refresh the vision to ensure it remains relevant and understood by stakeholders.

The service demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement. Structured self-evaluation and quality assurance processes supported this work. Improvement priorities reflected children's wellbeing, additional support needs and children's rights. These aligned with local and national priorities. Meetings, learning conversations, surveys and quality assurance activities promoted reflection and shared ownership of improvement. Monitoring information helped identify strengths and areas for development. Families contributed through questionnaires and consultation activities. Staff understood improvement priorities and their role in implementing change. As a result, children benefited from a responsive service that adapted to their wellbeing, learning and development needs.

There was scope to further develop evaluation of improvement activity. Some success measures focused on completed actions rather than outcomes for children. Leaders should strengthen evaluation arrangements. This could help demonstrate the impact of developments on children's wellbeing, learning, participation and achievement.

Quality assurance processes supported reflection, service development and policy review. Staff understood key policies and procedures and described how these informed practice. However, monitoring arrangements had not consistently identified compliance issues at an early stage. During the inspection, inconsistencies were identified within medication documentation. Discrepancies were noted between medication records and healthcare information. A lapse in professional registration had also not been identified. Staff understood their responsibilities for medication administration and systems supported safe practice. However, a nursery-specific medication policy was not available. There was also limited evidence of routine reviews of healthcare plans and medication records with parents. Leaders should strengthen governance and quality assurance arrangements. This would help ensure records, monitoring systems and statutory requirements remain accurate, robust and up to date. (AFI 1)

Professional learning was valued and linked to improvement priorities. Staff accessed a range of learning opportunities. Professional review and development processes supported reflection and identified learning needs. External partners highlighted staff's commitment to learning and collaborative problem-solving. Staff were increasingly taking on leadership responsibilities, with opportunities to further strengthen distributed leadership across the service. This contributed to high-quality experiences for children and supported positive outcomes in their wellbeing, learning and development.

A positive and collaborative culture was evident across the nursery. Staff felt valued, supported and encouraged by leaders. External partners highlighted strong teamwork and reflective practice. Families

described staff as approachable, supportive and responsive. They valued the quality of communication and feedback about children's experiences. Leaders responded appropriately to identified issues and demonstrated a commitment to improvement. Ongoing attention to good leadership and clear accountability will help maintain positive outcomes for children and families.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health, safety and wellbeing, the service should strengthen governance and quality assurance arrangements. This should include robust monitoring of medication records, healthcare information, professional registration requirements, and the regular review of healthcare plans with parents. Leaders should ensure that service-specific policies are in place and that monitoring systems identify and address compliance issues promptly.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective" (HSCS 1.24) and "I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources" (HSCS 4.27). It will also support a service that is well led and managed and meets statutory requirements (HSCS 4.19 & 4.23).

Children play and learn — 5 - Very Good

QI inspected: Playing, learning and developing

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.

Children experienced high-quality play and learning opportunities within a nurturing, inclusive and responsive environment. Throughout the inspection, children were settled, confident and engaged in their chosen experiences. Staff promoted independence and decision-making through warm, respectful interactions. They responded well to children's interests and preferences. Practitioners extended play, conversations and learning opportunities. As a result, children developed confidence and sustained engagement. They experienced a strong sense of belonging. Children spoke positively about their experiences and relationships. One child told us, "I love playing with my friends and learning with the teachers." This demonstrated enjoyment of nursery life and positive connections with staff and peers

The learning environment supported children's wellbeing, curiosity and creativity. Children benefited from free-flow access between indoor and outdoor spaces. This enabled them to choose where and how they played. Staff moved alongside children and supported uninterrupted play throughout the day. Real-life resources encouraged imaginative play, problem-solving and investigation. In the younger children's room, experiences promoted curiosity, independence and enjoyment. Examples included preparing and tasting apples and exploring sensory materials. Children made extensive use of the outdoor environment. They engaged in physical play, creativity and exploration using a variety of open-ended resources, sand, bubbles and wheeled toys.

Families valued the wide range of outdoor learning experiences. One parent highlighted their child's enthusiasm for caring for a sunflower grown at nursery and continued at home. They described positive opportunities both within the nursery and the wider community. These experiences helped children develop confidence, a sense of achievement and an understanding of the world around them.

Positive relationships and a nurturing ethos were evident throughout the nursery. Staff communicated

effectively with children and responded sensitively to their needs. Visual supports and Makaton enhanced communication and inclusion. These approaches helped children understand routines, make choices and participate in learning. Information in personal plans supported effective individualised support. As a result, children were confident and secure. They engaged in ways that reflected their interests, abilities and stage of development. Families spoke positively about the personalised support provided. They reported improvements in children's confidence, social skills and development. This supported children to reach their potential and experience positive outcomes in their development and wellbeing.

Staff demonstrated a strong understanding of child development. They adapted approaches, environments and experiences to meet children's needs. Staff worked positively with partner agencies and embraced professional learning opportunities. They reflected regularly on their practice. This supported responsive and inclusive approaches. As a result, children benefited from developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

Planning and assessment approaches were reflective and responsive, taking account of children's interests and developmental needs. Following professional learning, leaders reviewed planning arrangements to strengthen practice. Staff used observations, discussions and responsive planning to identify meaningful next steps in learning. In the 3-5 room, floor book planning effectively captured children's interests and views, which influenced learning over time. Leaders had also reviewed assessment and tracking systems, placing a greater emphasis on individual progress and core learning. As a result, children experienced learning that was relevant to their interests and needs, supporting their engagement, participation and progress.

Observations of children's learning were meaningful and ongoing, demonstrating staff's knowledge of individual children. Learning journals captured children's achievements, interests and progress. Leaders had begun to strengthen assessment practice by placing a greater focus on individual progress and core learning. As this work continues, there is scope to further strengthen progression in learning by ensuring next steps are consistently linked to learning targets and tracking information. Parents were active partners in children's learning. Stay-and-play sessions strengthened links between home and nursery, promoting continuity in children's learning, development and wellbeing.

Children are supported to achieve — 5 - Very Good

QI inspected: Nurturing care and support

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.

Children experienced warm, nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well. Staff responded sensitively to children's individual needs. Positive and trusting relationships were evident throughout the nursery. Children confidently sought reassurance, guidance and encouragement from familiar adults. Staff interactions were caring, respectful and responsive. This helped create a calm and welcoming atmosphere, where children were settled, secure and engaged in their play and learning. As a result, children experienced a strong sense of belonging and emotional wellbeing.

Care routines, including handwashing and personal care, were flexible and adapted to children's individual needs, preferences and stages of development. Children were encouraged to make choices, exercise independence and move freely between experiences throughout the day. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's personalities, interests and routines, adapting their approaches accordingly. As a result, children felt respected, valued and well supported. Care was delivered in a calm and dignified manner.

Children also had access to quiet spaces throughout the day, which supported rest, relaxation and emotional regulation.

Mealtimes were a positive social experience. They supported children's health, wellbeing and independence. Children followed appropriate hygiene routines. They helped prepare tables and served elements of their meals. Children poured drinks and tidied away afterwards. Staff sat alongside children and encouraged conversation. This helped create a relaxed atmosphere. Dietary requirements and preferences were well understood, with appropriate arrangements in place to meet individual needs. Fresh drinking water was available throughout the day, supporting children's health and wellbeing.

Children benefited from effective transition arrangements. These helped them feel safe, secure and confident. Staff worked sensitively with families and partners to support transitions. They demonstrated a clear understanding of children's individual needs. Strong links with the associated primary school supported children's move to school. Children moving to other settings benefited from effective information sharing. Staff communicated well with receiving establishments. Where additional support was required, staff worked closely with wider professional teams. This promoted continuity of care and positive outcomes.

Personal plans provided useful information about children's strengths, needs and next steps. These supported children's wellbeing and development. Staff clearly described how identified strategies were implemented in practice, and there was evidence of effective collaboration with families and other professionals. As a result, children received consistent, individualised support that helped them make progress and achieve positive outcomes in their learning, development and wellbeing.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's healthcare needs. They were knowledgeable about medical conditions and dietary requirements. Appropriate medication systems were in place. During the inspection, an opportunity was identified to strengthen medication management. This was addressed promptly.

Partnerships with families and other professionals were a significant strength. Parents described staff as approachable, caring and responsive. One parent told us, "My child has built healthy relationships with all staff and children within the nursery." Another shared this gave them "peace of mind" when leaving their child at nursery. Families valued the support their children received. Practitioners kept families informed about progress. They listened to feedback and worked collaboratively to meet individual needs. Stay-and-play sessions, coffee mornings and questionnaires supported family involvement. External professionals highlighted effective partnership working and strong communication. As a result, children benefited from coordinated support and positive outcomes. These partnerships contributed to children's wellbeing, development and inclusion.

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

Area for improvement 1:
The service should complete regular checks and audits of all medications stored including consent to give forms. This is to ensure they only store medication they have agreed and have consent to administer. All medication should be in date and returned to parent, if expired or disposed of following good practice guidance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which states as a child, I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice and I use a service that is well led and managed (HSCS 4.11 & 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 16 January 2019.

Action taken since then

The service had implemented monthly audits of all medication and associated consent forms. This helped ensure that only medications with appropriate parental consent were stored and administered. Records confirmed that medicines were in date and that expired medications were returned to parents or disposed of appropriately. As a result, leaders had strengthened medication management and oversight, reducing risks and supporting children's health, safety and wellbeing.

This area has now 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	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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