MACS Cross Arthurlie Day Care of Children

Cross Arthurlie Primary School
7 Fern Drive
Barrhead
Glasgow
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Telephone: 0141 887 0002

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 March 2025

Service provided by:
Mearns After School Care Service Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003000772

Service no:
CS2022000230

About the service

MACS Cross Arthurlie is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children attending primary school at any one time. The service operates from 7.45am to 9.00am and 3.00pm to 6.00pm, term time only .

The service is located in a residential area in Barrhead, East Renfrewshire. The service is close to local shops, parks and other amenities. Children are accommodated in a gym hall, dinning hall, classroom and an enclosed outdoor playground.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19th and 20th March 2025 Feedback was provided virtually on the 21st March 2025. The 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with people using the service
- Spoke with four staff, the manager, area manager and two of the directors
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident, and having fun with staff and friends on the days of inspection.
- Children accessed a large enclosed outdoor space which supported their health and wellbeing.
- The team should continue to embedded their planning cycle to enhance children's play experiences.
- Access to the community widen children's opportunities and strengthened their connection with their local area.
- The service should continue to grow and expand their resources to support children of all stages to be stimulated and challenged in their play.
- The entire team contributed to the improvement plan for the service and were committed to their role, which demonstrated a shared responsibility for the process.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as **very good.**

Children were happy, confident, and having fun on the days of inspection. Children experienced kind, responsive, and nurturing care from staff. We heard staff and children chatting and laughing together. Children we spoke to told us that they enjoyed meeting their friends, spending time with staff and playing games outdoors at the afterschool club. This meant that connections and relationships were strong which supported children to feel safe and welcomed.

Children experienced a snack time that was relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Children's independence and life skills were developing through opportunities to self-select and self-serve their own snacks. We would encourage the team to sit at the table to ensure children's safety and engage in conversations which will further enrich the mealtime experience. This would support children to establish healthy eating habits. Water was available throughout the session to ensure children remained hydrated.

Children's individual care, health, and wellbeing was supported by personal plans which outlined their likes and dislikes linked to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. Children were fully involved in completing their "All about me" booklets which highlighted their goals for the future. Enrolment forms contained key information regarding any medical or dietary requirements. This information supported families' personal preferences and helped promote children's independence, privacy, and dignity. This ensured the team had accurate and up-to-date information to support and meet the needs of children in their care. One parent told us "my child is well looked after and cared for."

Staff understood their role in promoting children's health and wellbeing while attending the afterschool care. Several staff members were trained in first aid, should children need medical assistance. Storage and administration of medication policy, procedures and paperwork were in line with current best practice guidance. As a result, children were kept safe and well.

Children were protected and safeguarded as staff understood their responsibility to keep children safe in their care. Staff undertook child protection and chronology training which afforded them a holistic view of potential factors that might impact children and families. The service had reviewed their child protection policy and added a flowchart to streamline the process for lead child protection officer in the setting.

1.3 Play and Learning

We evaluated this quality indictor as **good,** where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were having fun and engaged in activities throughout the days of inspection. On the second day of inspection, we found children could access a balance of organised and freely chosen play experiences. This meant that children had opportunities to develop social skills, their confidence and self-esteem.

Play could be further enhanced by children having access to a wider range of materials, which reflected their needs and interests. We asked the team to be mindful when organising planned activities to ensure they provide challenge and stimulation for children of all stages of development attending the setting. This would further support children's wellbeing and development.

We found children were actively involved in leading their play and learning experiences which respected their right to choose. The team met with children every month to create an activity mind map of ideas and activities that were then incorporated into the weekly planners. Children chatted confidently with us about their experiences at after school, telling us the activities they had done recently and enjoyed. One parent told us "It's friendly and fun for kids".

The team were developing the use of floor books in the service. Floor book shared children's play and learning experiences through pictures and children's comments. We found the planning cycle was in the early stages for the team and had still to be fully embedded. We made some suggestions on how the team could expand their floor book to further support the full planning cycle, with the addition of summary of the activity, team evaluations and links to the Playwork Principles. This would help celebrate children's achievements and continue to extend their play and learning opportunities in the setting.

Access to the community was a focus for the service who valued children's connections to their local area. The service had established links with a community greenspace where children had begun to plant and grow. These opportunities enhanced children's connections with their own community and supported their sense of belonging.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as **good,** where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The afterschool care was delivered in the local primary school. Children could access a gym hall, dining hall and classroom. On the days of inspection, the school had sole use of the gym hall. We found the environment was spacious, with natural light and ventilation. As a result, children had ample space to play and have fun together or alone should they choose too across the spaces available.

The team had created a resource book which contained pictures of toys and equipment available for children to choose from. On the days of inspection children had access to footballs, basketballs, skipping ropes, board games, Lego, dinosaurs, and some craft activities. These opportunities supported children's imagination, creativity and physical skills.

On the first day of inspection, we highlighted children's ability to extend their play, and learning had been impacted as some areas needed to be refreshed and restocked. There were improvements made on the second day of inspection which supported positive outcomes for children. We encouraged the manager and team to regularly review resources, children's engagement, and provocations available to ensure high quality play and learning experiences. The manager had an environmental audit template available which we encouraged them to utilise on a regular basis to ensure each space available sparked children's interests, curiosities, and creativity.

Free flow access between the indoors halls and outdoor playground ensured children's rights to lead their play was respected. Access to the outdoors also supported children health and wellbeing by being active. Children had the use of the large outdoor areas within the school grounds.

Children told us they enjoyed playing outdoors and football at afterschool. We saw children had lots of fun as they played outdoors with basketballs and skipping ropes. This meant that children's physical wellbeing was well supported and encouraged.

Staff worked well together to keep children safe in the setting. The team had engaged well with the SIMOA campaign and understood their role in supporting children to engage in risk beneficial play. On the first day of inspection, we highlighted potential hazards at the entrance and exit used to access the playground for staff and children. This was rectified for the second day of inspection through discussions with the school senior leadership team.

Infection prevention and control measures were in established and in line with current best practice guidance. Daily cleaning schedules and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was available, if required. This supported children and staff's health and wellbeing in the setting. We suggested the team revisit good hand hygiene practice with children before and after snack.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as **very good**.

We found that the team, manager, and provider engaged very well in the inspection process. The service had been through a period of change in staffing since opening. However, the team told us they had now formed and were keen to drive improvements in the setting to ensure positive outcomes for children in their care. The told us they want children to have fun and be happy at the afterschool club. This showed us children were at the heart of all improvements.

Aspirations for the afterschool were shared by all staff members and supported by the manager. The entire team contributed to the improvement plan for the service and were committed to their role, which demonstrated a shared responsibility for the process. Actions and improvements made in the setting were well informed and underpinned by relevant theory, frameworks, and best practice guidance. This demonstrated that the service had a strong capacity for change.

The manager of the service was visible, personable, and approachable to children, their families, and staff. This helped create a positive environment which focused on relationships and communication, where people felt confident to discuss ideas, suggest improvements, and raise concerns. The manager was organised and knowledgeable, which positively influenced the overall delivery of the service. One parent told us "the manager is very reachable and approachable."

Children were encouraged to provide their thoughts and views on the service through face-to-face discussions, mind maps and floor books. As a result, children and young people felt connected to the service.

The manager was keen to strengthen connections with families and improve parental partnerships working. On the first day of inspection parents collected children from the main entrance to the school, with staff escorting children from the play spaces to the door. However, following discussions with the school's senior leadership team, parents were now able to access the playrooms directly which will provide further opportunities to build relationships and effectively communicate.

A quality assurance calendar was in place which helped to guide the manager throughout the year. The service had recently introduced a robust quality control process undertaken by the area manager which helped identify strengths, areas for development and actions for the setting. We discussed with the manager how robust quality assurance processes help to improve the quality of provision, including planning, environmental audits and reviewing building resources. The manager should continue to embed these processes as this will support positive outcomes for children and young people.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as **very good.**

Children were supported in a service that was well staffed to meet their individual health, welfare, and care needs. We observed staff maintaining very good supervision through effective and respectful communication. The effective deployment of staff enabled them to be fully engaged and present in children's care, play and learning while keeping them safe.

Staff were compassionate and intuitive in their approach. They knew children and young people well and were responsive to their needs and wishes throughout the session. Staff were patient and respectful in their interactions with children and each other, which promoted a happy, relaxed atmosphere. As a result, children enjoyed quality time with staff, providing opportunities to build strong relationships. Parent described staff as "friendly" and "great with the kids."

Staff in the service routinely engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities that built on and sustained their practice. The provider was as a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) accredited centre, which provided staff with a variety of professional development opportunities. Staff accessed qualifications relevant to their role and engaged in continuous professional learning, such as BA childhood practice and SVQ level 7. Staff also access training to develop their practice such as observation, reflective journals, and chronology training. These learning experiences helped to provide assurance to children and parents that staff were knowledgeable and skilled to fulfil their practitioner roles.

Staff felt very supported by the manager both formally and informally through their open-door approach. The team met frequently to discuss ideas, improvements and new documents that were relevant to the service. There was a clear mentoring process in place to support new staff to feel welcomed into the service and be prepared to undertake their new roles. One to one supervisions and yearly appraisals in place to support continuous professional development. This meant that children benefitted from a team who continued to build on existing positive relationships with each other.

All staff were appropriately registered with their regulatory body, Scottish Social Service Council.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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