

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 24 JUNE 2026

REPORT ON: SUMMARY OF EXTERNAL CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTION REPORTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY NURSERIES, MAY 2025 TO MARCH 2026

REPORT BY: INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 150-2026

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of Care Inspectorate (CI) inspection reports for Dundee City Council nurseries from May 2025 to March 2026.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the summary of external inspection reports by the Care Inspectorate.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Two settings were inspected by the Care Inspectorate between May 2025 and March 2026: Frances Wright Nursery and St Mary's RC Nursery Class.

- 4.2 Frances Wright Nursery was inspected prior to September 2025 using *A quality framework for daycare of children*. The inspection evaluated four core quality indicators, all of which were graded Very Good (5):

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

- 4.3 St Mary's RC Nursery Class was inspected after September 2025 using *A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors*. Three quality indicators were evaluated, all graded Very Good (5):

- Children play and learn – Very Good (5)
- Children are supported to achieve – Very Good (5)
- Leadership – Very Good (5)

- 4.4 All evaluated quality indicators across both settings were graded at least Very Good (5).

- 4.5 Across both inspections, inspectors found that:

- 4.6 Children experienced consistently positive, nurturing, and responsive interactions from staff.

- Staff knew children well and supported their individual needs effectively.
- Learning environments supported a balance of planned and child-led experiences.

- 4.7 Children were supported to influence their play and learning.

- 4.8 Self-evaluation and quality assurance arrangements were effective and supported continuous improvement.
- 4.9 Strong partnership working with families and communities supported children's wellbeing
- 4.10 No requirements or areas for improvement were identified across either inspection.
- 4.11 Inspectors identified a small number of areas for further development, including:
- refining aspects of mealtime organisation
 - strengthening evaluation of staff professional learning
 - improving approaches to capturing children's views, including non-verbal communication
- 4.12 Copies of the full inspection reports are included in the appendices.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services, or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Council Leadership Team has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

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Interim Executive Director of Children and Families Service
Chief Social Work Officer

Author:

Paul Fleming
Head of Education, Learning and Inclusion
Chief Education Officer

MAY 2026

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY REPORTS FOR TWO NURSERIES

St Mary's RC Nursery	Inspection by Care Inspectorate	Latest Grade Awarded		Grading History
	Theme	February 2026	Theme	November 2018
	Children play and learn	5 - Very Good	Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
	Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good	Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
	Leadership	5 - Very Good	Quality of management and leadership	Not assessed
			Quality of staffing	Not assessed

Summary

- The vision and values of the service were clearly embedded and consistently reflected throughout the inspection. Children, families, and staff were actively involved in shaping these.
- A well-established ethos of self-evaluation contributed to high quality care, play, and learning. Change was well planned, informed, and evaluated. This ensured it was meaningful and at the right pace for children to thrive.
- Work to promote children's and families' understanding of UNCRC (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child) rights and Makaton was a strong focus. Children were empowered to make decisions and take responsibility for designing their learning spaces.
- One parent commented, "Overall the nursery is fantastic!!! Which is down to the care, support, and knowledge from the staff." Another said, "We are often asked for feedback and ideas." This evidenced that families' voices were valued and acted upon.
- Interactions were warm, kind, nurturing, and fun. Staff had formed strong attachments and knew each child's needs very well.
- Children shaped their play spaces through regular reviews and planning discussions. Floor books showed children's ownership and influence on nursery developments.
- Strong community links enriched children's wellbeing and development.
- Staff created a warm, nurturing, and emotionally supportive environment that helped children feel secure and valued. Their calm, caring and responsive interactions supported children to express their feelings and build early self-regulation skills.
- The curriculum and environment promoted children's rights and identity very effectively. Staff used the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) to guide interactions and decision making.
- Strong partnership working with families enhanced children's care and support.

Area(s) to develop

Care Inspectorate noted:

- We suggested extending peer moderation to further consider individual staff strengths and areas for development.
- We suggested strengthening how nonverbal voices were recorded. More consistent recording gestures and preferences would support children to feel included.

- Lunchtime was relaxed and unhurried, however longer waiting times reduced opportunities to consistently build independence. The team recognised this and planned to strengthen practice further to support children's developing life skills.

Frances Wright Nursery	Inspection by Care Inspectorate	Latest Grade Awarded		Grading History
	Theme	May 2025	Theme	May 2019
	How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good	Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
	How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good	Quality of environment	6 - Excellent
	How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good	Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good
	How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good	Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good

Summary

- Children experienced kind, warm and caring interactions from staff. They knew children well and were responsive to their needs, wants, and cues.
- A parent told us, "The staff are friendly, open and always willing to help."
- A balance of planned and spontaneous activities were available to children. Children's interests were well considered and influenced resources available to them.
- Children's learning was documented within their individual journals that they had access to as they wished. They were proud to show visitors and their families their learning.
- Children were confident to take ownership of their play and learning and celebrated their achievements with others.
- Children had opportunities to explore their local community. For example, walks to local parks, visits to the Urban Beach, Science Centre, and Camperdown Park.
- Children's individual needs were further developed with the use of carefully planned spaces throughout the service.
- Children and families benefitted from a manager and staff team who were enthusiastic and committed to delivering quality experiences for them.
- Quality assurance systems were in place that helped the management team deliver a quality service.
- A meaningful improvement plan was in place with clear priorities, for example outdoor learning.
- Staff were passionate and spoke proudly about their roles and how these impacted children's learning. As a result, children's play and learning experiences were enhanced.
- Children's daily experiences were supported by a staff team with a mix of knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Area(s) to develop**Care Inspectorate noted:**

- Most children experienced a relaxed, sociable, and unhurried mealtime. We discussed different ways with the management team how this experience could be developed further. For example, providing more space on tables where children were eating.
- An overview training plan supported the management team to identify where further training was needed. We discussed ways staff could evaluate training they had taken part in. This would further support staff to reflect on what they had learnt and how it would improve children's outcomes and experiences.

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APPENDIX 2

St. Mary's RC Primary Sch Nursery - Dundee Day Care of Children

St. Mary's Lane
Lochee
Dundee
DD2 3AQ

Telephone: 01382 436 707

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 February 2026

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003015784



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Inspection report

About the service

St Mary's RC Primary School Nursery provides a daycare of children service in Dundee. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 34 children between the ages of three years and those not yet attending primary school.

Children have access to a cosy indoor space and fully enclosed garden. The service is based in a residential area of Lochee in Dundee and is close to shops and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 05 February 2026 between 08:40 and 16:30. Feedback was shared with the service on 06 February 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:

- spoke/spent time with 20 young people using the service
- received ten completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with five staff and the managers
- 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.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing relationships that helped them feel safe, valued, and confident within the setting.
- Children benefitted from high quality play and learning experiences, indoors and outdoors, which supported exploration, creativity and steady progress.
- Children's rights, voice, and identity were embedded throughout daily experiences, promoting belonging, inclusion and empowered participation.
- Families were valued partners, and their contributions strengthened continuity of care and supported positive outcomes for children.
- Strong leadership and a reflective, skilled staff team drove continuous improvement, ensuring consistently high quality experiences for children.

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	5 - Very 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.

Inspection report

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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**.

The vision and values of the service were clearly embedded and consistently reflected throughout the inspection. Children, families and staff were actively involved in shaping these. This demonstrated high aspirations that were grounded in nurture, respect, equality and kindness. One parent commented, "The staff in the service make the nursery an excellent place for my child to nurture and grow." As a result, children knew they mattered, felt safe and were confident within the setting.

Children benefitted from a strong, passionate and reflective staff team. Staff were proud of the journey they had taken together and demonstrated a clear commitment to one another, to children and to families. A well established ethos of self evaluation contributed to high quality care, play, and learning. Change was well planned, informed, and evaluated. This ensured it was meaningful and at the right pace for children to thrive.

Leadership fostered a culture of trust and autonomy, which enabled staff to actively contribute to the improvement agenda. Work to promote children's and families' understanding of UNCRC (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child) rights and Makaton was a strong focus. Children were empowered to make decisions and take responsibility for designing their learning spaces. For example, consultation activities showed how children influenced developments within the construction and home areas. This supported a sense of belonging, ownership, and pride.

Staff consistently engaged in self-evaluation using best practice guidance. They had recently begun using the new A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors. Quality assurance processes were robust. Timely audits and peer moderation activities supported meaningful reflection, identified areas for review, and informed measurable improvements. We suggested extending peer moderation to further consider individual staff strengths and areas for development. This would continue to enhance professional practice and outcomes for children.

Families' views were central to driving positive change within the service. A variety of methods were used to gather feedback and communicate where changes had been made. One parent commented, "Overall the nursery is fantastic!!! Which is down to the care, support, and knowledge from the staff." Another said, "We are often asked for feedback and ideas." This evidenced that families' voices were valued and acted upon.

A skilled and stable staff team had been maintained over time, ensuring continuity of care for children. Induction checklists were shared with students to support their understanding of the service's high expectations. As a result, children and families benefitted from consistent relationships and predictable support.

Staff worked effectively together and demonstrated flexibility to meet children's needs. Accurate registers were maintained, and consistent messaging through SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) supported children's safety. This meant that children experienced a safe and well managed environment.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good**Quality Indicator: 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 were busy, happy, and fully engaged in their play and learning. Staff used open questioning and wondering aloud to extend critical thinking and problem solving skills. Staff were confident and provided experiences matched to each child's stage of development. Children accessed sensory play, schematic play, and challenging activities that supported thinking skills. These experiences helped children make progress at a pace right for them.

Interactions were warm, kind, nurturing, and fun. Staff had formed strong attachments and knew each child's needs very well. Children played positively with peers and developed secure friendships. Strategies like "big deal, little deal" were embedded to support conflict resolution. These approaches helped children self regulate and understand their emotions.

Children were confident in their play due to consistent communication strategies. Staff and children used Makaton, communication boards, and visuals. These supported every child to share their voice during play. One parent said, "Staff supported my child's needs and encouraged confidence and independence." This helped children feel valued and developed a strong sense of belonging.

Children accessed varied experiences that supported numeracy, literacy, curiosity, and creativity. Books were placed meaningfully to support interests and extend learning. Children explored shadows in the dark den and discussed what they created. These experiences showed that the child led environment promoted exploration and discovery.

Children shaped their play spaces through regular reviews and planning discussions. Floor books showed children's ownership and influence on nursery developments. This ensured their choices and ideas strengthened their learning experiences.

Outdoor play was an important part of children's learning. Children and staff were proud of recent outdoor developments. Planned areas encouraged creativity, curiosity, and imaginative play. Children used loose parts to design and build with confidence. Mud kitchen play supported sensory exploration and rich language. One parent stated, "Outdoor play was a normal part of their routine." This ensured children benefitted from learning across all nursery spaces.

Learning journals captured children's achievements, experiences, and voice. Next steps were identified and followed to support continued progression. We suggested strengthening how non verbal voices were recorded. More consistent recording of gestures and preferences would further support children to feel included.

Strong community links enriched children's wellbeing and development. Staff ensured children accessed varied experiences within their local area. One parent said, "Children joined many activities inside nursery and in the community." This thoughtful approach supported high aspirations and helped children thrive.

Inspection report

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: 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**.

Staff created a warm, nurturing, and emotionally supportive environment that helped children feel secure and valued. Their calm, caring and responsive interactions supported children to express their feelings and build early self regulation skills. Staff used decider skills, co regulation, and calming sensory approaches, such as soft lighting and gentle music, to support emotional wellbeing. These practices showed that children's emotional needs were understood and consistently met.

Transitions were managed with sensitivity and careful planning. Staff used visual routines, clear verbal prompts, and consistent adults to help children understand what would happen next. This approach helped children, including those who needed additional support, move smoothly between activities. As a result, children experienced predictable routines that helped them feel settled and ready to engage in play.

Children's privacy, dignity, and independence were respected throughout the day. Staff encouraged children to take responsibility for simple tasks to promote independence. During snack, children cut fruit and vegetables with appropriate support, helping them develop practical life skills. Lunchtime was relaxed and unhurried, however longer waiting times reduced opportunities to consistently build independence. The team recognised this and planned to strengthen practice further to support children's developing life skills.

The curriculum and environment promoted children's rights and identity very effectively. Staff used the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) to guide interactions and decision making. Learning walls, identity projects, and cultural displays helped children learn about themselves and others. Children spoke confidently and proudly about their backgrounds. One child told us, "Look at this - I come from Syria." A family member shared that their child's halal/vegetarian diet "had always been followed and respected." These approaches strengthened belonging, inclusion, and respect across the setting.

Personal planning was effective and responsive. Plans were detailed, strengths based and focused on each child's stage of development. These were updated promptly when needs changed and showed strong links to GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child). Families told us they had regular opportunities to review and sign off plans and observe their children in nursery. This resulted in consistent, individualised support that helped children make steady progress based and focused on each child's stage of development.

Strong partnership working with families enhanced children's care and support. Parents contributed to journals through speech bubble comments, "More About Me" updates, and ongoing communication via online platforms. This ensured staff held relevant knowledge of each child and helped families feel included and valued. As a result, children experienced strong continuity between home and nursery.

Complaints

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

Inspection report

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very 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

Inspection report

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APPENDIX 3

Frances Wright Nursery School Day Care of Children

28 Ann Street
Dundee
DD3 7DG

Telephone: 01382 436 406

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 May 2025

Service provided by:
Dundee City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003004034

Service no:
CS2003015792



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Inspection report

About the service

Frances Wright Nursery School is a day care of children service which provides early learning and childcare and specialist provision for children from across the City of Dundee. The nursery is located in the Dundee area. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 130 children from age three until they are of an age to attend Primary School. This service is managed on a peripatetic basis. The manager is also the manager of Baluniefield Nursery School.

The nursery is a purpose-built premises and is situated within a wider school campus. The nursery has access to their own enclosed outdoor spaces where individual rooms have direct access to. There is one main large play room with an additional eight smaller rooms. These smaller rooms are used to support children's individual needs. The service is situated in a built up area within Dundee and is close to local amenities such as, shops and parks.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors, which took place on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 May between 08:30 and 16:00. 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 children using the service
- received feedback from nine families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

"As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning.

This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met.
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services."

Key messages

- Children's learning experiences had been enhanced through a wide range of rich and stimulating resources across play spaces.
- Children benefitted from the use of different areas throughout the service that supported them with their individual development.
- Children experienced very warm, caring and nurturing support from a skilled staff team who knew them well.
- Children were happy while they explored different environments throughout their play.
- Children's individual needs were carefully considered to ensure their experiences were meaningful.
- Staff were passionate and dedicated to improving children and their families outcomes.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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.

Inspection report

How good is our care, play and learning?

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.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced kind, warm and caring interactions from staff. They knew children well and were responsive to their needs, wants and cues. Staff were down at children's level when engaging in play and conversations. They were mindful and ensured they were at eye level with all children throughout these interactions. Children were seen to actively seek out staff for comfort and reassurance if they wanted it. As a result, children throughout the service felt safe and loved.

Children and their families benefitted from strong trusting relationships with staff throughout the service. A parent told us, "the staff are friendly, open and always willing to help". Another parent shared, "staff are approachable and supportive of my child and their needs". Relationships had been established with other agencies and professionals which supported children's individual needs. As a result, families and their children felt respected and their care, play and learning was enhanced.

Children had personal care plans in place that gathered important information that helped the staff meet their individual care and support needs. Plans were reviewed with parents in a variety of different ways, for example over the phone conversations. We discussed ways the service could streamline the information gathered to ensure parents have opportunities to view the appropriate information. The management team were proactive and had devised new forms with the support of appropriate guidance before the end of the inspection.

Medication storage and systems were in place that ensured children were kept safe in the event they required medication. Best practice guidance was followed and used to support improvements. For example, when audits took place, management had identified signs and symptoms were not always clear. Management had looked at ways to review forms to ensure it is clear on all paperwork. Medication was reviewed monthly with parent's signatures and dates. Very good systems were in place that supported visiting professionals who administered medication to some children. This further supported children's overall wellbeing.

Most children experienced a relaxed, sociable and unhurried mealtime. We discussed different ways with the management team how this experience could be developed further. For example, providing more space on tables where children were eating. Staff had shared that sometimes lunchtime can be quite stressful and overwhelming. The service had shared this is an ongoing area for improvement and planned to revisit the mealtimes. This further development would enhance children and staff's overall mealtime experiences.

Children were kept safe while they attended the service. Staff were trained and confident in child protection procedures. They could confidently identify concerns and knew who their child protection officers were. Policies and procedures were in place and regularly reviewed by all staff. A flow chart was displayed within the office. This ensured staff were able to follow correct processes and provide appropriate support to children and their families when needed.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were seen to be having fun and fully engaged in their play and learning. Laughter was heard by children who played indoors and outdoors. A balance of planned and spontaneous activities were available to children. Children's interests were well considered and influenced resources available to them. A parent told us, "staff take the time to find out what motivated our daughter individually and to figure out activities she will enjoy participating in, whilst recognising and respecting their dislikes and limitations". This helped children to extend their interests further. As a result, children were actively involved in leading their play and learning experiences.

Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were woven throughout the children's learning environment. Meaningful signs supported children to develop their independence skills, for example sequencing signs for washing their hands or how to use the toilet. Further consideration was given to individual children's needs and stages of development. For example, providing children with sensory objects to use as a form of communication. Children were seen engaging with staff, using mathematical language, such as "can you find number two?" or "What number is this?" Focus stories were available to children. This was developed further with the use of focus words within the stories, such as 'soft'. Activities were planned using these focus words and children shared "I made a picture with only soft bits I found". These opportunities helped children to develop their language, knowledge and communication skills in a meaningful way.

Planning approaches were child centred, responsive to children's interests and linked to their identified next steps. Different frameworks were used to support children's developmental stages. For example, the Curriculum for Excellence and Routes for Learning ensured staff provided appropriate activities for all children. Planning was reviewed by staff at least every six weeks. Additional discussions took place regularly within staff teams, where they reviewed the environment and reflected on their own practice to help them identify how they could improve children's experiences. As a result, children were challenged in a way that was right for them to achieve and thrive.

High quality observations supported children to extend their interests and learning further. For example, children sharing their interests and cultures from home. Children's learning was documented within their individual journals that they had access to as they wished. They were proud to show visitors and their families their learning. One child shared, "this is when we found a worm in our garden and looked at how it moves, it wiggles, you know". Another child proudly told us, "my daddy took me to the park in this picture and I showed my friends how high I went on the swing". Children's and families voice were captured within the learning journals. Children were confident to take ownership of their play and learning, and celebrated their achievements with others.

Children had opportunities to explore their local community. For example, walks to local parks, visits to the Urban Beach, Science Centre and Camperdown Park. A parent told us, "My child goes on class trips to various places throughout the year". Another parent shared, "our child often goes on walks around the local community, to parks and the library". Multigenerational links were supported through visits to schools within the campus. Residents from the local care home visited the campus and took part in activities with the children from the nursery and the school. This gave children the opportunity to begin to build relationships with a range of different people throughout their community.

How good is our setting?

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.

Inspection report

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a welcoming environment that had plenty of natural light and furnished to a high standard. The use of dimmer lights helped to create a cosy and homely feel for children. Natural resources were woven throughout the environments, for example on displays and loose parts play. As a result, this helped children to regulate their emotions and create calming environments when needed.

Children's safety was well considered while they explored their environments. Risks were assessed and documented in robust risk assessments which were regularly reviewed. The service used SIMOA (Safety, Inspect, Monitor, Observe and Act) campaign by the Care Inspectorate to develop children's understanding on how to manage their own safety. Children were given leader roles, such as SIMOA helpers where they helped staff risk assess different areas within their environments. Number boards were displayed within rooms with information, such as how many children and staff were attending on that day. Regular head counts took place within rooms and when transitioning to different areas within the service. This ensured children were kept safe and were beginning to understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

Children benefitted from direct access to outside spaces from each room. Free flow access was mostly offered throughout the service. In rooms where free flow access was limited, staff worked hard to ensure they followed children's interests and provided access to outside spaces when they wished. The outside area is an area the service is working to develop and have recently made improvements, such as the addition of large planters. This helped children to explore different types of play and activities, such as planting.

Effective infection, prevention and control measures were in place. Regular cleaning of the service took place, this included cleaning down equipment after it was used. Children and staff washed their hands at appropriate times of the day, for example before eating or after messy play. We discussed with the service to be mindful how they were storing items in toilet areas to help reduce the spread of infection. Children's absences were monitored and any illness that presented within the service was shared with families and appropriate absence procedures were followed. These procedures further supported to reduce the spread of infection throughout the service.

Children's individual needs were further developed with the use of carefully planned spaces throughout the service. Sensory rooms that were easily accessible to the smaller rooms provided children with daily opportunities to explore different resources. A soft play area was available and was a favourite area most of the children liked to play in. These experiences supported children with developing their gross and fine motor skills in a way that was right for them.

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families benefitted from a manager and staff team who were enthusiastic and committed to delivering quality experiences for them. The staff were proactive and began to make improvements throughout the inspection process. For example, reviewing and updating some documentation. As a result, children's outcomes were enhanced by a dedicated staff team who wanted to get it right for them.

Families and children were meaningfully involved within the service.

There were barriers on how some of the families were involved in their children's nursery journey. For example, children who used the provided transport to be able to attend the nursery. The use of phone calls, emails and news letters supported with communication. One parent told us, "my child comes by bus daily but we have been welcomed on trips and to stay and play sessions. Staff always available on Seesaw and the phone if we ever have any queries". Termly meetings took place with families, where their views of their children's care was gathered. Some parents have attended nursery and lead some activities, such as cooking days. These experiences helped children to celebrate their learning with their families in a meaningful way. Quality assurance systems were in place that helped the management team deliver a quality service. Calendars were used and broken down into monthly tasks. This helped the management team to identify priorities and what was expected to be achieved throughout that timeframe.

A meaningful improvement plan was in place with clear priorities, for example outdoor learning. We could see areas within the outside spaces had been recently developed. Staff shared the next steps to further enhance the outdoor learning experiences for children. Plans had been adapted throughout the year to highlight the progress that had been made. Self-evaluation processes were in place that further supported the staff team with the nursery improvement journey. For example, learning walks took place by management throughout the play spaces and the observations were shared with the staff. This helped room teams to come together to identify how they could improve children's outcomes and experiences further.

Children benefitted from a staff team who were keen to develop their leadership skills throughout the service. For example, staff had ambassador roles where they took part in additional training and provided different experiences for children. Staff were passionate and spoke proudly about their roles and how these impacted children's learning. As a result, children's play and learning experiences were enhanced.

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.

Quality indicator 4.3 staff deployment

Children benefitted from a happy, caring and nurturing staff team who knew them well and were focused on providing high-quality care and support. Children were cared for by a staff team who were passionate about getting it right for all the children in their care. A parent told us, "staff respond quickly to queries and concerns, maintain open dialogue, proactive in learning about my child's needs and developing inclusive spaces to contribute to children's development and success". Another parent shared, "the staff are always open and keen for me to raise any issues/concerns I may have, so these are addressed". As a result, positive relationships had been formed with children and their families.

Children's experiences were improved by a staff team who worked well and communicated respectfully towards each other. For example, when they were leaving an area or sharing why children were not attending on that day. Management recognised at busier times of the day can be stressful for staff. As a result, management and staff step in and support each other where possible to help with staff's overall wellbeing.

Staff were appropriately deployed throughout the day to meet children's needs. Staff were skilled in understanding when to step in and support children with their play or allow it to develop on its own. There was consistent staff teams within individual rooms. This contributed to effective team working and helped them to deliver positive outcomes and enhance experiences for children.

Inspection report

Children's daily experiences were supported by a staff team with a mix of knowledge, skills and experiences. Qualified staff supported staff who were undertaking training. They shared that they felt supported by their staff team and were happy while they attended their work. This contributed to a positive ethos throughout the service.

Staff undertook regular training that linked to children's needs or identified improvements. An overview training plan supported the management team to identify where further training was needed. We discussed ways staff could evaluate training they had taken part in. This would further support staff to reflect on what they had learnt and how it would improve children's outcomes and experiences.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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

Inspection report

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