

# Castlemilk Family Learning Centre Day Care of Children

c/o Miller Primary School  
20 Arden Craig Road  
Castlemilk  
Glasgow  
G45 0HS

Telephone: 01416 342 007

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 August 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Glasgow City Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003390

**Service no:**  
CS2007151471

## About the service

Castlemilk Family Learning Centre is provided by Glasgow City Council. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 74 children. The age range of the children will be from 6 weeks to those not yet attending primary school. At the time of our inspection there were 49 children attending.

The service is located in the south of Glasgow close to local amenities such as parks, shops and schools. The children are accommodated within three playrooms and have access to a quiet room and separate dining/multifunction area. The children have direct access to a large outdoor area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 August 2024. 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 children people using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received electronic feedback from 24 parents/carers

## Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and settled in the service.
- The setting was comfortable, spacious and stimulating for children.
- Children benefitted from direct access to a range of learning opportunities outdoors.
- Staff had positive relationships with children and families.
- Staff worked well together to deliver positive outcomes for children.
- The management team were friendly, visible and approachable, which strengthened relationships with families.

## 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.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff were warm, kind and nurturing in their approach with children. Children were confident and happy within the setting. Staff knew children well and were attentive to their needs. One parent commented, 'I feel it's more like a family in the nursery as you can feel the love when you go in, as I'm sure the children feel too!' This contributed to the positive relationships children had with staff and supported children to feel respected and valued.

Lunch was a relaxed and unhurried experience. Staff were aware of children's dietary needs, and these were catered for. This supported children's health, safety, and wellbeing. There were some missed opportunities for older children to self-serve which would develop their life skills and independence. Staff were sitting with children during the mealtime experience and children were engaging in quality conversations with staff. This made it a sociable experience for children.

Personal plans were in place for children and contained the information staff needed to meet children's individual needs. Plans were regularly updated in collaboration with parents and carers to reflect progress and changes in children's lives. This recognised the importance of valuing parents and carers knowledge of their child. Strategies for children with additional support needs had been identified, and staff were supported by external professionals with this. We received positive feedback from professionals who worked with the service. One professional commented that 'Castlemilk Family Learning Centre was one of the best examples of multi-disciplinary working in the community setting.' This positive collaborative working meant that staff were supported to offer better outcomes for children.

Staff used Makaton throughout their day to support communication with all children. Makaton is a language programme that uses symbols, signs, and speech to enable people to communicate. Staff used signs to reinforce instructions or specific words and Makaton symbols were displayed throughout the environments. One parent commented, 'The use of Makaton and flash cards is great and definitely helps with communication/speech at a young age.'

Management told us some parents and carers were entering the service when bringing their children to the service and when collecting their children. We observed staff providing feedback to parents of their child's day and we could see the positive relationships staff had formed. Some parents told us they would like more access to inside the service. The service had introduced tea and coffee mornings and Bookbug sessions for families to attend. We saw some families entering the service to drop off and collect children. We discussed with management that all parents should be encouraged to enter the playrooms to support relationships with staff and further develop children's sense of security within the setting.

Staff understood the importance of sleep for children's overall development. Routines were reflective of individual children's needs and family wishes and promote good habits around sleep. Children's rights were respected as personal care routines were carried out using sensitive and warm interactions. This meant children's needs were taken care of in a way that respected their privacy and dignity.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We observed children having fun and being fully engaged in their play and learning. Children experienced a balance of spontaneous and planned activities and had opportunities to lead their own play and learning. This had a positive impact on their development and wellbeing. One parent commented, 'The service provides play experiences which encourage learning and development for my children, e.g. play exercises which revolve around counting or identifying shapes.' One child commented, 'I like playing with my friends and being outdoors.'

Children had access to a range of resources, which promoted their curiosity, imagination, and problem-solving skills. These included water play, loose parts and large block play for older children and bubbles, physical equipment, and sand play for younger children. Play opportunities supported children's development of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, one child spent time measuring the heights of her friends on the height chart to see who was bigger.

Children benefited from free flow access to outdoors. Children made good use of all the space in the outdoor area. Children were confident in leading their own play outdoors and were fully engaged in play. The play experiences supported children to develop their physical skills and movement. For example, some children were outdoors dancing and performing songs with staff, while others spent time being supported by staff to jump from crates and other climbing structures.

Planning for children's learning and development was based on their interests and individual learning needs. Learning and development was tracked to establish children's progress. Observations of children's learning were shared with parents online. This meant they felt included in their children's experience in nursery and provided opportunities for them to contribute and extend children's learning. Next steps for learning were identified to support children's development and progress and enabled progression in learning and development.

## How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a bright, clean, comfortable, and welcoming environment. The large indoor playrooms offered plenty of space to meet children's needs. Internal gates had been added to each room to enhance safety and security for children. The setting made good use of the indoor environments, which were furnished to a high standard. This gave children the message that they mattered.

The environments were structured to take account of children's stages of development and learning. One parent commented, 'There is a wide range of areas in the service which keeps my child interested and focused.' Children had cosy areas to rest and relax and had access to a quiet room and multi-function room which was used for lunches. Resources available were age and stage appropriate and were easily accessible for children. This promoted their independence and gave them the opportunity to lead their learning.

Equipment in the setting was clean and well maintained, with plenty of natural resources. Risk assessments were in place, and staff recorded any potential risks and hazards. This meant children were cared for by staff who understood how best to keep them safe.

Children benefited from direct access to a large, well-resourced outdoor area. The outdoor spaces were safe and spacious, and offered a variety of stimulating resources including a literacy shed, loose parts, and mud kitchen. Outdoor play areas offered opportunities for risky and challenging play including climbing apparatus, a hammock and monkey bars. Sheltered areas provided opportunity for children to play and learn in different weathers. One parent commented, 'My son loves being outdoors, and from his learning journals and interaction with the staff I know he has loads of opportunities to go outdoors.'

The service had access to local woodland areas where children benefitted from experiencing nature in all weathers. One parent commented, 'They have days where my kids go out in the woods, have their lunch and set up the hammocks.' Another commented, 'They also go walks to the woods and also the park ranger comes too, parents are invited as well.' Visiting the local area supported children to feel part of the wider community.

**How good is our leadership?****5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

**Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

There had been some recent changes to the leadership team and an acting manager was in place. The management team were friendly, approachable, and engaged well with the inspection process. Staff told us they found the management team to be supportive and approachable. One staff member commented 'I feel fully supported by my management team. My Head of Centre is always aware of any needs, worries or concerns I have & I feel completely comfortable going to her about anything.' This meant staff were supported in delivering positive outcomes for children.

There was an ethos of distributed leadership with staff having responsibility and champion roles. The staff were confident and passionate when telling us about their roles. These included Makaton, nurture, Bookbug story sessions and outdoor champion roles. This had the potential to extend staff knowledge and skillset and to continue to improve outcomes for children and their families.

An improvement plan was available which highlighted strengths and areas for development within the service. The plan had been created in consultation with staff and was shared with parents. This helped staff and families feel involved in the development of the service. We could see progress had been made in the areas of gender friendly accreditation and children's transitions. Regular staff meetings gave staff the opportunity to discuss developments within the service.

A quality assurance calendar was in place. The management team's quality assurance systems included auditing and monitoring of accident and incidents, medication, personal plans, and environments. This contributed to having identified strengths and areas where improvements could be made. Management understood the value of parents and staff contribution in quality assurance processes. When parent opinions were asked for, feedback was given so they understood the impact of their thoughts. One parent commented, 'We are always asked for improvements and there is always events and things going on in the nursery.'

Children's voices were gathered through questionnaires to establish their opinion on the service. Children could be more involved in quality assurance processes and decision making within the setting to help them have ownership of the service.

## How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

During our inspection, we found that there were enough staff to meet children's individual needs. There was a mix of skills and experience in the team which helped staff to deliver positive outcomes for children. A keyworker system was in place, which meant children knew who they could go to if they needed help or support. This also helped staff to know the children they cared for. Parents told us that they felt the staff were approachable and supportive to them. One parent commented, 'The staff are very kind, caring and compassionate, they know my child well and I can ask them/speak to them either in person, over phone or through seesaw if I need to.' A very low turnover of staff meant there was a continuity and consistency of care for children and families.

Staff worked well as a team and told us this was a strength of the service. We agreed and saw that staff communicated well with each other when leaving areas and about children's care. Staff were vigilant of children at all times and noted when children entered and left the setting. This helped to support children's safety and ensure there was enough staff to meet their needs. Staff were deployed indoors and outdoors and supervising children in their play. Staff deployment worked well to support the needs of the children in their care and play.

Staff development was actively encouraged within the service. Staff had attended training to enable them to meet children's needs and help offer positive outcomes. This included first aid, autism, and nurture training. Staff shared with us they had protected time off the playroom floor for planning and observations. This enabled staff to plan for continued support, learning and progression for children.

Staff understood the importance of having positive relationships with families and children. One parent commented, 'I have never seen or knew that such a wonderful nursery exists until Castlemilk learning centre. I never knew such beautiful kind loving genuine people they are like a family.' One staff member commented, 'As a nurture practitioner it is important to build positive relationships with parents/carers as it is a crucial link between nursery and home and allows me to have a better understanding of parent/child dynamics and relationships within their home life.' Knowing the families and children well helped staff to offer care which met their individual needs.



## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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

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