

# Castlemilk Day Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 March 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Glasgow City Council

**Service provider number:**  
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**Service no:**  
CS2003014819

## About the service

Castlemilk Day Nursery is provided by Glasgow City Council. The early learning and childcare centre registered with the Care Inspectorate in April 2011. The service is currently registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 86 children aged 0 - 5 years.

The service operates from a purpose built premises in Castlemilk. Accommodation comprises of three playrooms, a sensory room and a secure outdoor play space. The service is conveniently situated on public transport routes and close to other schools, nurseries, shops and community amenities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 and 11 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. During our inspection visits there were 64 children attending on the first day and 59 on the second day.

This inspection was part of a pilot to test the "Quality improvement framework for early learning and childcare sectors" developed jointly with Education Scotland. Because this inspection was part of a pilot, no evaluations (grades) have been awarded.

During our inspection we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- spoke with a Glasgow City Council early years area manager
- received electronic feedback from eight parents/carers whose children attended the service
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were happy and had fun indoors and outdoors.
- Key staff knew children and families well.
- A review of some of the play spaces and resources was needed.
- The service was experiencing management and staff changes and challenges.
- A more focused approach to staff support and supervision was required.

## Leadership

### Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service was going through a period of change within the management team. The head of centre had recently left, and the service were waiting on a new head of centre being appointed. The service was being led by two acting deputies, one of whom had just started on the morning of our inspection. The uncertainty around the leadership and management of the service had created some unsettlement within the team. We discussed with the Glasgow City Council early years manager how staff and children would benefit from experienced management support prior to the permanent appointment of a head of centre.

The service's vision value and aims were displayed on their website. Although this reflected the service provided, they had not been reviewed or updated to reflect aspirations of people currently using the service. The management team should involve children and families in this review. A shared approach and responsibility of this review will help to ensure that any planned developments or improvements take into consideration children's rights, interests, curiosities, needs and preferences.

The management and staff team were adaptable to change. They were willing to consult, make changes, try things out and if necessary, say that things did not work. An example of effective self evaluation was when changes were made to the use of the dining room. Through training and professional dialogue amongst staff, a decision was made to change the dining space into a sensory room. Staff realised that the benefit of a sensory space far outweighed the transition of rooms for lunch. As a result of this children experienced quality time in a smaller group with familiar staff which helped to support their individual needs. Other children did not have the disruption of having to move to another room for mealtimes.

The service's improvement plan highlighted the priority to improve how the service delivers high quality learning through play, improve involvement for all learners at all stages and increase levels of engagement and participation. Priorities were well identified through self evaluation. We saw through our observations how the management and staff team used and were familiar with local and national guidance to evaluate and plan improvements. A quality assurance calendar was used to plan focused quality assurance tasks such as reviewing children's personal plans, learning journals, medication and accidents. This contributed to children's health, wellbeing and safety.

## Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

The service was experiencing management and staff changes and challenges. This was due to staff moving on, temporary positions and staff absence. Staff and parents who provided feedback highlighted staff absence as an issue, one parent commented that the lack of staff had led to a reduction in service for their child. This impacted on the time children spent at nursery.

We noted that staff remained motivated to work together. We observed effective communication across the staff team. Overall staff were respectful of each other and of the acting management team. They shared a common goal, to provide high quality care and learning to the children and families within their setting.

We observed there to be enough staff in place to meet children's basic needs. However, at times staff could have been more responsive to children's ques. This led to gaps in high quality engagement and interactions.

Staff who had been most recently employed in the service spoke very positively about their induction, and the buddy and mentoring system that was in place. The service had begun to use the national induction resource to support and monitor staff. Staff we spoke to told us that they felt the mentoring and induction programme had been beneficial to them in their new roles. They told us "New staff go through a mentoring process with management team where goals and targets are agreed on to help support them within the building. Our new staff have an induction to the building and are shown the building on their first day." This contributed to ensuring staff were appropriately inducted to support positive outcomes for children.

The service made good use of development opportunities offered to them through the local authority. Staff were committed to their future learning and development. We could see where recent training around nurture, outdoor play and "The promise" had enthused staff and improved outcomes and experiences for children.

A more focused approach to staff support and supervision was required. We found that staff had not been invited to engage in any professional development and review meetings for several years. As a result, staff did not have the opportunity to formally discuss their development needs or wishes. In order to support staff, the manager should reintroduce professional development and review meetings. This will ensure that learning is well planned and informed by local, national, and international evidence and research which will enhance staff's skills and knowledge.

All staff were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and were aware of their roles, responsibilities, and codes of conduct. The SSSC are a regulator with responsibility for ensuring that staff working in social care are skilled, trusted and confident.

## Children thrive and develop in quality spaces

### Children experience high quality spaces

Access to the building was via a secure buzzer entry system. Visitors to the service were required to report to the office, provide identification and sign in and out of the service. On arrival at the service visitors were made aware of the service's child protection procedures and who the coordinators were. These procedures helped to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children.

Childcare staff were supported by a janitor, catering and cleaning staff all of whom contributed to the health and safety of children in the service. The janitor explained to us the processes for reporting, tracking and monitoring any repairs to the building, equipment or resources. We could see that effective procedures were in place to ensure that any repairs needed were followed up and actioned promptly.

Generally, children were cared for and played in playrooms according to their age and stage of ability. Babies were looked after in a cosy playroom which was neutrally decorated and furnished to provide a homely environment. Children aged 2-3 years were in a larger room where a small snug area had been developed to provide a space for quieter activities or rest. Children within the 2-3 room were confident moving about the room and accessing high quality resources which were of interest to them and stimulated their creativity and curiosity. Children aged between 3-5 years free flowed between two connecting playrooms. Noise levels within the 3-5 rooms were particularly high. Staff told us how this had been discussed with the management team and escalated to the area manager. We highlighted to the management team that the layout and resources in the busier room were much more inviting and led to children being more excited about their play and learning. We asked that management team review the noise levels, layout and resources across both playrooms to support children's play and learning.

The development and use of the sensory room had impacted very positively on children. We observed staff inviting and children requesting to go to the sensory room. Interactions and resources within the sensory room were of a high quality. Staff were skilled in using the space and resources within the sensory room to support children's individual needs.

Children's rights were supported by daily access to outdoor play throughout the full session. Outdoor environments were well structured to take account of children's stages of development and needs. Children had access to a Willow Garden where they could take part in risky and challenging play and explore their natural world. Staff based themselves outdoors and invited children to explore outdoors across the day. Children had lots of fun outdoors with opportunities to run, dig, climb and cycle.

Access to high quality outdoor experiences supported children's health, wellbeing and physical development. To ensure the safety of children outdoors we highlighted some items which were stacked up against the outdoor fence. Staff and management should consider the outdoor area perimeter fence, and how some items may invite children to climb and leave the service. We acknowledged that staff positioned themselves well outdoors, however we identified this as a potential risk that should be addressed to ensure the safety of children.

Children's information was stored in password protected online systems or in secure files. Efficient and effective record keeping systems were in place. Information was available to staff to support children's care. Staff understood their roles and responsibilities to keep information safe.

## 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).

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