

# Tinto Primary School Nursery Class

## Day Care of Children

School Road  
Biggar  
ML12 6LT

Telephone: 01899 308 279

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 March 2025

**Service provided by:**  
South Lanarkshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003481

**Service no:**  
CS2003015373

## About the service

Tinto Primary School Nursery Class is located in the village of Symington, South Lanarkshire. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 45 children at any one time aged from two years to entry to primary school age, of whom no more than 10 children are under three years. There were 30 children present during the inspection.

Children are cared for across two playrooms and have direct access to a secure outdoor play area. Children also have access to other areas within the school grounds. The service is close to shops, parks and public transport links.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 and 11 March 2025 between 09:30 and 16:15. Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection. 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.

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 new evaluations (grades) have been awarded.

During the inspection we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received seven completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Leaders had developed a strong ethos of continuous improvement and staff were empowered to share ideas and take on individual leadership roles.
- Staff valued opportunities to discuss and suggest improvements, with well-planned changes positively impacting children.
- Staff were knowledgeable about best practice and used this to influence changes. As a result, children were well supported, settled and enjoying their nursery experience.
- There was a consistent staff team who knew children and families well, which supported strong attachments.
- Staff were deployed carefully across the service to help ensure they could meet the needs of children.
- Staff skilfully observed and supported children to extend their thoughts and ideas.
- Children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care from staff, which helped them feel loved, safe and secure.

## Leadership

### Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources.

Leaders had developed a strong ethos of continuous improvement and staff were empowered to share ideas and take on individual leadership roles. This helped create a positive culture of self-evaluation. Meaningful opportunities for improvement discussions within the staff team helped secure positive outcomes for children.

There was a shared vision and values in place that reflected the aspirations of children and families. This included developing a sense of belonging and encouraging respect, care, honesty, equity, perseverance and trust. Staff worked hard to help ensure this was embedded in practice and shared with children in a meaningful way.

Staff were supported to participate in meaningful self-evaluation of the service. They reflected well together as a team and involved families in this process to help bring about positive change. One parent told us "I've been involved in talking through and making suggestions about new policy. I'm always asked for my opinions about things, but I work part time and I'm happy with being kept up to date through newsletters and little chats." Staff consulted with children to make informed changes, this helped to ensure children felt their thoughts and ideas mattered. Recent examples included observations of play and audits of play spaces, which were then adapted to meet the needs of children. We discussed where some approaches could be more visible, to help evidence where views informed change.

Quality assurance measures supported leaders in reviewing the service. This included audits of personal plans, accidents and incidents, and medication systems. Monthly evaluations helped ensure staff were responsive to make necessary changes. Staff valued opportunities to discuss and suggest improvements, with well-planned changes positively impacting children. One parent suggested that the service could make better use of online learning journals and improve communication about nursery events. We shared this with the leaders, which they agreed to consider.

Leaders welcomed opportunities to share good practice and learn from other colleagues. This supported staff to identify strengths and potential areas for improvement. Children's needs, rights and play were at the heart of all improvement work. Staff were knowledgeable about best practice and used this to influence changes. As a result, children were well supported, settled and enjoying their nursery experience.

There was a consistent staff team who were familiar with children and families. Newer staff were supported to settle into their role through a purposeful induction and mentoring program. This helped staff understand their role to meet the needs of children. Staff felt very supported by leaders, which helped contribute to a positive environment for children. One staff member told us "the management team is outstanding, providing continuous support and encouragement to all staff. Their open-door policy, along with regular check-ins, ensures that we feel valued and heard."

## **Quality indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment.**

Staff were committed to their continued professional development and valued opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. As a result, the staff team had a wide range of skills and abilities and shared learning with each other. Regular opportunities for staff to engage in learning helped motivate the team and develop positive outcomes for children. Staff had individual leadership roles which was evident throughout the setting, for example, STEM (science, technology, communication and maths), expressive arts, outdoor learning and parental involvement. Staff told us "the combination of a supportive team environment, strong leadership, and a commitment to ongoing professional development makes Tinto Nursery a truly rewarding place to work, where staff are empowered to succeed and grow."

Staff were deployed carefully across the service to help ensure they could meet the needs of children. Leaders had developed rotas and a flexible approach to ensure children experienced safe and responsive care and learning.

Children benefitted from interactions that encouraged problem solving, thinking and sharing their ideas. This supported children to be confident and try things on their own. Staff skilfully observed and supported children to extend their learning, for example, getting dressed for outdoors, during snack routines and using real tools for woodwork and sewing.

Staff communicated well with each other to help ensure they meet the needs of children. Newly introduced 'walkie talkies' further supported staff to communicate with each other when outdoors, or in the dining hall. Staff supervised children well and communicated with each other if they needed to leave the area, this helped to ensure children's needs were met.

We discussed reviewing staff deployment over the lunch period to help maximise the use of play spaces during this time. This is reported under quality indicator 'nurturing care and support.'

## Children are supported to achieve

### Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support.

Children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care from staff, which helped them feel safe and secure. Staff took time to get to know children and families, which supported children to build secure attachments. Children told us "I like going to nursery because it's fun and I get to play outside" and "I love my nursery, the ladies are very nice and give me cuddles when I'm sad." One parent commented "we love Tinto and are really happy our child goes there."

Opportunities for children to mix with older children and siblings were developed naturally through outdoor play opportunities and visits to different playrooms. This helped ensure younger children were supported, promoting their confidence and wellbeing. We discussed where this could be reviewed during the lunch period, to help ensure it meets children's needs. This was a busier time and younger children would benefit from their own space, to help them to feel secure. The manager agreed to review this.

Children enjoyed relaxing and sociable snack times. They were involved in preparing food and self-serving, which helped promote their independence skills, for example, spreading butter on their toast. Children chatted to staff and other children during this time, which helped promote their language development.

Children's choices were respected at lunch time, as they chose where to eat and could select from three food choices on the menu. This met children's preferences and dietary requirements. However, some children chose to eat in the dining hall and others ate their meal in the younger children's playroom. This was a busy time and staff became task focused to support children with routines. Staff identified where mealtimes could be improved and were in the early stages of considering changes to make this a more relaxing and sociable experience for all children.

Systems were in place to help ensure medication could be safely administered when needed. Staff worked closely with families and reviewed health needs regularly. This helped support children's wellbeing. We reminded staff to ensure names were included on all medication boxes as this was missing on a couple of boxes.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through information gathered in personal plans. Staff knew children's needs well and skilful interactions helped to support their development. We discussed how plans could be strengthened further by recording how identified next steps link to children's needs and interests. Staff worked closely with families and external agencies to develop strategies to support children requiring additional support. This helped ensure consistent approaches were in place to support children's care, play and learning. One parent told us "we were given a choice of times to go into nursery and review my child's care plan but I feel involved because we are spoken to. I get regular updates online too which I appreciate as I work."

Staff valued opportunities for families to be involved in children's play and learning. A variety of communication methods were in place which supported this. This included online newsletters, stay and play sessions, coffee and chats, as well as planned meetings throughout the year. This helped ensure families felt valued and connected to the service.

A flexible approach to the start and end of the day helped to meet the needs of families and many parents told us they liked the open door policy. However, some parents told us they found it difficult to share or ask

for information at the end of the day, as most children left at the same time. One parent commented "often at handover times the cloakroom can be a bit chaotic and so I do not get a chance to discuss my child's day, care, play or learning." We shared this with the service and they were considering ways to improve this transition time.

## 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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