

Lochwinnoch Early Learning and Childcare Class Day Care of Children

Lochwinnoch Primary School
Calder Street
Lochwinnoch
PA12 4DG

Telephone: 03003 000 169

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 April 2025

Service provided by:
Renfrewshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003388

Service no:
CS2003014760

About the service

Lochwinnoch Early Learning and Childcare Class is a day care of children's service provided by Renfrewshire Council. They are situated in Lochwinnoch Primary School, Renfrewshire. Children are cared for in a refurbished annexe building within the grounds of the school. They have access to a large playroom and an enclosed garden which they can freely access. The service is a short distance away from other amenities, such as, local shops.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 48 children aged 3 years to not yet attending primary school at any one time.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23 April 2025 and Thursday 24 April 2025. 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.

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 12 people using the service
- received 11 completed questionnaire responses from parents
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children had the benefit of a motivating learning environment, designed to empower children to actively engage in play and learning.
- Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from staff, which helped them feel welcomed and loved in the setting.
- In line with legislation, the management team and staff should develop personal plans to ensure a consistent approach across the service.
- The service had a clear and up-to-date child protection policy and procedure in place.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces

Children experience high quality spaces

Children had access to a large, well-resourced playroom with free-flow access to the outdoor area. The service made the best use of available resources to create, sustain, and enhance a motivating learning environment, designed to empower children to actively engage in play and learning.

Staff recognised the importance of daily outdoor play and understood the benefits it has for enhancing children's learning and wellbeing. Children were actively encouraged to explore and learn about the wider world through activities such as observing snails, engaging in woodwork, climbing, risk-taking, and growing plants. One parent told us, 'My child enjoys the sand pit, water table, mud kitchen, fire pit and toasting marshmallows.' As a result, children developed confidence, curiosity, and a range of important skills that supported their overall development.

Children were meaningfully involved in influencing their environment and were supported to direct their play and experiences in ways that reflected their interests and ideas. For example, during outdoor play, a group of children suggested moving the chute to the edge of the sandpit so they could slide directly into the sand. Staff listened, discussed the idea with them, and helped risk assess the space before making the change. This led to rich, imaginative play and showed us how children's input shaped and enhanced their learning environment.

Staff provided a rich range of resources indoors and outdoors that sparked curiosity, imagination, and creativity. They made effective use of loose parts and open-ended materials in the house corner, small world area, and mud kitchen. This supported children to engage in rich play experiences.

Children's safety was promoted through daily risk assessment checks, which were monitored by a senior member of staff. However, attention should be given to potential blind spots outdoors and to ensure resources are safely stored, particularly on the steep hill between the willow structures and the container.

Staff recorded accidents and incidents appropriately and asked parents to sign records. To strengthen practice, staff should consider how accidents and incidents are audited and review the accident and incident policy to ensure it aligns with current best practice.

Staff and children followed infection prevention and control procedures, washing hands at key points such as, before eating and after outdoor play. Staff should strengthen hand hygiene practices during outdoor experiences to further minimise infection risks.

Since the last inspection, a nappy changing area had been installed within the disability toilet out with the playroom. However, we found that this was not being used in line with current best practice guidance. We discussed this with management and have asked that the dedicated changing area is only used for children within the service. Staff and visitors should use alternative toilets.

Staff understood their roles in managing sensitive information. Children's personal information was securely stored, ensuring compliance with best practice and legal requirements.

Children are supported to achieve

Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, confident and having fun. They experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from staff, which helped them feel welcomed and loved in the setting. Staff were kind, caring and respectful, creating an environment where children felt safe, secure and valued. Parents told us, 'The staff are always very approachable, warm and friendly,' and 'Staff are fantastic, welcome you every morning and always happy to invite parents in to play.'

Staff knew children well and spoke confidently about their personalities, interests and how they were supporting individual needs. For example, staff described how they encouraged children's interests outdoors through developing skills with the woodwork, growing plants and vegetables and supporting role play in the mud kitchen. This was fostering engagement, developing children's imagination, curiosity and creativity.

Children experienced sociable, calm and unhurried mealtimes. Staff used these daily routines as valuable opportunities to promote children's involvement, independence and enhance their overall experiences. Staff supported children to set tables and serve themselves, encouraging responsibility and choice.

There were diverse spaces available that supported children to socialise, play in small groups or play alone if they wished. This positively impacted children's ability to regulate their emotions, build social skills and develop confidence.

Although staff could describe how they supported children and information was recorded in personal plans, we identified inconsistencies across the process. It was not always clear how staff would support and enhance children's health, wellbeing and safety or foster their play and learning. In line with legislation, the management team and staff should streamline information and develop a consistent approach across the service. This will ensure children's information is clear, concise and supports positive outcomes for all children. (See area for improvement 1).

We sampled medication held within the service and found that medication records required to be more detailed. For example, when a child has food allergies, all relevant information should be clearly recorded, appropriate dispensing utensils should be used, and all forms should be signed and updated in line with best practice guidance. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection and will be repeated. (See area for improvement 2).

Children's experiences of nap times did not always provide them with a sense of safety and security. We encouraged the service to review how they provide opportunities for rest and sleep, recognising that daily routines offer rich opportunities to connect with children and support their emotional wellbeing and growth.

The service knew children and families very well and had created a warm, welcoming environment where families felt valued and supported. Strong connections with families increased their engagement with the service, positively impacting the quality of children's experiences. Staff welcomed families' insights about their children's interests and achievements, helping to enhance children's care, learning and development.

Child protection

The service had a clear and up-to-date child protection policy and procedure in place. However, to avoid confusion, any outdated policies should be removed from the service.

Staff were confident in their child protection responsibilities, having received regular, up-to-date training to safeguard children effectively. They had developed strong relationships with the children, resulting in high levels of trust and open communication. This was fostering an environment where staff felt skilled in identifying children who may be at risk of harm.

Staff were thorough in recording and reporting any concerns or disclosures in line with the established protocols. There were designated child protection coordinators in place, and staff were fully aware of who to report concerns to directly, ensuring a clear reporting structure.

However, we found there have been instances where the Care Inspectorate was not always made aware of all child protection concerns. These should be reported promptly in line with the guidance, 'Early learning and childcare services: Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make,' to ensure full compliance and appropriate action.

Areas for improvement

1. To meet children's health, welfare and safety needs, the manager should develop children's personal plans. This should include, but not be limited to, identifying and implementing appropriate strategies to meet children's needs, supporting progress and helping them to achieve their full potential.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.1).

2. To ensure children's health needs are met, the manager should review medication systems. This should include, but not be limited to, ensuring that all information relating to children's medication is accurately recorded and regular audits are completed to highlight any areas for improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure children's health needs are met, the provider should review medication systems. This should include, but not limited to, ensuring that all information relating to children's medication is accurately recorded and regular audits are completed to highlight any areas for improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This area for improvement was made on 6 March 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, changes had been made to the storage of medication. However, there were inconsistencies in practice and not all forms had been signed.

This area for improvement has not been met and will be repeated.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children's health, welfare and dignity are promoted, children's nappy changing facilities should be improved. This should include, but not limited to, the prevention of spread of infection, respecting the privacy and dignity of children and supporting the wellbeing of staff and children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed' (HSCS 5.4); and 'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.16).

This area for improvement was made on 6 March 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection a nappy changing facility had been installed into an accessible toilet within the service. On the first day of inspection this toilet was being used by staff and visitors. After discussion with the manager, a change was made to the use of this facility. In line with current guidance, the accessible toilet will now only be used by children attending the service.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

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

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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