

Renton Primary School ELCC Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 April 2025

Service provided by:
West Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003383

Service no:
CS2003014745

About the service

Renton Primary School and ELCC is provided by West Dunbartonshire Council and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 88 children from 2 years to not yet attending school at any one time. Of whom no more than 15 are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

The service is based in purpose-built facilities within the recently opened Renton Primary School. The accommodation comprised of a smaller playroom for the youngest children, a large playroom, with an adjoining cocoon area, a lovely family room and children's changing facilities and toilets. There are two large outdoor areas to offer children opportunities for outdoor play and learning.

The service is based in the Renton community in West Dunbartonshire and is easily accessible by foot and car and is near local bus routes. It is within walking distance of the train station. Other local primary schools are within walking distance of the setting.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 29 April 2025 from 08:30 - 16:15 and Wednesday 30 April 2025 from 09:00 - 15:15. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors - an additional inspector was shadowing - 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 16 children using the service and 14 of their families
- spoke with 18 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

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 experienced nurturing care and attentive support from staff who were warm, loving, caring and kind. Children were thriving in the setting, enjoying high quality play and learning and making very good progress in their learning development.
- Children and families enjoyed access to a high quality setting which was attractively furnished and resourced to a high standard. The well-developed outdoor facilities supported children to experience active play and fresh air every day. Children were safe and secure in the setting.
- Improvement planning and approaches to self-evaluation were impressive with clear, rigorous evidence-based processes which identified strengths, areas for improvement and promoted excellence across the setting.
- Relationships were a true strength across the setting. The staff team placed children and families at the heart of their practice.

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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent

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 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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing care and attentive support. Staff worked in partnership to ensure security and consistency for children. Staff were warm, loving, caring and kind. Children received support and comfort during times of upset. Staff treated children with respect and personal care routines were carried out respectfully to protect children's dignity. Children and their families were respected, included and genuinely cared for by staff. Children were thriving and had secure attachments.

Families were keen to speak to us during inspection. They described a high-quality setting where staff placed importance on relationships. One family hoped children received hugs throughout the day. Staff were caring and attentive and we witnessed many hugs, hand holding and sensitive interactions.

A collaborative approach to personal planning meant children received the right care and attention at the right time, ensuring their needs were met. Staff worked closely with families to capture comprehensive information about children's individual needs, to set personal targets, and to review these plans regularly to ensure staff had the most up-to-date information. This ensured staff tailored each child's care to their individual needs. Families told us how well staff knew their children and how they felt comfortable discussing their children's needs with their children's own keyworker and other staff.

Clear, concise and informative staged intervention plans were in place for children who required additional support. These highlighted positive partnership working with external agencies and enabled staff to respond to children in a sensitive and compassionate way, ensuring that their emotional and physical needs were met. Highly effective approaches to inclusion led to positive outcomes and happy children.

Children accessed healthy meals and snacks within the setting. Effective arrangements were in place to ensure children remained hydrated throughout the day. Staff were trialling different approaches to supporting the youngest children to become familiar with the lunchtime routine, including sitting at the table and serving themselves. Older children were very familiar with the lunchtime routine and had many opportunities to develop independence at mealtimes. Many children chose to sit with their friends and enjoyed sociable and pleasant snack and lunchtime experiences, with support from staff when needed.

Procedures were in place to ensure children could rest and sleep safely to support their emotional wellbeing. We suggested staff consider the timing of the sleeping arrangements for the youngest children. Older children were able to make use of the comfortable quieter areas to rest and recharge if needed.

Effective arrangements were in place to ensure staff understood children's dietary and health needs. Effective procedures for the storage and administration of medication were in place and we confirmed these were followed to keep children safe. Staff understood how to ensure children were kept safe in the sun following best practice guidance.

Staff were very confident and well-trained to understand their responsibilities for safeguarding children.

1.3 Play and learning

Children experienced high-quality play, learning and development opportunities. The routine of the day was well-balanced allowing opportunities for both structured and free flow play and learning. Children confidently and independently led their play by making their own choices about where to play and what experiences they wanted to participate in.

Staff skilfully interacted with children; supporting and enriching their play, as well as knowing when to step back and allow the children to build on their own ideas. Staff made effective use of questioning during their interactions. This led to children having opportunities to develop their creativity, inquiry, and curiosity. Staff were proud of their achievements in supporting children to achieve their goals.

Planning was child-centred and very responsive to children's interests and experiences. We observed children to be engaged during indoor and outdoor play. Children had access to a variety of spaces. Staff and children had recently developed outdoor literacy and numeracy areas; as well as a cosy area to promote wellbeing and cater for children who may require quiet time. Staff were flexible and responsive to children's needs. Through these experiences, the children were developing their social, emotional and physical skills.

Children had access to a range of physical experiences using bikes, a climbing area and large loose parts play materials. Children demonstrated an awareness of keeping themselves safe for example, they selected a helmet before riding a bike.

Staff supported children well; guiding, enriching and further challenging their development and skills. This encouraged child initiated and adult framed learning and teaching opportunities. Children had autonomy and were confident in leading their play. They were happy, engaged and relaxed during our inspection.

We observed children playing very well together. They were respectful, nurturing and kind. Children were co-operative during play through sharing and turn-taking. Children also observed, planned, created and shared ideas when building a water feature. Staff supported children to recognise and regulate their emotions and feelings during play. The sound of children's laughter featured throughout the day, showing us that they were confident, happy, safe and having fun.

Learning journals, wall displays and online journals (Padlet) were accessible to children and families. Learning journals focused clearly on individual children, highlighting learning and teaching, progression and next steps in learning. The learning journals were shared by staff, children and families highlighting the importance of collaborative working. Families had the opportunity to discuss and set achievable targets for their children. Children were eager, motivated and proud to show us their journals. Families told us about the activities their children enjoyed and valued regular updates about their children's progress. They commented:

"Staff often ask for my opinions on their development and ask for next steps."

"Always encouraging different experiences."

The early stages teacher was working very effectively with children, and supporting staff on the local authority baseline for literacy, numeracy and wellbeing, which was an effective tool for tracking children's learning and development. This data clearly evidenced children's very good progress in learning. The equity and excellence lead supported staff well to ensure children received the targeted support they needed to reach their potential.

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.

The setting was welcoming, comfortable and furnished to a high standard with good natural light and ventilation. The accommodation was clean, well-maintained and attractive. This reinforced the strong message to children and their families that they matter. Families told us how welcome they felt within the setting, and we could see that they were very comfortable whilst dropping off and collecting their children.

Children of all ages were confident, safe and secure in the setting and moved freely between indoors and the outdoor area. They demonstrated a clear sense of ownership and pride in their setting. Children and families enjoyed a warm and personal welcome to the setting each morning. The bright, welcoming entrance hall providing attractively displayed and useful information for families underlined the lovely welcoming ethos families received. There was a calm and relaxed atmosphere throughout the setting.

Children could freely explore their environment in the knowledge that risk assessments were in place and staff understood how to keep them safe. Staff talked confidently about the arrangements that were in place to ensure children's safety, and supported children to keep themselves safe. Children helped to risk assess their outdoor play area. Staff recognised the benefits children derived from setting their own safety limits and participating in risky play.

The outdoor areas were very well-developed and resourced to provide children with fun, stimulating and interesting experiences. Children participated in their 'daily mile' each day in the school playing field. We could see how much children's gross motor skills benefited from this. The large playing field gave children the opportunity to have fun running, walking and playing ring games for example in the safe enclosed area. Children enjoyed singing and dancing on the outdoor stage they had decorated themselves.

Families valued the time children spent outdoors in the setting and commented:

"Children are always outside and have the freedom to choose."

Playrooms were laid out attractively and effectively with high quality resources. Staff had taken time to ensure areas were interesting and appealing to children. Children could self-select from resources at child height. Wall displays were attractive and contained photographs and child voice, which facilitated discussion with children about their learning. The well-established construction area inspired children to direct their own building projects, from the early planning stages through to construction.

There were effective systems in place to control and prevent the spread of infection within the service to protect staff and children. Nappy changing facilities complied with best practice guidance. Children and staff demonstrated very good hand washing practices and children understood how this helped to protect them from germs.

Overall, appropriate systems were in place to manage electronic information in line with general data protection requirements (GDPR) managed by the local authority. However, we raised some concerns about the policy and procedures around staff use of personal mobile phones. It was agreed that this would be discussed with the local authority to confirm these arrangements complied with GDPR.

How good is our leadership?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

The strong senior leadership team was fully committed to continuous improvement within the school with the early learning and childcare setting as a vital and integral part of the school. The leadership team worked very well together to provide effective support to the service, staff, families and children. The ethos of the service was warm, welcoming and inclusive.

The leadership team and staff across the setting were very keen to engage in the inspection process to showcase what was done well. We found staff, at all levels, were open, honest and receptive to feedback to enhance their practice and ensure high quality outcomes for children and families.

Priorities for improvement for the setting were clearly set out within the service improvement plan which was underpinned by relevant local and national guidance and legislative frameworks. Improvement planning and approaches to self-evaluation were impressive, with clear, rigorous evidence-based processes which identified strengths, areas for improvement and promoted excellence across the setting.

Staff recognised the important role they played in self-evaluation and told us their views and opinions were valued and respected. They were keen to discuss individual leadership areas with us and highlight the developments and improvements they had introduced to improve outcomes for children.

There was clear allocation of roles for monitoring quality across the setting with effective monitoring systems in place to assess quality and provide assurances to families.

Family involvement was well-established. Children and their families were at the heart of the quality assurance cycle. Families had varied opportunities to participate in the service and influence outcomes for their children. The full staff team was committed to meaningful partnership and collaboration with children and their families and told us about their plans to increase family engagement.

Families told us that they were delighted with the service their children received and highlighted some very positive examples of their suggestions being taken forward to meet children's individual needs.

Appropriate arrangements were in place to record details of any accidents and incidents occurring and to pass this information on to families. Some staff were trained in first aid to ensure they had the skills and confidence to react to any accidents or health issues arising. Accident and incident reports were audited monthly to ensure patterns and hazards could be identified and addressed promptly. Records showed where action had been taken and we could see where risk assessments had been revised to address new hazards.

All staff were registered to practice with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS). Staff had undertaken qualifications relevant to their roles. Staff told us they had very positive opportunities to engage in continuous professional learning to ensure their practice was underpinned by relevant theory and guidance.

How good is our staff team?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

During our visit, we asked children, families, staff and the leadership team what the biggest strength was within the setting. All agreed, with no exceptions, that it was the staff team. Our inspection findings supported this view. The staff team demonstrated real passion for their role in maintaining high standards across the setting. Staff were very confident and provided effective supervision and clear, consistent boundaries to ensure children felt secure and were able to regulate their feelings and emotions in a safe place.

The setting was appropriately staffed each day to ensure the wellbeing of children in the service. Staff recognised the importance of compliance with prescribed adult: child ratios indoors and outdoors to keep children safe. Effective arrangements were in place to ensure that occasional staff absences and vacancies caused minimal disruption to children's care.

Staff told us they felt their contribution to the service was highly valued. They felt very well supported in their roles, benefiting both from the support of their colleagues and the accessibility of the leadership team. The team worked very well together and demonstrated effective communication within the service and with families. Staff valued the support of their peers in their daily routine. They were sensitive and aware of the need to support each other. These staff relationships made an important contribution to the effectiveness of the service. Staff had a shared vision for the service and enjoyed their roles, valued their relationships with children and families and wanted to have fun at work. Families found staff approachable, friendly and happy to help.

Staff communicated effectively with their colleagues throughout the day in a way that was sensitive to the needs of children. Staff worked co-operatively together to ensure effective supervision and positive engagement with children across the day. The continuity of care across the day made for smooth transitions for children. Children were always safe and well-supervised.

Keyworking arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care across the day. This ensured positive transitions for children and good communication with families. Families told us how positive relationships with their children's keyworkers, and other staff across the setting, gave them a sense of security and confidence their children were being well cared for.

The senior leadership team had worked hard to promote staff wellbeing. Staff wellbeing was a core item for discussion at each team meeting, which reinforced the recognition that healthy, engaged and well supported staff were better equipped to provide safe and high quality services. This support had been fundamental to the growth and success of the staff team.

Staff benefited from dynamic peer support. Effective induction processes ensured new staff were equipped to work well within the setting. The Be the Best process supported staff to reflect on their skills, practice and development needs to support high quality outcomes for children.

Throughout our visit, staff treated children with respect. Children had very positive relationships with staff. Staff knew children very well and responded considerately and patiently to their needs, conversations and questions. Interactions were well-timed and enhanced children's experiences. Staff were fun, enabling and empowering children to feel secure within the setting.

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?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent
4.3 Staff deployment	6 - Excellent

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