

Stane Primary School Nursery Class

Day Care of Children

Stane Primary School
Torbothie Road
Shotts
ML7 5JJ

Telephone: 01501 826 705

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 March 2025

Service provided by:
North Lanarkshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000237

Service no:
CS2009230024

About the service

Stane Primary School Nursery Class is a day care of children service provided by North Lanarkshire Council. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 48 children not yet attending primary school, at any one time.

Care is provided from a purpose built modular unit, on the grounds of Stane Primary School. This includes a large open plan playroom, family room, block play room, kitchen and toilets with changing area. Children have access to large outdoor spaces in the grounds of the nursery and school. The service is located in a residential area of Shotts, North Lanarkshire and is situated close to shops, transport links and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 and 21 March 2025 between 09:00 and 15:30, we returned on 24 March to provide feedback. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. A team manager was present during the inspection as part of our quality assurance processes. 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 some children using the service
- gathered the feedback from 11 family members of children using the service
- spoke with staff and management present on the days we visited the service
- gathered written feedback from five staff using a survey
- observed staff practice and children's experiences on the days of our visit
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy and told us they felt secure in the nursery.
- Daily outdoor play supported children's physical development.
- The nursery was safe and welcoming.
- Personal plans, created in partnership with parents, should be in place to ensure consistent support that is tailored to individual needs and wishes.
- Staffing levels could be improved to support meeting the needs of all children attending the service.
- A new planning method had been introduced to help child development and learning.
- Children were empowered to take ownership of their play and manage the pace of their day.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

Quality Indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring, nurturing approaches from staff, where their emotional wellbeing was prioritised. Staff were responsive to children's needs and were usually able to recognise when a child required comfort. They knew children well and had developed trusting relationships with families. Comments received through our Microsoft forms questionnaires told us that parents were happy with the relationships that had been built, stating: "[Staff are] very approachable and friendly, built relationships with my [child] and myself" and "All staff are friendly, know the children well, enjoy what they do, ready and open for any discussions needed". This helped the children to feel safe and secure whilst at nursery.

The service provided snacks and meals in a respectful and empowering manner, which allowed children to self-serve and develop self-help skills. The provision of 'Loving Lunches,' developed following previous inspection feedback, was a positive step. The rolling lunch system allowed children to indicate they had eaten. Some children had their names in hand while not at the lunch table. It was unclear if these children had eaten. Staff should consider how they check whether children have had lunch and have used the self-registration system effectively. This will help to ensure the nutritional needs of all children are met.

Information relating to children and their progress was kept in differing locations within the setting. To enhance support for children, comprehensive plans should be developed, which clearly outline how each child's development is supported. To further enhance support, the focus must now be to develop comprehensive plans that clearly outline how each child's early years development would be supported. Staff demonstrated an awareness of some children's individual needs. They should build on this by implementing specific support strategies. In response to a previously identified area for improvement, the service must ensure personal plans are in place for all children. To meet current legal obligations and offer tailored support, personal plans should be reviewed at least every six months. (see requirement 1)

Medication was stored and administered appropriately. To improve communication and safety, the next step required parents to sign the form confirming medication administration. This would make sure that information was shared appropriately to keep children safe.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

The relaxed environment enabled children to direct their own learning. The service's adjustments to planning for spontaneous activities, along with leadership support for staff, created an active learning environment. The service understood the challenges around planning and recognised the importance of staff reflection. The development of personal plans for individual strategies will further support this. This demonstrated that the service is working towards creating an environment which prioritises child-led learning. Staff are supported effectively and are planning to meet individual children's learning needs. This should result in positive experiences and learning for children.

The children were proud of their nursery stating: "the slide is my favourite" and "I like making cakes outside" during the inspection. This genuine enthusiasm and sense of ownership from the children directly reflected the success of the service in creating a welcoming and stimulating environment where children felt happy, engaged, and empowered in their learning.

Children had access to a wide variety of play resources and were observed having fun with each other and the environment. Children did not seek more resources, which indicated that activities were appropriate for their needs and interests. Unfortunately, staffing limitations sometimes hindered the opportunity to provide positive interactions which would extend children's play. The service should improve these opportunities to more effectively support children's development in play and learning.

The service provided opportunities which actively stimulated children's imagination and their engagement in real-life role-play. Children played in a house corner stocked with real resources, including food tins and china. They also demonstrated resourcefulness by bringing in items like playdough to enhance their imaginative play. The play opportunities effectively allowed children the freedom to select and use materials that met their needs. This focus on imaginative play, with authentic materials, not only sparked creativity but also empowered children to explore their interests and develop their understanding of the world around them through self-chosen activities.

Children experienced the positive impact of uninterrupted play for much of the day. This generally supported a relaxed environment which was beneficial to self-directed learning. The exception to this was the end-of-day 'tidy up time,' which presented a contrast to the earlier calm. During the inspection, the absence of the 'tidy up time' music required staff to adapt, and children handled this change well. Children's play was stopped and they were brought together in their key worker groups for planned activities, such as story time or table top activities. This observed change from child-led exploration to adult-directed activities at the end of the day was a potential missed opportunity to allow children to conclude their day in a more self-regulated and relaxed manner, even during transitions.

Requirements

1. By 01 June 2025, the provider must ensure that personal plans are in place for all children. These should be developed and reviewed in partnership with parents.

To do this, the provider must develop plans which, at a minimum:

- 1) Include personal confidential details, contacts, emergency contacts, medical information, named person, consent etc.
- 2) Include personal routines, interests and preferences
- 3) Include significant observations linked to progress and learning from a wide range of evidence and how these inform personal planning for each child.

This is to comply with Regulation 5 (1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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 1.15).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The setting featured a large, bright and comfortable open-plan playroom, creating a welcoming atmosphere for children.

The outdoor area was accessible to children throughout the day. Despite pleasant weather during the inspection, some children opted for waterproofs and wellies to play in the muddy area. The outdoor provision was rich, offering diverse opportunities for children to lead their own play and learning. The multi-level garden was accessible via a ramp or steps, both of which children used confidently, with staff available for support. However, the service needed to develop a process to monitor the number of children throughout the day to ensure their safety and prevent them from leaving the area unnoticed.

A new 'sand hut' was introduced on the day of inspection, generating excitement among the children. Concerns were raised regarding the supervision of children across the expansive outdoor area, this is further discussed in section 4.3 regarding staff deployment.

The outdoor space provided numerous opportunities for children to develop their inquiry and curiosity skills, with open-ended resources. We discussed adding some sensory materials to enhance the mud kitchen like herbs and spices to extend learning opportunities.

Risk assessments were in place for some areas of the nursery. It was recommended that these be reviewed to include potential risks, such as climbing on resources against the fence in the outdoor area. Children demonstrated an understanding of safety during fire activities. They told us they were aware of risks and their responsibilities in risk assessment. The service was encouraged to implement this ethos throughout the nursery to support children's understanding of risk and how they can help keep themselves and others safe.

The indoor environment offered cosy spaces for children to relax. Observations showed children using these spaces in various ways, suggesting their appreciation for this aspect of the environment. The service agreed that replicating cosy spaces in the outdoor area would provide opportunities for self-regulation and quiet time, regardless of where children were playing.

Staff adhered to infection control processes to minimise the spread of infection, with all areas and resources being sprayed or wiped down at the end of each day. It was suggested that the appropriateness of this activity while children were still present should be reviewed. Improvements were recommended for hand washing practices to ensure children were supervised during routines, such as before lunch.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service had successfully established and maintained a welcoming and inclusive environment. Families were greeted daily when they dropped off and collected children from the playroom, allowing parents to see the activities provided.

Parents were appreciative of this opportunity, telling us that they liked going to the service because they were "allowed to enter the building for drop off and collection to see what activities are set up for the day, with opportunity to speak to key workers".

Communication with families was transparent, for example using displays, emails, children's learning journals and face to face contact. Involving parents in the daily life of the nursery contributed to them feeling respected, and made it more likely that any developments were relevant to their families' needs.

The leadership team demonstrated a proactive approach in identifying areas for improvement within the nursery. In collaboration with the Quality Officer from North Lanarkshire, they were in the initial stages of their improvement plan. The inspection highlighted a comprehensive set of planned initiatives and it was recommended that the service prioritise these to ensure effective implementation. Throughout the inspection, leaders and staff actively engaged in discussions and expressed appreciation for constructive feedback regarding quality improvement.

Several procedures were developed during the inspection period. Consistent implementation of these practices is now crucial to support health and safety and ensure procedures are following best practice guidelines. (See area for improvement 1)

Areas for improvement

1. 1. To support high quality outcomes for children and families, the service provider and management team should streamline their quality assurance processes. This should include, but not be limited to monitoring of:

- children's personal plans
- risk assessments
- accidents and incidents

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

Throughout the inspection, staff interacted positively and enthusiastically shared their perspectives. The core staff team was well-established, with the majority having prior experience of the inspection process.

The staff team demonstrated effective communication throughout the day to ensure appropriate deployment, meeting the required child-to-staff ratios. However, there were instances where staff deployment raised concerns, primarily due to the layout of the outdoor area, and block play occurring in a separate room. Children were observed spending prolonged periods in an unsupervised section of the garden.

This, combined with low-level fencing and readily accessible loose parts, heightened the risk of injury or children leaving the setting unnoticed. Similarly, the indoor block play area was occasionally unsupervised, increasing the risk of children being injured while exploring the resources. Discussions were held regarding potential management strategies, such as temporarily closing the block play area when adequate supervision was not possible, and ensuring alternative block play opportunities were available in the main playroom during those times. The area for improvement in the previous report relating to staff deployment will be continued.

Staff had positive relationships with the children and each other, being kind and respectful at all times. While the positive aspects of team support were acknowledged, we received mixed feedback regarding overall staff morale and wellbeing. To support this, the leadership team should continue to build on the inclusion of staff through the improvement journey, and support the team to access development opportunities. A focus on staff development will create a positive atmosphere, resulting in enhanced staff satisfaction, positively impacting children's wellbeing.

Newer staff told us they felt supported during their induction and were provided with the support of a mentor. All staff had relevant, up to date first aid and child protection training, and knew the process involved should they have any protection concerns. Staff had regular reviews with leaders to identify their strengths and development needs. These were due for review at time of inspection.

Supportive relationships with families were evident during drop off and collection, when staff made time to speak to each of the parents to pass on any relevant information from the day.

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

1. To support children's wellbeing and improve the quality of their play the manager and staff should review daily routines and the pace of the day.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 11 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Met

Previous area for improvement 2

2. To support children's wellbeing and development, the manager and staff should review personal plans, to ensure they set out how their individual needs will be met, as well as their wishes and choices. This should include, but not be limited to, ensuring that personal plans record relevant targets and strategies to support learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 11 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Not met. This will now become a requirement.

Previous area for improvement 3

3. The provider must ensure that staffing levels support meeting the needs of children attending the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15) and 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 11 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Not met - continued

Previous area for improvement 4

4. To ensure that children are supported to develop their learning, the manager should make sure staff access training on providing high quality play and learning, and apply it in practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 11 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Met

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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