

Letham Pre School Class Day Care of Children

Letham Primary School
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003017497

About the service

Letham Pre School Class is a day care of children service provided by Angus Council and is located in the village of Letham. The nursery is situated within the school building with access to their own enclosed outdoor space and the school grounds. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time aged from three years and not yet attending primary school.

The service is situated in a rural area and is close to some local amenities such as, shops, cafes and nature walks. Children are cared for in a designated space, they have their own toilet facilities, areas to have their meals and families have direct access to the nursery.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors, which took place on Wednesday 04 June 2025 between 08:30 and 15:30. 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.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with children using the service.
- received feedback from four families.
- spoke with staff and management.
- observed practice and children's experiences.
- reviewed documents.

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's play and learning experiences had been enhanced through a wide range of rich and stimulating resources across play spaces.
- Children experienced daily access to outdoor play and fresh air. This supported their overall wellbeing.
- Children were confident to lead their own play.
- Staff extended children's learning through their interests in a meaningful way.
- Children benefitted from a staff team who knew them well and helped them to thrive.
- Staff were passionate about enhancing children's experiences and felt well supported by management.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, kind and nurturing interactions from staff. Staff were down at children's level and engaged in play with them. For example, they were seen to be sitting on the floor with children while they took part in activities together. As a result, children experienced quality interactions from staff which supported them to be confident and happy while they played.

Children benefitted from effective personal planning. Additional forms were in place that gathered further information. For example, 'My world' documentation, these were reviewed with parents at least every term. A parent told us, "lots of opportunities throughout the year to review this and to see how well the children are doing". Another parent shared, "we frequently receive folios home to review and give opinions on". We discussed with the service to ensure all information was reviewed in line with legislation, such as emergency contacts and consent forms. Systems were identified and put in place before the end of the inspection. This supported children to thrive at a pace that was right for them.

Children had cosy and comfortable areas to rest and relax if they wanted to. Resources such as cushions, blankets and rugs were available and used to create these welcoming areas for children. Emotional wellbeing was well considered for children. Daily emotional check in was used where children discussed how they were feeling and why. These areas were developed further with the use of props and children were seen exploring in these areas. As a result, children's overall health and wellbeing was supported well while they attended the service.

Mealtimes was a relaxed, unhurried and sociable experience for children. They chose where to sit, using their name disks and staff sat with children while they ate. Children were heard chatting with each other and staff. A parent told us, "my child really likes snack time and always tells me what fruit and vegetable they've had". Appropriate sized utensils were available for children to use, which supported them to serve their meals independently. Child size furniture, such as low chairs and tables allowed children to sit comfortably and safely. These opportunities helped children to develop their confidence and life skills.

Children were kept safe and protected by a staff team who were trained in safeguarding procedures. Child protection procedures were discussed regularly within the staff team. A staff member shared, "annual training is essential and has given me the confidence to know what I should do and the correct procedures to follow should child protection issues arise". Appropriate policies and procedures were in place. The use of a child protection flow chart supported staff with appropriate steps to follow if they had concerns. As a result, children and their families were kept safe and protected by a staff team who were confident in safeguarding procedures.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children had opportunities to lead their own play and learning through a range of quality planned and spontaneous experiences. They were engaged in their play where they had fun and explored areas happily. Children's interests were well considered by a skilled staff team.

For example, children who were interested in arts and crafts were able to express their creativity with a variety of different junk modelling, paint and gluing options. As a result, children had opportunities to develop their learning in a meaningful way.

Language, literacy and numeracy opportunities were available to help children make sense of the world around them. We discussed with staff to consider how these opportunities could be developed further in the free flow garden space. Mathematical language was heard throughout children's play. Their understanding was developed further through discussions with staff. For example, while children played in the small world area with dinosaurs, staff supported them to identify which dinosaur was taller. Children were heard saying, "this one is bigger and that one is smaller". This helped children to build their problem solving skills while they played.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interests. Weekly meetings took place where children's particular interests were discussed and influenced next steps with planned activities. Monthly evaluations were carried out by the team, helping them to develop areas further within the environment. A careful balance of spontaneous and planned activities supported children's individual learning and enhanced their experiences.

High quality observations of children's learning was captured in large books that children had access to. These books were shared with families regularly. One child told us, "my book is at home, we look at it together with mum". Children and families were encouraged to celebrate their voice within these books, with mark making, pictures and comments. Children's learning was tracked with the use of the Curriculum for Excellence framework. This helped staff to identify gaps or trends in children's learning. Next steps were identified for individual children. We discussed with management ways to ensure it was clear when next steps were achieved or if they had been extended. This would help staff and families have a clear understanding where children were developmentally and if they needed more support.

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

Children were welcomed into a bright, comfortable and welcoming environment. The play spaces were clean and free from clutter. There was a homely feel with ample space for children to play and explore. Children had spaces to keep their belongings, for example pegs to hang their coats and areas to keep their shoes. This gave children a sense of belonging.

Children were able to access resources easily, they were at child height and spaces were inviting. Both indoor and outdoor areas were developmentally appropriate for children to explore opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Children were encouraged to develop their play ideas, for example transporting resources to different areas. A parent told us, "It's a lovely environment for children". Loose parts were woven throughout play spaces. As a result, children had opportunities to develop their curiosity and imagination skills.

Children were mostly kept safe while they explored their environments. The building had secure access through key fobbed entry doors and internal doors had high handles. The outside areas had a secure fence around most areas.

We discussed with management how these areas could be further secured, to ensure the potential risk of children leaving the service is reduced. For example, consider where resources were stored near low fences or walls and gaps in fences were covered. Risk assessments were in place and were reviewed regularly by staff. We asked the service to be mindful of risk assessments in place and ensure they reflect the practice within their service. This would further support staff to ensure children were kept safe and protected while they attended the service.

Children took part in risk assessing their play and environments. A floor book was used to showcase children's voice within these assessments. Throughout the inspection, children were seen to be risk assessing not only their own but their friends behaviours. For example, one child was heard saying to their peer, "no running". Children were monitored by staff with the use of registers, head counts and number boards, where the number of children and staff attending for the day was displayed. The staff team had done extensive training and took part in discussions around SIMOA (Keeping children safe - look, think, act) the Care Inspectorate campaign. We discussed ways this could be developed to support children with their own understanding of risk further.

Children had free flow access to an outside area that was attached to the nursery room. There was an additional garden space at the front of the school. Children accessed the front garden as a whole nursery class most afternoons. A parent told us, "one of the main appeals of the nursery is the outside space". Another parent shared, "my child really likes going to the front garden and helping out". As a result, children had daily opportunities to access fresh air and explore physical play which supported their overall wellbeing.

Infection, prevention and control measures were in place that were effective within the service. Children and staff were seen to be washing their hands at appropriate times of the day. For example, before eating, after using the toilet or after messy play. The nursery was clean and well organised. A parent told us, "never experienced any issues, nursery is always clean". This meant that the spread of infection was reduced further.

How good is our leadership?

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children, families and staff were involved in reviewing and refreshing the service's vision, values and aims. The management team were keen to ensure the values of the nursery were meaningful to everyone who used the service. This shared vision approach helped to develop meaningful relationships with children and their families.

Children and families were meaningfully involved within the service. Families were consulted in different ways. For example, parents views were gathered through feedback displays from focus days and feedback sheets from stay and play sessions. Families were welcomed into the service at drop off and pick-ups, they had regular opportunities to come and take part in activities and play with their children. A parent told us, "I can ask to stay and play at anytime and can chat to staff at any drop off or pick-up time". Another parent shared, "stay and play is always on offer". These opportunities allowed families to be part of their children's learning journey.

A quality assurance calendar was in place that supported the effective running of the service.

Tasks were broken down into monthly time frames and each month was evaluated with actions carried forward or changes identified. The management team spoke how effective quality assurance systems were to ensure essential tasks were completed. For example, auditing systems for medication, My Worlds, accidents and incidents were robust as a result.

An improvement plan was in place which was inline with the school's priorities. The nursery management team developed this further through their self-evaluation processes. This ensured that improvements identified were meaningful to children in the nursery. Self-evaluation systems were evaluated regularly and discussed with the team where next steps were identified and implemented. Monitoring Pro Formas were used to identify focus areas the team had been visiting, for example safeguarding and child protection. Additional Early Learning and Childcare action plans were used to monitor areas of development that came up throughout the year. These systems supported the staff team to ensure processes in place were effective and drive improvement throughout the service.

Policies and procedures were in place that underpinned the service. These policies were developed further by the management team who ensured they reflected their service. Regular reviews took place and all staff signed and dated when they had reviewed the policies and procedures. This ensured staff were well informed of procedures to follow.

How good is our staff team?

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.

Quality indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were kind and nurturing towards children. They knew children and their families well. Consistent staff throughout the day supported positive transitions for children and their families. A parent told us, "staff have great communication and good bonds with the children". Another parent shared, "It's great that the whole team has awareness of the children's individual support needs". As a result, children and their families had built trusting relationships with the staff who cared for them.

Children's needs were met by a staff team who deployed themselves throughout the service appropriately. Including at busier times of the day, such as staff breaks which were staggered to maximise the amount of staff present to support children. There was enough staff to support children's play both indoors and outdoors. Some staff moved with children around the service to support them in extending their learning interests. A parent told us, "there always appears to be a good ratio of staff to children". There was a cross over day where staff who job shared all worked. Staff meetings were scheduled for these days when all staff attended. This helped to keep all staff informed and ensured staff felt valued and respected.

Staff undertook regular training as a team and individually. Training was relevant to priorities within the service and of interest to staff. Staff shared their individual training with the team. Evaluations and reflections took part as a team. Staff were encouraged to reflect on their learning individually and share this on their online platforms. This helped staff to reflect on their learning and how it would improve children's outcomes and experiences.

Staff worked well as a team and they communicated respectfully with each other. Staff recognised each other's strengths and supported where possible. A staff member told us, "I feel supported by all my colleagues, senior EYP and Head Teacher who are always available to listen and offer support or advice".

Another staff member shared, "I work with a supportive team with strong senior management". This resulted in a staff team who were happy within their work place.

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?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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