

# Knowepark Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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Selkirk  
TD7 4HF

Telephone: 01750 235 39

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
10 December 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Scottish Borders Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001976

**Service no:**  
CS2003017371

## About the service

Knowepark Primary School Nursery is provided by Scottish Borders Council and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 54 children at any one time between the age of 2 years to not yet attending primary school of whom no more than 10 may be under 3 years. The service is based in Knowepark Primary School, in Selkirk.

The service was provided in one large playroom. The playroom which had direct access to a large secure outdoor area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 December 2024 between the hours of 9:00 and 15:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 children using the service and two parents
- took account of written feedback we received from nine families
- spoke to all staff and management and took account of the written feedback we received from nine staff
- observed practice and daily routines
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing care from responsive staff, which helped them feel secure, safe and loved.
- Staff were respectful in their interactions with children, families and each other.
- Children made developmental progress through creative and engaging play experiences.
- Staff engaged in regular self-evaluation for improvement to ensure continued high quality learning. This contributed to everyone feeling included within the setting.
- Staff showed commitment to continuous professional development to support positive outcomes for children and families.

## 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?	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 evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Staff were kind and respectful in their approach with children, taking time to speak to children at their level. Parents commented, "They give a very warm welcome and have brought my child right out their shell" and "Staff are friendly and welcoming at drop off and pick up. They have a good understanding of my child's individual personality". Children had developed positive relationships with staff. They were happy and confident in approaching them if they needed help or support.. Children told us that the staff were nice to them and they liked coming to the setting.

Personal planning and additional care plans were in place for children and supported their wellbeing. Pastoral notes indicated parental involvement and ensured relevant information was kept on any changes in a child's life. Children who had additional support needs were cared for in a calm and supportive manner. Strategies were in place for children's wellbeing. We saw the progress children were making and it was obvious through out chats with parents that they valued the support staff gave them. One parent told us "I know and like all the staff. They are all caring and I trust them with my child. They seem to know my child well and understand their needs". The keyworker system worked very well and meant children and parents were able to build positive and trusting relationships and attachments with staff.

Children were familiar with snack and lunch time routines, and it worked well for them as the rolling snack allowed them to choose when they wanted to eat. Staff were sensitive to the individual needs of children which promoted a positive lunch experience. Flowers and coverings were provided on the tables and promoted a welcoming and homely experience. Independence was promoted as children were able to pour their own drink and help with the preparation of snacks. Staff sat with children and engaged them in social conversation and as a result children appeared confident and had developed a positive relationship with food. One parent told us "All staff are wonderful. They let me know anything my daughter has done and ate in the day".

We reviewed the procedures for the administration and storage of medication. We found that medication was stored safely and securely. Staff had attended child protection training and as a result were aware of the correct procedures to follow to keep children safe.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Staff gave careful thought and consideration to the developmental needs of children. As a result, they benefitted from carefully planned and responsive play and learning opportunities. We saw children's preferences and needs were well considered. A strength of the team was promoting children to make choices in play and learning. As a result children were happy, confident, and had fun.

Children were using a wide range of resources which supported their problem-solving skills, creativity, and imagination. These included a range of arts and craft materials which engaged children in drawing, designing junk modelling, and construction. The paint station and playdough station encouraged children to mix different mediums and experiment. All these impacted positively on children's development. One parent

commented "The play experiences in the nursery are very good and they have a good variety of inside and outside activities. Lots of open ended play".

The playroom was rich in literacy, language and numeracy resources. Children were confident in holding conversations and were given opportunities for mark making both indoors and outdoors. Children played independently or cooperatively in groups which helped them to build positive relationships with their peers and develop their social skills. We saw children transporting items to other areas of the setting and staff supported this, showing their understanding of child development and schematic play where children learn from repeated actions of behaviour as they explore an idea which interested them. Staff were skilful in knowing when to step back from play and join in again to spark children's interest and curiosity. Staff listened to children's needs and wishes and supported their overall wellbeing and sense of belonging. Children enjoyed real life experiences including, handling, chopping and playing with a selection of seasonal vegetables in the home corner area. As a result children were able to explore and learn about the world around them.

Some children chose to spend a lot of time playing outdoors which was facilitated well by staff. One parent told us "There are many activities for the children to do outdoors. My child particularly likes the sand pit and being involved in gardening". Children were developing skills through construction, water and sand play, and planting and growing. Staff joined in with play and were responsive to children's interests. For example, staff had attended Play on Pedals training which enabled them to support children's learning to ride a bike safely.

Observations of children's interests and activities were shared with families as they were detailed on Showbie, the online platform used for information sharing with parents. One parent told us "One thing that has gone up on Showbie included making willow dens". It was very good to see learning and achievements at home were shared with staff. Children were very proud to show and talk to us about what they had been doing and learning about and what they had achieved. Staff used regular observations and discussions with families to plan experiences tailored to each child. This supported a holistic approach.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced an environment that was clean, well maintained and safe. The homely touches enhanced comfortable spaces for children. The atmosphere in the setting was happy and inclusive with busy children enjoying their day. Children were encouraged to look after the resources and fabric of the setting as respect for the environment was role modelled by staff.

Children had ample space both indoor and outdoor which allowed them to move freely and confidently between areas. Staff valued the positive impact of outdoor play and promoted it in all weathers. Resources were varied, safe and accessible to children. One parent told us "There are many activities for the children to do outdoors. My child particularly likes the sand pit and being involved in gardening".

Staff were responsive and proactive to risk management. They involved children in keeping the environment safe. For example, a child recognised there was a slippery area outdoors and somebody could fall on the ice so they arranged to put a warning board in the area.

Children had opportunities to go out in the local community visiting local shops, a local care home and park. This supported children to develop meaningful connections with their own and the wider community. Parents all agreed that their children had regular access to the outdoors and one parent commented children had "Free flow outdoors, walks in community to The Haining, building outside, sand pit, puddle jumping, playing with cars and diggers".

Infection control measures were understood and implemented effectively by staff. Handwashing routines were embedded and staff protected children by providing a clean and hygienic environment. As a result children were kept safe.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

### Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families experienced a welcoming, warm, and inclusive ethos that valued them as partners. Management and staff promoted a shared vision for the setting that provided a safe, caring, supportive learning environment that inspired learning through high quality play. This ensured positive outcomes for children.

Staff demonstrated commitment to their professional learning through training and reading of best practice guidance. This included supporting children's emotional literacy, creating inspiring spaces and supported children's communication, language, and love of books and drama. Staff were able to reflect on training and talk about the positive impact this had on outcomes for children. As a result, children benefitted from a skilled staff team.

Families experienced a varied family engagement programme led by staff. This included stay and play sessions and opportunities to connect with other families. Parents told us they liked attending the sessions with their child as staff always made these sessions fun. Staff reflected and evaluated the experiences to plan future learning sessions. As a result, there was a strong culture of respect, support and inclusion.

Children and families were consulted regularly. Their views and suggestions supported the services ongoing improvement journey. Staff took part in regular self-evaluation of the provision. Their reflections demonstrated they were forward thinking in identifying their improvement priorities and clear about their actions on how they will deliver these. We suggested to management staff could be given leadership roles within the setting to drive forward areas of expertise. They made use of best practice guidance such as 'How good is our early learning and childcare', and 'A quality framework for daycare of children, Childminding and School Aged Childcare'. This meant children received high quality play and learning that supported them to reach their full potential.

The service had effective quality assurance systems in place that ensured children's information, planning, playroom observations and improvements were continually reflected on and reviewed. As a result, staff were well informed and understood their role in delivering a very good service that had high aspirations for children.

**How good is our staff team?****5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for children.

We saw a team that was motivated and wanted to do well, they were engaged and open throughout the inspection process. There was a very good sense of teamwork. One parents told us "I couldn't fault this nursery at all it's brilliant".

Staff communicated well across the team and worked together to support children's individual planned experiences, needs and preferences. They were skilled, compassionate, knowledgeable and very good at reading children's cues. Staff empowered children to reach their full potential, to achieve, grow and belong in their community. As a result, we could see children felt safe, secure and nurtured through positive, trusting and responsive relationships.

Staff were proactive at anticipating when support might be needed. This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children's experiences were positive and appropriately supported throughout the day. For example, staff checked in to ensure staffing outdoors appropriately met the needs of all of the children playing.

The leadership team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring that the service was well staffed in supporting children's individual needs. Staff were flexible, attuned and responsive of each other, recognising when support may be needed. They provided good role modelling throughout our visit. Staff told us they were committed to professional development and had undertaken additional training and learning.

The wellbeing of staff was carefully considered which promoted a culture of care and respect where staff felt valued. As a result, they were part of a skilled team that delivered very good care that had a positive impact on the outcomes for children and families.

**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).

## 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?	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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