

# Craigclowan Preparatory School Pre School Day Care of Children

Edinburgh Road  
Perth  
PH2 8PS

Telephone: 01738 626 310

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
13 November 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Craigclowan Preparatory PreSchool

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003587

**Service no:**  
CS2003016198

## About the service

Craigclowan Preparatory School Pre School is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 102 children aged 3 years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The main setting consists of two large playrooms and an additional play space for the younger children. The children have access to a wide range of outdoor areas including a forest school, gardens and a play area. The children also make use of the school gym hall for active and physical play.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11 and 12 November 2024. The 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed the children at play
- received questionnaire feedback from 13 families and seven staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident in the setting.
- Children experienced caring interactions from staff which helped them feel safe and secure.
- Children were fully engaged in various play experiences and activities.
- Safer recruitment procedures should be strengthened to enable staff to fully support children's safety and wellbeing.

## 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?	4 - 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff which supported their wellbeing. Children approached staff confidently and staff shared cuddles and comfort with children who required support. Children were encouraged to discuss their emotions which supported their confidence and security. Families shared with us, "My child is happy and likes going into nursery and has made plenty of friends" and "It's a caring, friendly, warm environment".

Information was gathered for all children through personal plans. There was ample information in these which enabled staff to have a very good knowledge of children's needs. Where children required any additional support, strategies had been identified to support a consistent approach between staff. Any significant information was captured in a chronology and staff were knowledgeable about the potential impact any trauma could have on children. Staff were also clear on their responsibilities relating to keeping children safe and protected and the procedure to follow should they have any concerns.

Medication was stored safely with appropriate consents in place. The manager should ensure consent forms are completed fully by families and checked by staff for any inconsistencies prior to children receiving medication. We advised that medication paperwork should be reviewed in line with best practice guidance. This would support staff with safe and effective administration of medication to children in their care. This was actioned by the manager and shared with families by the end of the inspection process.

Allergies, intolerances and preferences were managed well. Children were involved in the planning and preparation of snack which helped promote their sense of responsibility and independence. Soft touches such as teapots, tablecloths and vases of flowers supported a more homely experience. Mealtimes were a sociable experience where children and staff sat together.

Children shared they could sleep or rest if they wished to in the cosy areas. Children were observed gathering blankets and getting cosy to soft music. Children were regularly checked on which supported safe sleep practice.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were busy and having fun. They were leading their own play through a good balance of spontaneous and planned experiences. There were some very good provocations in place to engage children's imaginations. For example, children decided they wanted to go on a bear hunt. An experience was then set up with the use of loose parts and interactive story telling.

Regular planning meetings provided opportunities for staff to come together to discuss children developmental needs and interests. Observations of play and learning were generally recorded in the moment and used to support the next set of planning. This enabled staff to be responsive to the children's interests as well as incorporating intended learning into the planning. Appropriate next steps were in place for children. Families and children were involved in identifying these next steps which supported a shared

understanding of children's developmental stages. Children shared their next steps with us proudly during the inspection. One child shared, "I am working on my listening ears". As a result, children were effectively challenged throughout their play.

Literacy and numeracy were evident through play and in the environment. Children had opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills through stories, singing, mark making and taking part in discussions. Most staff supported children through skilful interactions, commenting on their play and using meaningful and relevant questions to challenge their thinking.

Floorbooks were used to document experiences and learning. Children took ownership of their learning through mark making and shared their voice through the floorbook. Staff should continue to develop these with children and support the children to revisit their learning in the floorbooks. This would further support a depth and breadth of learning.

Children were encouraged to be responsible through individual daily jobs which included a 'line leader' and 'outdoor risk assessor'. Children proudly shared their roles with us. One child told us, "I am a toilet monitor today and I check if there is toilet roll in the toilet". Children and staff had also created golden rules together which supported children to feel respected and valued.

Children did not have free flow access to outdoor areas, however, spent a large part of the day outdoors. Children were regularly reminded they could go outside and children also approached staff confidently when they wanted to access outdoors. There were opportunities for free flow play to the gym hall in one room of the nursery. Children were supported to develop their gross motor skills here and enjoyed using the low hurdles to jump and the benches to practice balancing. Children also regularly accessed the forest area where they built dens, made potions and cupcakes and enjoyed stories in the dens. Regular use was also made of the playing fields, the park and the forest. These opportunities supported children's health and wellbeing. Staff shared with us, "The setting has very successful outdoor areas, the rainforest garden and forest kindergarten areas enable lots of learning opportunities for children".

There was some involvement from the local community including visits from the doctor and police. Parents and grandparents were invited for stay and play and tea and tots sessions. This could be further strengthened and developed which would further enhance children's play and learning opportunities.

## 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

There were a variety of measures in place to promote a safe environment for children. This included secure entrances, gates, and fences. Children were involved in risk assessing the indoor and outdoor environment and shared with us ways in which they keep themselves safe. For example, a child shared with us, "We don't stand in the black bit in the forest as that was where the fire goes".

Staff had used our Look, Think, Act campaign and reflected together on areas of their environment. The service had identified that they would like to heighten the fence in the garden. In the meantime, risk assessments had been developed to ensure they identified all hazards to support a safe environment for children. Simoa the elephant also went home with families at the weekend which supported families

understanding and involvement.

Important information was shared on noticeboards for families which included staffing information and policies. This supported families to feel informed. Each child had their own peg to store their bags and jackets and a tray to store artwork helping support a sense of belonging.

Family photos and the addition of some soft furnishings helped create cosy spaces for children to relax and feel safe. This included dens, cushions, rugs and fairy lights. Softer lighting throughout some of the playrooms also contributed to a more homely environment. The service recognised there was scope to further soften the environment. Some staff shared plans of wanting to soften corners and ceilings which may further support children's emotional wellbeing.

## How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

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

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

A vision, values, and aims were in place which was reflected across the service. Plans were in place to review these. We would encourage management, staff, children and parents to be involved in this to support a shared approach.

Families were involved in the service through daily handovers, stay and play sessions and communications through a digital platform. Some families shared they would like more communication about what their child had been doing at nursery. The service had identified developing stronger links with parents in their improvement plan and had introduced a question of the month to encourage involvement. Staff were aware of our 'Me, my family and my childcare setting' practice note and beginning to use this to inform strategies to improve parental engagement. This would ensure all families have opportunities to engage with staff and feel welcomed into the service.

The management team were friendly and approachable and staff said they felt supported and valued by management. Regular appraisals and termly chats supported staff's wellbeing and development. The management team involved the staff in the continued development and improvement of the service. This supported staff to feel valued and respected. Staff shared with us, "Senior management are always supportive and I feel able to speak to them about any concerns I have or challenges I face".

Policies and procedures which underpinned the service were in place. The majority reflected best practice. We advised the manager that the medication policy and paperwork should be reviewed to ensure this is fully in line with guidance. This would ensure children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent risk to children.

A detailed quality assurance calendar highlighted tasks to be undertaken throughout the year. Audits in place included the review of personal plans, learning journeys and accidents and incidents. We discussed developing the accident and incident audit to support the further identification of patterns or triggers. Some auditing of medication had been completed. We asked the service to strengthen this area. This would help ensure all paperwork is fully completed and signed and support children's wellbeing.

Some monitoring was in place which covered mealtimes, experiences and resources. The service planned to

develop this further with peer monitoring which would support more professional discussions between staff and improve experiences and outcomes for children.

We had not been notified of a few incidents involving children in the nursery. We signposted the service to our notification guidance to help ensure notifications are submitted when required.

Safer recruitment procedures had not been consistently followed by the school's HR department to fully ensure children are protected and safe. One member of staff had been recruited without suitable references being returned, although it was noted that all other checks including PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) were in place. The manager should ensure all required checks are in place prior to staff starting in the nursery. This would further support children's safety. **(See area for improvement 1.)**

### Areas for improvement

1. To support the welfare and safety of children, the provider should ensure that they follow safer recruitment guidance. All relevant checks should be concluded before staff commence at the service.

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

'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited (HSCS 4.24).

### 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

#### Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff promoted a happy and welcoming environment, where children were valued and respected. Staff were respectful to each other and worked well together as a team to ensure children's needs were met. As a result, children benefitted from a committed team, who were focussed on creating positive outcomes for children. Families agreed and shared, "Staff are approachable, show genuine care and knowledge of the children" and "Staff are always welcoming and provide regular feedback on my child's time at pre-school. I know that I can always approach any of the staff".

Appropriate levels of staffing were maintained at all times. This ensured staff were responsive to children's needs. Staff were aware of how many children were in the service and took regular head counts when leaving different spaces. We asked the manager to be mindful of staff tasking on arrival at lunch hall, however, this was for a limited time. This would ensure staff are fully focused on children to support a safer approach to mealtimes.

Overall, communication was good between staff, alerting each other if they needed to leave the room to support children. We discussed using walkie talkies to strengthen this communication between indoors and outdoors and this was acted upon swiftly.

There was a very good mix of skills, knowledge and experience in the staff team. Staff spoke confidently and passionately about recent learning and plans for future training. Staff were enthusiastic about

providing high quality care for children and developing their practice. Some staff had taken on champion roles in the nursery. Staff shared how training supported them in meeting children's needs, providing consistency and effective support at the time it is needed. Staff shared with us, "The biggest success of the service is seeing the children grow and develop throughout their time with us. It really is a joy to see how much they develop over the course of their pre-school life and seeing them happy in their time with us and their peers here is a very enjoyable and worthwhile part of working here, which I believe to be an achievement of our service".

## 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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.