

# Law Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Law Primary School  
Haddington Road  
North Berwick  
EH39 4QZ

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
14 November 2024

**Service provided by:**  
East Lothian Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002600

**Service no:**  
CS2003016988

## About the service

Law Primary Nursery Class is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 120 children from age 3 years to not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is provided by the local authority and operates for 48 weeks of the year.

The nursery is attached to Law Primary School, located the costal town of North Berwick, East Lothian. The nursery is located in a purpose built building. Children have access to playrooms, cloakroom area, kitchen/ serving area, toilets and an enclosed garden space. There is also a meeting area, staff and training room.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection visit which took place on 11 and 13 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, 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;
- received written feedback from 16 families;
- spoke with staff and received written feedback from 11 staff members;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

**Key messages**

- Staff knew children well and were beginning to form positive relationships with children and their families.
- Outdoor spaces provided opportunities for exploring, being creative and developing children's imagination.
- Children's personal plans should be further developed with a focus on detailed support strategies. This would ensure children were supported to achieve their full potential.
- Mealtime arrangements should be reviewed to enable staff to provide a well paced and positive social experience for all children.
- Management and staff had a clear vision for the development of the service and were committed to drive forward improvement.
- The setting had plans to continue to grow and strengthen their partnership working with families.
- The provider should ensure the deployment of staff is sufficient to meet the needs of the children and and complexity of the building.

**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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

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

### Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Overall, children received nurturing care from kind and knowledgeable staff. Staff knew children well and often responded to their wellbeing needs. Some children had developed secure relationships with staff and received positive interactions with adults caring for them. However, depending on where children chose to play, they did not receive good levels of adult interaction to help them feel nurtured and secure.

On the whole children were well supported by the range of information which had been gathered to make up a child's personal plan. Staff were able to describe how they were supporting individual children but this information was not always recorded. This impacted on consistency of support for some children and limited the evaluations of how strategies were supporting positive outcomes. For example, it should be clearly recorded if visual timetables, sign along and visual prompts were being used to support individual children. This had been a recommendation made at the previous inspection and is not met, it is now carried forward into this report as an area for improvement. **(See area for improvement 1).**

Children benefited from a snack routine which enabled them to be included in the preparations of snack foods, develop independence and develop skills such as pouring drinks, spreading and cutting. Mealtimes were overall, calm as children chatted and ate together. Some staff joined children and provided good levels of support and interactions. However, the arrangement of the lunch routine needed further consideration as the current process impacted on the pace of the day for children who were in the last group to have their meal and did not provide opportunities for children to serve themselves or be supported by staff to learn important life skills. Many parents commented on the quality of the food and some raised concerns regarding how much their children were actually eating. The service were aware of these concerns and were working to develop a positive mealtime for children. **(See area for improvement 2).**

Children were supported to develop relationships with each other and these were supported by staff. Staff had introduced "colour monsters" to the children which allowed them to express the emotions they were feeling. This was helping children to learn to understand their emotions.

Children were kept safe and well due to a range of procedures in place. This included safeguarding children's well-being, accident and incident reporting and displaying appropriate allergy information. Medication was securely stored and paperwork was available. The service should ensure paperwork is updated regularly. Staff should also be aware of using one medication at a time and discarding the empty container. This would ensure children are kept safe.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children's physical and emotional wellbeing was supported by daily access to outdoors. The garden area provided an attractive and varied space for children to explore sensory experiences and develop their physical skills. Children were using loose parts, the sand pit and climbing equipment to play in small groups or by themselves. These varied opportunities helped children begin to build friendships, whilst having fun and developing their physical confidence outdoors.

Staff placed a lot of focus on gather time, this included in the morning and for an extended time over the lunch time period. This meant that children had limited opportunities to choose what they wanted to do and lead their own learning. We suggested staff review the pace of the day for children and increase their knowledge around supporting children's needs and wishes.

Staff had developed a system for planning children's play and learning. This included responsive and intentional approaches. Most children were having fun and leading their own play with the provided resources. However, not all children were actively engaged in their play and learning as some of the evaluations of children's experiences did not extend or capture children's ideas, interests and curiosities.

Learning journals were in place for each child. On the whole these provided an attractive record which children could use to review their learning experiences and could be shared with parents. There needed to be more consistency to the tracking of individual progress and use of next steps for children where these were appropriate. Strengthening this approach would ensure children make progress in skills and achieve their potential.

**(See area for improvement 2).**

There were some opportunities for children to develop skills in language, literacy and numeracy. For example, staff read stories, sang songs and children engaged in mark making opportunities. Some children were counting during spontaneous play experiences to develop their numeracy skills. However, these opportunities should be reviewed to ensure children have access to resources that promote their language, literacy and numeracy skills both indoors and out. Families all commented positively about the range of toys, resources and activities that were available for their children. Comments included "The new garden is great for play and mostly always open, the children are encouraged out no matter the weather" and "the indoor and outdoor environments are fantastic and my child really enjoys all of the play opportunities on offer".

## Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure children's personal plans reflect their needs. This should include, but not be limited to, recording children's care and support needs and how these will be met in practice with effective support strategies.

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).

2. To support children's health and wellbeing, the service should review the mealtime arrangements and ensure staff provide a well paced and positive social experience for all children.

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

'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible'. (HSCS 1.35).

3. To help children to achieve their potential, the service should ensure that an effective cycle of high-quality observations supports and track children's individual learning and development needs. This should include identifying relevant next steps and ensuring they are measurable and achievable.

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

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me'. (HSCS 1.27).

## How good is our setting?

## 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good. We found several strengths that impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality Indicator 2:2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a welcoming setting with plenty of natural light and good ventilation. It was a clean, tidy and well-maintained space for children to play, learn and relax in. Children had direct access to the outdoor garden space, giving them good opportunities for free flow play between indoors and outdoors. We have asked the service to ensure the temperature in the playroom is comfortable especially when the doors were open.

The design of the building had resulted in areas of the setting being difficult to supervise. Staff encouraged children to be independent but they often had to leave what they were doing to go and supervise areas such as the cloakroom which could not be clearly seen from the main playroom. Some of the environment had very high ceilings which could be overwhelming for some children. Leaders should continue to review the environment to ensure that it promotes a welcoming and nurturing environment.

Children had space to move around and a range of play resources were available to them. Playrooms were well furnished and provided some comfortable play spaces for children. Children were confident in accessing the outdoors for their play. An overview of play resources and opportunities should be in place to ensure loose parts and real life resources were plentiful to enable children to follow their play ideas. Staff should be aware of adding provocations to support extension of play for activities such as the building blocks, music or drama.

Children's safety, emotional security and wellbeing were supported through arrangements for rest and relaxation. Children enjoyed stories and relaxed on the soft seating and cushions. We have asked staff to consider the number of safe and quiet spaces available to children across all the playroom. This would help children feel safe and secure.

There was a clear process for reporting maintenance issues and repairs. The service had some issues with the environment due to snagging issues and this should be fixed in a timely manner. This would ensure children experienced an environment that was safe and well maintained.

Infection prevention control procedures followed best practice guidance. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack and mealtimes. The setting was kept clean and tidy which contributed to reducing the potential spread of infection.

Children's personal information was stored securely in a lockable cabinet and any digital information was password sensitive. This ensured families' privacy and confidentiality.

**How good is our leadership?****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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.**

Parental engagement was an improvement priority. Children and families' views had been sought and were used to inform some improvements. Families were welcomed into the service at drop off and collection times. The service plan to re-introduce PEEP, "raising children with confidence" and stay and play sessions. The majority of families were happy with the level of communication from the service, but some stated that daily information lacked depth. The service should provide further opportunities to work in partnership with parents and strengthen relationships that support children's needs.

A keyworker system was in place, this helped staff know the children in their groups well. To further strengthen the keyworker system we have asked the service to revisit the roles and responsibilities with staff. Staff individual working patterns should be taken into account when allocating keyworker children. This would support staff to feel confident when supporting children's individual wellbeing needs.

The improvement plan included some priorities that were set by the Local Authority, others had been highlighted by the service. The plan was beginning to support staff to prioritise and focus on key areas for improvement. The team should further develop effective self evaluation and quality assurance systems to inform their improvement plan. The improvements should be manageable, achievable and identify the key areas that need to be prioritised. The system for auditing aspects of the service should be improved to ensure it is effective in highlighting aspects of the service that need to be improved.

Staff undertook professional reviews and these helped provide direction, support and training opportunities to develop skills and knowledge. Staff spoke to us positively about the trauma informed training that they had undertaken and this supported their approaches to working with families. Some staff have identified or carried out training which would enable them to lead on aspects of the service. Leaders were keen to develop these opportunities further to upskill staff and improve outcomes for children.

**How good is our staff team?****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 4.3: Staff deployment**

Staff were kind, knowledgeable and were beginning to develop positive relationships with the children and families in their care. Some parents described staff as 'friendly, supportive and welcoming, one parent told us they "feel at ease with staff", other comments were shared with leaders. Staff should understand the importance of having positive relationships with families.

Due to recent staff vacancies and absences, the staff team had faced some changes and challenges. Although staffing met the minimum adult to child ratio, there were times when it did not always meet the needs of the children. Staff deployment should be effectively managed to ensure the service is appropriately staffed for the layout of the environment and the needs of the children. Attention should be

paid to transitional times throughout the nursery sessions to ensure staff deployment does not impact on opportunities for children to be fully supported.

Staff communicated effectively throughout the day and were trying hard to ensure the needs and wishes of the children were met. Communication between the team was sometimes difficult due to shift patterns but staff told us they were kept up to date with changes to children's support needs. The shift pattern did not support team work and this should be reviewed to ensure staff have time to meet together. Leaders were aware of these difficulties and wanted to make changes to support staff.

Staff told us during the inspection that they felt supported in their role and leaders were open and available. However, some shared through our questionnaire that they were unhappy and this affected their health and wellbeing. There were also limited opportunities for staff to come together as a whole team to take a meaningful part in self- evaluation and reflective practice. We have asked the leaders to assess how staff are deployed in the setting and consider numbers of staff as well as how responsibilities and expectations are shared.

## 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

To support children's individual needs staff should ensure that personal plans are used more effectively. They should include strategies and next steps for each child in accordance with their individual needs.

National care standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16:

Standard 3: Health and wellbeing

Standard 13: improving the service

Standard 14: well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 8 November 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place and had been reviewed in partnership with families. Staff were able to talk through strategies of support, however, this was not always clearly recorded. The service should review and consolidate personal plan information to ensure significant information and strategies were clear and easy to follow. This would support staff to consistently meet children's individual needs.

This recommendation is not met and is reinstated as an area for improvement in this report.



## 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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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