

# Oakbank Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 March 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Perth & Kinross Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003370

**Service no:**  
CS2003017340

## About the service

Oakbank Primary School Nursery is a local authority run nursery provided by Perth and Kinross Council. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 98 children not yet attending primary school at any one time, of those 98 no more than 5 are aged 2 years to under 3 years. Children have access to a large open plan playroom and large nursery garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 and 11 March 2025 between 09:00 and 16:00. Two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection.

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.

This inspection was part of a pilot to test the 'Quality improvement framework for early learning and childcare sectors' developed jointly with Education Scotland. Because this inspection was part of a pilot, no new evaluations (grades) have been awarded.

During the inspection we:

- spoke with children using the service, and some of their family members
- received five completed questionnaires / survey responses
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

Children were happy, confident and having fun accessing the inspiring environment.

Children benefitted from a rich environment which provided them with opportunities for creativity, exploration and development of skills.

Leaders empowered all staff to develop the service and created opportunities for families to be involved.

Strong and effective leadership had supported a culture of continued reflection and improvement.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes enabled the service to deliver high quality care.

Children benefitted from a staff team who were passionate, motivated and reflective.

## Leadership

### Leadership

#### Leadership and management of staff and resources.

Leaders and staff had a shared vision for the service that focussed on improvement and ensuring positive outcomes for all. Staff were committed to promoting and sustaining the vision values and aims of the service 'achieve, compassion, opportunity, resilience and nurture' promoting high standards for children and their families. These had been designed and developed with children and their families and were regularly reviewed. Ensuring families felt listened to, included and that their feedback was valued. This approach promoted a positive ethos to partnership and continuous improvement. The vision, values and aims were embedded into everyday life within the setting and children were confident when talking about these as they played.

Leaders and staff had developed effective and purposeful self-evaluation systems which supported the delivery of high-quality care. This promoted a tailored approach to meeting children and families' individual needs. The pace of change was realistic, and staff were involved in this journey and played a vital role in implementing improvements. Best practice was shared within and beyond the setting and had a positive impact on outcomes for children.

Regular consultations with children and families influenced improvements and developments. This was central to the self-evaluation processes. There was clear evidence that views of children and their families helped to inform change and secured improvements to ensure positive outcomes for all. For example families were consulted about their preferences at drop off and pick up times and these preferences were well supported by staff. Families who responded to our MS forms questionnaire agreed that they were meaningfully involved in the development of the service their comments included:

"Parents are always asked their views and input."

"The last stay and play sessions they asked for feedback, and we are asked to complete surveys occasionally."

"We were invited in during their last visit from the council to share our thoughts and feelings. Questionnaires have also been shared to gather our views."

Leaders recognised the importance of skilled and consistent staff members as essential for the wellbeing of children. Through an effective induction programme new staff were well supported. The carefully considered mentoring support, considered best practice guidance, and local authority programmes. Staff told us they valued the support that their mentor gave them. Appropriate supports were also put in place for individual staff when needed and this supported them in their role at Oakbank ELC and set out high expectations for staff practice.

## **Staff skills, Knowledge, values and deployment**

Children benefitted from a skilled staff team and most staff had a clear understanding of how children learn and develop. The large team worked effectively together. More experienced staff were positive role models and demonstrated high aspirations for children's achievements.

Effective use of time to support professional development and reflective discussion had created a culture of inclusion, where staff opinions were valued. This time was prioritised and organised into a three-weekly cycle of meetings, which focused on leadership roles, staff training and self-evaluation. Staff were further supported through the effective use of best practice guidance, with leaders and staff making it relevant to the setting. For example, the setting had creatively used the Care Inspectorate document 'Me, my family and my childcare setting' as a guide to share information, gather views and respond to family's feedback. This approach encouraged families to share their views helping them to feel included and valued.

Staff benefitted from effective support and supervision. This enabled staff members to reflect, celebrate success and identify training needs. This helped to promote a culture of openness and created a staff team that were motivated and proud to work in the setting. Staff told us they loved working at Oakbank ELC and felt supported and valued.

Leaders were knowledgeable about their staff team. They made very good use of the diverse experience, knowledge and skills of their staff group. Leadership roles were actively encouraged, supported and valued by the wider team. This promoted opportunities to develop skills and learn from each other whilst celebrating staffs' individual strengths.

## **Children thrive and develop in quality spaces**

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#### **Children experience high quality spaces**

Children benefitted from an environment that was welcoming, homely and clean. Both indoor and outdoor spaces had been carefully considered, they were inviting, well organised and equipped to meet children's needs. This approach gave children a strong sense that they mattered and were valued.

Resources were of high quality and staff had created motivating and engaging spaces for learning. Children were empowered to make choices to develop their interests, leading their own play and learning.

Most staff promoted children's right to play and learn and outdoor play further promoted children's wellbeing and learning. Children benefitted from, free flow access to the outdoor spaces and families said that children had access to a wide variety of opportunities outdoors. Comments included:

"My child has access to a well provisioned outdoor space, and I believe the nursery also do outdoor activities including access to a fire pit to do some basic cooking and practise safety. They have also been out into the community on a few occasions."

"My child is often outside playing on the climbing frame or enjoys being at the fire pit. He has enjoyed trying and making hot chocolate at the fire pit. He has recently worked with his friends to make an obstacle course and then enjoying trying to beat his time in completing the course."

"Outdoor play is my child's absolute favourite with a wide range of activities, fire in the woods (talking about safety), building dens, snack, hot chocolate etc bike riding, climbing, water play. These are done in all weathers."

Staff provided opportunities for children to engage in risk benefit play, for example, climbing and using loose parts. This helped children to build self-confidence in their abilities and provided opportunities for challenge. Encouraging children to flourish and thrive. We saw opportunities at mealtimes for children to be independent and develop important life skills. We also discussed other ways in which this could be further developed through champion roles for children and taking on responsibility for their environment.

Creative use of the Care Inspectorates SIMOA (Safe, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) campaign supported safety and ensured children were always accounted for. Drop off and pick up was managed effectively to further ensure safety of children.

Effective arrangements were in place to monitor spaces and report maintenance of the setting and equipment. Staff understood the importance of following this up and ensuring repairs were carried out promptly so that children experienced high quality spaces.

Children were involved in influencing spaces as staff responded to their emerging interests. This encouraged children to direct their play in a way that they chose showing they were listened to and were valued. This was embedded throughout the setting. Children were supported to thrive and flourish as staff had created high quality spaces that reflected their interests, stages of development and curiosities. A wide range of open ended resources encouraged children to explore and be creative. As a result, all children made progress at a pace that was right for them.

The rich and engaging learning experiences supported children to have control over how they played and what they did. Staff had considered multi-sensory experiences which supported wellbeing and resilience, for example 'emotion works' helped children identify and name their emotions alongside a wide range of sensory activities.

A key strength of the provision was that literacy and numeracy were embedded into daily practice. Staff had carefully considered this and spaces reflected the variety of resources available to support children. This offered them a rich and broad range of learning experiences and opportunities.

A culture of inclusion had been developed, this supported diversity and equity across the provision. All children were included and were developing their knowledge, respect and understanding of difference, for example understanding uniqueness and personal value.

## 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).

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