

Oxgangs Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

60 Oxgangs Road North
Edinburgh
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 March 2025

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003017046

About the service

Oxgangs Primary School Nursery is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 55 children from birth to primary school age. The service is provided by the City of Edinburgh Council.

The service is located in the South West of the city within Oxgangs Primary School, near to shops and amenities and has good transport links. The accommodation consists of two playrooms, a sensory room, toilet facilities and office space with kitchen area. Both playrooms have direct access to fully enclosed outdoor spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 11 March 2025 between 08:45 and 15:30, and continued on Wednesday 12 March 2025 between 08:00 and 15:30. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service and some of their families
- considered feedback from 12 families and eight staff through an online form
- spoke with staff and management
- spoke with four visiting professionals from partner agencies
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to the care of children and the management of the service.

Key messages

- Children and families received outstandingly high support from a committed staff team who had created a nurturing, inclusive and loving atmosphere.
- Positive communication with other professionals supported excellent outcomes for children.
- Children benefitted from unhurried, sociable and relaxed mealtime experiences.
- High quality play opportunities enabled children to lead their own play and learning, and explore the resources and opportunities available with confidence.
- Floorbooks supported children to revisit their learning.
- An inspiring and supportive senior leadership team empowered staff to be actively involved in the continuous improvement of the service.
- A dedicated and knowledgeable staff team supported consistent care for children.

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.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as excellent, where performance was sector leading which supported outstandingly high quality outcomes for children.

Children felt safe, secure and loved. Children moved confidently around the service with a real sense of freedom and fun. Staff had developed exceptional relationships with children and their families. These important, positive and nurturing attachments contributed to children being happy and settled. One parent told us, "I see the service as an extended part of my family. I don't know what I would've done without them".

Strong connections with families allowed the service to offer meaningful, emotional and practical support. They had developed and ran family workshops to promote healthy cooking and safe sleep. The connections some families made with staff in the nursery had lasted many years after their children had started in primary school. Families had asked nursery staff to attend meetings at the school to support them. This demonstrated the trusting relationships that had been formed and made a positive difference to the outcomes for the whole family.

Excellent personal planning approaches meant children received the right support at the right time. The service worked exceptionally well with children, families and other professionals to identify and develop support strategies when required. Other professionals we spoke to told us the service worked in a very proactive way and sought support at appropriate times. The service valued, respected and trusted the knowledge of families. One parent told us, "The staff are incredibly welcoming, open and happy to talk". They worked together in true partnership to ensure children's wellbeing needs and development were maximised, both at home and in nursery. This ensured children's needs were identified, assessed and met, which supported children to achieve their potential.

The nursery were a key feature for all families in the community. Partnerships with local organisations and voluntary groups had been formed, which allowed them to provide much needed resources for families. Supermarkets and local churches donated items that allowed the service to create and distribute food and health parcels. Their approach was supportive and compassionate, and they were extremely empathetic to individual family circumstances. This helped families feel understood, valued and supported positive trusting relationships.

Staff supported snack and mealtimes very well, which provided an unhurried and sociable experience. Children could choose when they ate, which allowed them to enjoy uninterrupted play. There were many opportunities to develop important independence and self-help skills, such as children collecting and clearing their plates, and pouring their own water. This enabled children to develop important life skills and create positive connections with eating experiences.

Transitions through children's nursery experiences were very well planned. All children benefitted from home visits to support them before starting nursery. This helped staff get to know children and their families and ensured they were fully involved in planning for individual needs and wishes. The service went above and beyond to work flexibly with other primary schools to support families and children moving on in a very sensitive and supportive way. This approach ensured children and families received exceptional support and significantly enhanced the emotional wellbeing of children and their families.

We were confident that children and families would continue to experience excellent nurturing care and support.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

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

Children's natural curiosity and creativity were enhanced through a range of resources and natural materials. Staff's approach to supporting child-led play, enabled all children to discover and learn things for themselves. This approach fostered children's independence, creativity and problem-solving skills.

The service had recently reviewed their planning approaches, which were child-centred and responsive to children's interests. Planning sheets were used in a variety of play spaces to record children's interests and learning. Floorbooks captured children's play and ideas, and staff used these to plan opportunities to extend children's learning. Regular planning meetings enabled staff to discuss the new approaches and assess the impact on children's progress. This ensured play experiences provided met children's needs and engaged their imagination and learning, which resulted in children having fun and achieving their potential.

Children's learning and development was supported by sharing observations and next steps with families using a digital app. Observations detailed significant learning and planned next steps that were relevant to individual children. Effective tracking of progress ensured that all children were supported on an individual basis. As a result, children were effectively supported to learn and achieve, and family's told us it helped them to feel included. One parent told us, "I feel very involved. There are daily updates on the app and plenty of opportunities to come in and talk to staff anytime".

Respectful and trusting relationships with families supported them to be meaningfully engaged in their children's learning. Regular stay and play sessions offered families opportunities to join their children in nursery which allowed achievements to be shared. This was further enhanced with the opportunity to take home the nursery mascot, Walter the Bear Junior. Children enjoyed sending in photographs of their home adventures with Walter Junior, and staff printed and displayed photographs to encourage children to share their adventures with their friends. This showed the service recognised the importance of promoting parental engagement to support children's outcomes.

Children enjoyed singing and listening to a story before lunch. Some children chose to gather together in a group and other children were enabled to continue to lead their own play. We observed how some children's contributions were encouraged and valued, as they practiced and developed their social skills, communication and confidence. We recommended the service further assess how children's interests and needs are being met during group activities. Children should be fully involved in the review. Staff should develop a collective understanding of the purpose of this experience. This would ensure it provides a safe space for children to express their feelings and develop important skills.

The service had started to develop their resources and practice to support children's awareness of different cultures and languages. The staff were keen to enhance this area, which would support children to further celebrate their unique identities and cultures.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

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

The nursery environment enhanced play and learning opportunities as the spaces were well-designed, furnished to a high standard and comfortable. Children were engaged in their play and enjoyed showing us how they used the space. Children told us they enjoyed nursery and playing with their friends, and many children told us the best thing about nursery were the staff. This showed they felt safe and secure in their environment.

Children's artwork and photos of them having fun with their families were displayed throughout the service. This provided children with a sense of ownership of the space and promoted a strong sense that they matter.

The service were developing children's awareness of environmental issues. Children regularly visited the recycling station in the community to safely recycle items of waste collected. They had been involved in some gardening in the nursery outdoor spaces and enjoyed exploring in nature during their weekly forest trips. This helped children develop a sense of responsibility and understand how to take care of their environment.

Children experienced challenging and fun play experiences in a safe way. Risk assessments and daily checks were carried out to promote a safe environment. Children were involved in risk assessments for the outdoor play space. We discussed with the service how this could be extended to support children to assess risk in other areas of the play spaces. This would further support children to develop an enhanced awareness and understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through use of the wider community. Trips to the local woodland had been carefully planned and risk assessed and preschool children enjoyed visits on a weekly rota. Children enjoyed trips to the supermarket to choose healthy snacks for the week. Good use was made of the school building for the younger children, to practice walking up and down stairs. This supported their gross motor development, balance and coordination. Children felt comfortable with all staff in the school community, as teachers used children's names and greeted them warmly. This helped build positive relationships and added to children's sense of security.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection. Staff sensitively reminded and supported children to wash their hands at various times throughout the day, promoting a safe environment for children.

Children benefitted from free flow access to the garden. This provided fun play opportunities including sand and water play, loose parts and climbing frames to promote risk and challenge.

Quiet spaces had been created both indoors and outdoors, which provided opportunities for children's emotional development to be supported. There were soft rugs and cosy cushions for children to relax with sensory toys and books to explore. These calm areas provided a safe, peaceful space for children, which helped them develop their ability to self-regulate their emotions.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

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

The service was very well led by a senior leadership team that promoted a clear shared vision and had high aspirations for children and their families. They had created conditions where almost all staff told us they felt confident to make suggestions for improvements and took responsibility for the process. Staff had taken on individual areas of responsibility and were leading on some areas of improvement. For example, staff had leadership roles in medication, transition and planning. They understood their role in the development of the service and improving children's experiences and outcomes. We suggested this could be further enhanced if staff were supported to create individual improvement plans for their leadership area. This would allow them to measure the significant positive impact on children's learning outcomes each area provided. Staff also spoke confidently about their own professional development journey and how this supported outcomes for children. This showed staff were part of the service's commitment to continuous improvement and took responsibility for enhancing children's play and learning.

Parents told us they felt well informed of changes and developments in the nursery and felt included by having frequent opportunities to discuss ideas. For example, parents were asked to share their views through questionnaires, which were collated and used to form the service development plan. Monthly newsletters acted as a positive communication tool to keep parents informed of upcoming events, activities and any relevant changes. Staff, children, and families were represented in the whole school community parent council and parent teacher associations. These provided further opportunities for families to share their views or concerns. This helped the service to build trusting relationships with families and provide a service which met their needs, wishes and choices.

Regular team meetings enabled all staff to be included and contribute to the evaluation, review and development of the service. Meeting agendas created in advance, allowed staff to prepare for discussions and made efficient and effective use of the time available. Notes were available to all staff which ensured they were informed of discussions and allowed them to reflect on topics raised or decisions made. This promoted consistent practice and provided a clear understanding of responsibilities with agreed actions.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

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

Children benefited from a caring and nurturing staff team who knew them and their families well. They were focussed and committed to providing high-quality care and support. Effective use was made of staff experience, knowledge and skills, to ensure children's experiences across their whole day were positive.

Staff communicated very well with each other and worked together as a team to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children. This ensured key tasks and responsibilities could be carried out whilst ensuring continued positive outcomes for children.

Building positive, trusting relationships was a priority in the service. One parent told us, "I am extremely thankful to all staff. My child comes home every day and talks about each staff member as if they are part of the family".

The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed at all times. They supported busier times of the day to ensure staff could rest during their breaks and provide continuity of care for children. This enhanced children's wellbeing and safety.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities within each area of the nursery, which ensured key tasks were carried out and supported consistent practice. This helped to provide the necessary supervision of children and offered a breadth of opportunities and experiences.

An induction plan was in place to support new or agency staff, to familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures in the service. The service had used the 'ELC National Induction Resource' for some new staff joining the team. We encouraged the service to make better use of the resource to support with their self-evaluation and continuous staff development. This would further enhance staffs' knowledge and understanding, and support them to continue to provide consistent high-quality outcomes and approaches for children.

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	6 - Excellent
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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