

Hermitage Park Primary School Day Care of Children

Hermitage Park
Edinburgh
EH6 8HD

Telephone: 01315 542 952

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 May 2025

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003017031

About the service

Hermitage Park Primary School is registered to provide a daycare of children's service to a maximum of 30 children at any one time between the ages of 3 years and entry into primary school.

The nursery is located within Hermitage Park Primary School in the Lochend area of Edinburgh. The accommodation consists of one playroom, toilet facilities, office space, kitchen area and a foyer. There is also direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor space directly from the playroom and also the foyer area. Local transports links and community amenities are located nearby.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 20 May 2025 between the hours of 09:20 and 16:05. We returned on Wednesday 21 May 2025 between the hours of 09:05 and 16.20 to continue with the inspection and to provide feedback to the service.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. A short model inspection was carried out on the following:-

- How good is our care, play and learning? (1.1: Nurturing care and support and 1.3: Play and learning)
- How good is our leadership (3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well).

As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

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 to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff, headteacher and depute headteacher
- observed staff practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service
- took into account feedback from families we spoke to and also from families who completed the online survey we issued.

Key messages

- Children's health and wellbeing needs were supported as staff knew the children in their care well. Children's personal plan documentation was continuing to be reviewed and developed by the service.
- Children experienced a variety of play and learning opportunities which took account of their interests and curiosities. Ongoing evaluation of the planning approaches would support children to be able to revisit their learning and provide further challenge.
- Quality assurance processes were supporting ongoing improvements to the service and outcomes 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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	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?

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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing and respectful interactions from staff. As a result, positive relationships had been built. Staff supported children with reassurance and cuddles when needed and were responsive to their needs, verbal request and non-verbal cues. Staff also helped children to problem solve issues with friends and reminded them of the boundaries of their play. As a result, children were learning skills to help them to be resilient, keep safe and be kind to each other.

Feedback from families included, "Staff give 110% always kind and patient. Welcoming staff and environment".

Children benefitted from staff who knew them well. To support staff knowledge, children's personal plan information was reviewed regularly with families and this was used to support their individual needs. For example, any individual strategies of support, links with other professionals as appropriate, medication needs, allergies and any additional support needed. As outlined in the previous inspection report, the ongoing development of the personal plan documentation would help ensure that all children were supported to reach their full potential. For example, following reviews with families, clearly recording the reasons for any changes, any significant events or any meetings that have been held. It would also be beneficial to record where other relevant information would be located such as medication information. The management team were reflective of this going forward.

Medication to support children's individual needs was stored appropriately on the premises. Progress had been made to develop systems to support the reviewing of the information held with families. This ensured information was kept up to date and for medication to be replaced prior to the expiry date. Further information had also been documented about how to support children's medication needs and the action staff should take if this was needed. Further progress was needed to ensure that all medication and associated information was reviewed with families at least once every three months in line with best practice. Where children have inhalers to support their medical needs, the permission documentation completed with families should also clearly outline the dosage needed. The management team agreed to consult the local authority to resolve this. The area for improvement in the previous report has not yet been met and remains in place (see the section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Children experienced unhurried and calm mealtimes with opportunities to learn new skills. For example, learning to self serve their own drinks and foods. Children were kept safe as any dietary needs were catered for and staff were vigilant to minimise the potential for choking. At present, children queued up to self serve their food at lunchtime with the support of staff and they carried this back to their table. At times, staff became task focussed and this meant that they were not able to sit with children throughout their meal. Children would benefit from having staff consistently sitting at their table during their meal to support role modelling and further self service opportunities. Having the table set with cutlery and cups would also minimise children having to bring items back from the main serving station. The management team were

continuing to develop the lunchtime routines to ensure that all children have a consistent and positive experience.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The majority of children were able to have fun and could lead their own play from a variety of resources and opportunities both indoors and outdoors. Other children, benefitted from staff support and engagement during their play to enhance their experiences and build confidence.

Since the previous inspection, changes had been made to the layout of the environment and additional resources had been provided. Numeracy and literacy opportunities had also been enhanced. As a result, children were sustained in their chosen play and consolidating their learning. For example, they enjoyed; relaxing in the book area reading, measuring and pouring in the water play as well as problem solving with the construction resources.

Staff enhanced children's engagement and learning during their play through asking questions, having discussions and explaining the purpose of decisions. This helped ascertain children's needs, interests and ensured children's understanding of keeping safe. For example, during climbing opportunities, wearing helmets on the bikes and turn taking with peers.

Children were enjoying planting and growing opportunities in the garden area. Children had also enjoyed exploring their community with staff which had supported a wealth of learning. For example, Lochend park, community walks and sports day. Ongoing progress was planned to enhance children's experiences through the development of the garden area and use of the wider community. This included further safety measures on the boundary fences to minimise climbing and to provide additional outdoor learning experiences including safe climbing opportunities with staff.

Feedback from one family indicated that quiet spaces in the nursery were not always accessible. Developing further quiet cosy areas including clarifying the purpose of the space behind the shed and under the climbing frame may support children to be able to find a safe space to relax whilst being visible to staff. Providing other provocations such as the development of loose part resources and natural resources would also support children's curiosities, creativity and imagination.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's interests. Continuing with the evaluations of planning and observations of children's experiences should assist staff to provide further challenge for children or opportunities for them to revisit their learning. This should also support staff to ensure that children's next steps or targets were achievable and to assess whether some experiences would be more beneficial for individual children.

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

Children and their families benefitted from the nursery's shared vision, values and aims. Information was shared with families online and also in the foyer which helped them to keep up to date about the setting,

their child's learning experiences and about the progress made to the improvement plan. This along with parental consultations, community walks and stay and play opportunities helped families have the opportunity to be involved in the nursery and to be able to influence change.

Feedback from families about what they liked about the service included "Familiar, friendly/kind staff, open play to the garden" and "The different activities, stations for playing, carpet time stories and numbers. She also really seems to enjoy crafting, and bringing different creations home".

Since the previous inspection, the management and staff team had continued to progress with their journey for improvement. Self-evaluation processes had continued including audits of the environment, observations of staff practice, routines of the day, team meetings and staff visits to other settings. This had provided opportunities for staff to reflect on the service and identify the action needed to enhance children's experiences. The management team were continuing to carry out audits and observations to support their ongoing assessment of the nursery and enhance outcomes for children. For example, mealtime routines, medication processes and personal plan documentation.

There had been further recent changes to ensure child safety and wellbeing throughout the session. This had included further risk assessments of the garden, additional security measures on the gates and additional staff deployment. The risk assessment information was continuing to be reviewed to reflect day to day practice and to help identify any further areas for improvement. For example, identifying specific areas and boundaries for climbing opportunities in the garden and providing further coverings on the fencing and gates to minimise children's potential for climbing.

Feedback we received from some families outlined that more staff were needed in the nursery to support children. Since the previous inspection, additional staff deployment measures had been provided with the extension of staff hours and support from the school. Additional staffing for the new academic year had also been identified. However, the effectiveness of staff deployment for this term should continue to be monitored by the management team to ensure this was appropriate throughout the day to support children's individual needs. This would support all children to reach their full potential.

Some staff had specific roles of responsibility to take the lead for enhancing different aspects of nursery and supporting children's learning experiences. For example, outdoor learning and technology. This was discussed in team meetings as well as individual staff meetings with the management team to support reflection and identify action plans. There was an ongoing commitment by the management team to progress with providing Forest Kindergarten experiences for children.

In the previous inspection report, an area for improvement had been for the provider to ensure that maintenance issues were progressed. Some progress had been made including the replacement of the nappy changing unit and the lack of regulated hot water in the handwashing sinks within the toilet facilities had been fixed. Further maintenance of the environment was due to take place over the summer holidays. The area for improvement has not yet been met and remains in place (see the section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

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 ensure children's safety, health and wellbeing, information about their medical or medication needs should be reviewed with families in line with best practice. Information should also clearly document the expiry date of any medication, the signs and symptoms of medical needs and the action to be taken to support their individual needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.

Action taken since then

Progress had been made since the previous inspection.

Systems had improved to document expiry dates of children's medication to ensure this was replaced by families prior to this date.

Further information was also documented to outline the strategies of support for children with their medication needs.

Systems were in place to review medication information with families a minimum of every three months. However we found that one child had not had their medication reviewed within this timescale. We discussed that this should be reviewed in line with the timescales stipulated in best practice guidance going forward.

Further progress was needed to ensure the permission documentation used in relation to children's inhaler medication also recorded the dosage needed. The management team agreed to consult the local authority to resolve this.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children's health, safety and comfort, the provider should ensure maintenance issues are carried out promptly and timescales clearly identified. This should include but not be limited to, improving the nappy changing facilities, the damaged plasterboard, addressing the worn painted surfaces and regular cleaning of the radiators.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.22).

This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.

Action taken since then

Progress had been made since the previous inspection. This had included:-

- a new nappy changing unit
- the issues with the lack of regulated hot water at the handwashing sinks in the children's toilet facilities had been addressed
- a deep clean had been carried out in the setting
- new wall displays meant that the area was more welcoming
- new daily checklists were carried out by staff to support their assessment of the environment and the reporting of any concerns to the school.

Further risk assessments had been carried out on the garden including the entrance gates. As a result, further security measures on the gates had been installed to ensure children's safety. Further measures were to continue to be put in place to minimise children's access to the gates with a clearer and more robust boundary by the ramp leading to one gate. Fence and gate coverings were also due to be installed to minimise the potential for children to climb on these.

Further maintenance was due to be carried out including the repainting of the nursery in the summer holidays. Further action was to also be taken to ensure the regulated hot water within the playroom was checked daily and that soap was replenished to ensure children's wellbeing and safety. The garden was also due to be further developed and maintained to support a welcoming environment for children and their families.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

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