Compass Playgroup
Day Care of Children

Deanpark Primary School
Main Street
Balerno
Edinburgh
EH14 7EQ

Telephone: 01314 494 530

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 August 2026

Service provided by:
Compass Playgroup Management Committee

Service provider number:
SP2003002848

Service no:
CS2003011882

About the service

Compass Playgroup is a committee run service who provides a daycare of children service in Balerno, Edinburgh. The service are registered to provide care to a maximum of 18 children aged from two years to primary school entry. There are currently 36 children registered with the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 August 2026 between 08:45 and 15:15. Feedback was shared with the service on 18 August 2026.

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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

· spent time with 13 children using the service
· spoke to four parents during the inspection, and received ten completed questionnaires from families and staff
· spoke with staff and the management team
· assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
· observed practice and daily life
· reviewed documents.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within quality indicator - Leadership and management of staff and resources.

Key messages

- Interactions between staff and children were warm, kind and caring which supported the development of positive relationships.
- Children were engaged in a range of play and learning experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- Observations of children's learning and development were shared with families through the learning app.
- The service should develop their approach to quality assurance to develop positive outcomes for all.
- Families shared that there was regular and effective communication with the service.

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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator - Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

The service had a vision, values and aims in place which were displayed and shared with families. We observed aspects of these being reflected in practice. The staff had reflected on the values as a team and identified how they were being implemented within the service. Moving forward, the service could consider reviewing the vision, values and aims in consultation with children, families and staff. This would ensure a shared approach with shared expectations.

An improvement plan was in place which included three main priorities to support improvement. The service were in the process of taking these priorities forward over the year ahead. The previous improvement plan had been updated regularly to show progress that had been made. This supported positive outcomes for all.

Quality assurance processes were in the early stages of development. The service was creating a quality assurance calendar. This could provide a more structured approach to monitoring practice, reviewing documents and completing audits. At the time of the inspection, quality assurance activity was limited. Further development of quality assurance systems was needed to ensure that practice and experiences were regularly reviewed. This would support management to identify areas for development and ensure consistent positive outcomes for children. (See area for improvement one).

The service were in the process of developing their approach to self-evaluation. Some self-evaluation activity had taken place using the 'Quality Improvement Framework.' This supported reflection on environments and children's experiences. Families' views were sought through surveys and informal discussions. This demonstrated a commitment to involving them in the evaluation and development of the service. Feedback received was displayed within the setting. This helped to ensure that families' views were visible and valued. Moving forward, management could act on some of the feedback shared with them and share these changes with families.

Policies were in place to support safe practice. We discussed that some policies could be reviewed and updated to reflect current best practice and guidance. It would be beneficial for the service to develop a safe sleep policy which could be shared with families.

Safer recruitment processes were being followed for all newly recruited staff. Each new member of staff completed an induction process using the service's own induction checklists. This supported new staff to have a good understanding of expectations, policies, and procedures in place to support them within their roles. The service could consider using the 'Early learning and childcare: national induction resource' to further develop their induction process.

Areas for improvement

1. To improve outcomes for children, the provider should implement a more robust system to further develop quality assurance processes to support ongoing improvement within the service.

This should include but is not limited to:

a) ensuring and evidencing that all personal plans are reviewed at least every six months with families;
b) ensuring and evidencing that all long-term medication is reviewed every three months with families;
c) developing audits for medication and accidents and incidents to identify any discrepancies or patterns;
d) recording the monitoring of environments, interactions and experiences and re-visiting these to identify and record the impact on outcomes and experiences for children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator - Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children were engaged in a range of meaningful play experiences that supported their learning and development. Staff supported children's learning and development and were mostly down at child level throughout interactions. Children demonstrated creativity and early mathematical awareness while exploring shapes through playdough activities. Children also developed their communication and language skills through story sharing opportunities with staff. This promoted discussion, listening, and engagement in a nurturing learning environment.

A range of resources supported children's creativity, imagination, and communication skills. Numeracy and literacy were promoted through the availability of books across most areas, as well as real life resources such as clocks, scales, and environmental print. A parent shared, 'My child loves crafts, stories, songs, outdoor play and imaginary play.' Most learning areas were well resourced, including construction, home area, and creative spaces. This provided children with opportunities to explore and develop a variety of skills. The service could consider extending the use of visual communication tools throughout the setting. This could further support children to make choices, express their needs, and develop independence.

A newly established den area provided children with a calm, comfortable, and nurturing space to access throughout the day. The area was observed to be well used during our visit and offered an alternative environment away from the busier play spaces. Children could choose to access this space for relaxation, quiet play, or to support their emotional wellbeing and self-regulation when needed.

The service did not have free flow access to their outdoor play space, however, children were offered opportunities to spend time outdoors throughout the day. Children had fun while outdoors. They developed an awareness of how to stay safe while wearing helmets when accessing the scooters. Children accessed and explored the cabin where they could be creative and develop numeracy, literacy and communications skills. Some children developed problem solving skills through the use of open-ended resources. A parent shared, 'Great outdoor space which is used everyday.' The outdoor space provided a range of play experiences and supported children to be active, explore, be curious and develop imaginations.

Planning was in place which supported intentional and responsive learning. It was recorded within floor books which evidenced children's play and learning through photographs and observations. The service could consider including children more in the development of these floor books. This could provide them with ownership of their learning and development and provide the opportunity for children to revisit and share their previous learning experiences.

Most children had regular observations recorded in their learning journals which identified learning and skills being developed. Next steps within a child's learning were recorded after most observations to support progression and achievement. A clear overview of each child's next steps would further support staff to meet individual learning needs and progression. Children's observations of play and learning were shared with families through the app. Parents had the opportunity to comment and share feedback about their child's learning and development. A parent shared, 'I love seeing my child's photos and reading the observations and stories.'

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality indicator - Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Interactions between staff and children were warm, caring and nurturing. Staff were approachable and responsive and had developed positive relationships with children. A parent shared, 'Staff always very supportive, they always respond to my child's needs.' As a result, children appeared settled and confident in seeking support and reassurance from staff.

Effective arrangements were in place to support children and families during periods of transition. New families were welcomed into the service and were supported throughout a settling-in process. This helped build relationships, share important information and promote consistency of care. This supported children to feel safe, settled and nurtured while they became familiar with the service and its routines.

Personal care routines were well managed and maintained children's privacy and dignity. Staff interacted with and supported children throughout. Infection control measures were in place and were effectively followed to minimise any potential risk of spread of infection.

Snack and mealtimes provided a valuable social experience for children. They interacted with each other and with staff once they sat down at the tables with the children. Children made choices from their packed lunches and were offered water to keep them hydrated. These experiences could be further developed to promote and extend children's independence and life skills.

Medication was stored safely and securely and was easily accessible in an emergency. Consent forms had been completed by parents and clearly recorded the name of medication, dosage, and reason for medication to be administered. It would be beneficial for the forms to include more detailed information relating to possible signs and symptoms. This would support staff to fully meet the health and wellbeing needs of children.

Personal plans were in place for each child. These included information to support staff to meet individual needs of children. Updates to some plans were recorded and dated on the front page. These updates could also be recorded within a child's plan to ensure all information is current and up to date. Each child had a chronology in place which recorded significant events in their life. This ensured that staff had current information to meet the changing needs of children.

Family engagement was supported through effective daily communications during drop off and pick up. The nursery app and group messaging systems further enhanced the effective sharing of information. Parents were welcomed into the service and were invited to attend stay and play sessions. This supported them to be included in their child's play and learning and the daily life of the setting. Parents spoke very positively about the service and shared that staff were nurturing and knew their child well. A staff member shared, 'We always communicate with families at drop off and pick up times, through learning journals and communicate about children's personal plans.' This supported the ongoing development of positive relationships between staff and families.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.scot.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good

Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - 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.scot

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.gov.scot

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 cànain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

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.