Woodburn Family Learning Centre
Day Care of Children

Woodburn Primary School
5 Cousland Road
Dalkeith
EH22 2PS

Telephone: 01316 541 565

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 July 2026

Service provided by:
Midlothian Sure Start

Service provider number:
SP2003003175

Service no:
CS2003013421

About the service

Woodburn Family Learning Centre is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 17 children not yet attending primary school at any one time, no more than 10 children are under two years.

The service is located within Woodburn primary school in the town of Dalkeith, Midlothian. The nursery offers a welcoming, open-plan playroom with direct access to the outdoor play area, along with toilet and kitchen facilities, office and a meeting space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 July 2026 between 09:15 and 17:30. This inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 evaluations we:

- spent time with children using the service
- spoke with children using the service, and their family members
- spoke with staff and the leadership team
- considered feedback from three families and three staff, through an online questionnaire
- 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, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- The newly established leadership team demonstrated a commitment to improvement over a short period of time.
- The service demonstrated a strong commitment to partnership working, positively impacting on the care and support children received.
- Nurturing approaches created a calm, secure environment where children were observed to be emotionally safe, well cared for and confident to explore and express themselves.
- Observations and interactions to extend learning and development should be improved.

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	4 - Good
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 4 - Good

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.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service's vision was, "To support every infant, child and family to thrive in our community through Building Best Beginnings." This was evident in the nurturing environment and the respectful interactions between children, families and staff. These were visible within the environment, promoting a shared sense of purpose. Values, such as 'person-centred,' 'fair' and 'inclusive' were reflected by staff in daily practice. The vision, values and aims had recently been reviewed with input from children, families and staff, demonstrating a commitment to involvement and continuous improvement. This supported a shared understanding of what mattered within the setting. As a result, the vision and values continued to reflect children and families' rights, needs and preferences.

The newly established leadership team demonstrated commitment to improvement. Leaders and staff were beginning to reflect on previous priorities and had identified actions for improvement. Regular feedback had been sought from families and staff through questionnaires, conversations and meetings. These views were used to inform improvements. For example, the recent restructuring of the wider 'Sure Start Family Learning' resulted in changes within the service. This was managed at an appropriate pace. Regular updates were shared with staff, families and children. For instance, staffing changes kept them informed and included. As a result, change was managed at a pace that was right for everyone.

Self-evaluation, quality assurance and moderation was at an early stage. The leadership team had begun to strengthen oversight. A quality assurance calendar was in place to support regular monitoring and evaluation. For instance, leaders had identified gaps in personal planning reviews, audits of medication and accidents and incidents. These had been addressed promptly and brought in line with best practice guidance. This improved oversight contributed ensuring children's health and wellbeing, needs and interests were met. Recent self-evaluation included reviewing children's spaces for rest, sleep and peer reviews of children's observations, with support from leaders. This demonstrated a commitment to continuous development and helped ensure children's experiences and outcomes remained at the centre of improvements.

Staff had been recruited in line with safer staffing practices and the values-based approach reflected the service's ethos. National induction resources had been used effectively to help new staff understand their roles, responsibilities and expectations. Recent changes within the staff team had been managed well. A new staff handbook had been introduced, providing clear and up to date guidance on policies, roles and responsibilities. Staff spoke positively about the changes and described feeling well supported by leaders and colleagues throughout the process. Their comments included, "We have regular meetings and conversations around wellbeing and how important it is to look after yourself." Appraisals helped staff to recognise their strengths and identify areas for development, with information used to support learning and growth. Staff meetings provided opportunities to reflect on children's wellbeing, individual needs and developments within the service. Management valued staff contributions. As a result, staff were valued, empowered and contributed to ongoing improvements across the service. Families commented, "Staff are a credit to the service", "I can ask staff about anything and they are always supportive."

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children were engaged in a range of play experiences that supported choice, curiosity and exploration. Experiences included, water and sand play, painting, small world and imaginative play in the home area. The well-resourced indoor and outdoor spaces encouraged child-led play through stimulating and open-ended materials and resources. Children were observed to be happy, generally settled and benefited from uninterrupted play.

Children moved freely between indoor and outdoor spaces, supporting their choice, development and wellbeing. Outdoors they enjoyed riding bikes, scooters and playing with dinosaurs. Whilst the mud kitchen had a range of bowls, pots and utensils, there was no mud for children to use in the space. Following a discussion, staff added water, the children became engaged in mixing, pouring and transporting sand from the sand pit, showing increased engagement. We discussed with staff regularly reviewing play areas, to ensure resources are available to provide rich and stimulating play experiences.

Interactions were kind, nurturing and inclusive. Staff demonstrated effective inclusive practice in supporting children with additional support needs to participate meaningfully in play experiences with their peers. Some children were deeply engaged in their play. For instance, during a tea party in the home corner, staff sat alongside children and were invited to join in. At times, staff used effective commenting and questions to extend children's interests and develop their ideas. This enriched their communication, social skills and problem solving. However, this practice was not consistently demonstrated across the staff team. As a result, there were missed opportunities to extend children's thinking and add greater depth to their play, learning and development. (See area for improvement 1).

Planning was mainly responsive with staff responding in the moment. Previous planning and evaluations were clear and detailed; however, this had become inconsistent. We discussed with leaders the importance of using observations to inform planning for play and individual learning. While some observations were rich, detailed and reflected on children's learning with next steps, others were basic and a few were repetitive. This meant staff could not ensure all children were experiencing a wide range of purposeful and freely chosen experiences that promoted progression and supported individual learning needs. Leaders had identified the need to strengthen the quality of observations and had begun to support staff through a peer review approach. This demonstrated a commitment to improving practice and strengthening children's learning and development. (See area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receive high-quality play, learning and development opportunities, the provider and manager should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to provide challenge, extend and deepen children's learning through skilled interactions.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14).

2. To ensure children make appropriate progress and achieve positive outcomes. The provider and manager should improve the approach and skills of staff in relation to planning for children's play, learning and development and monitoring progress. Staff should be supported to develop their understanding of how to effectively observe and assess children's learning, to plan quality learning experiences and meaningful next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials." (HSCS 1.31).

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

Staff demonstrated warm, kind and inclusive interactions that helped children feel safe and valued. Most staff knew children well and had built positive relationships with children and their families. Families commented, "The staff are so friendly and caring towards me and my child, nothing is ever too much." And "My child absolutely adores the staff." Children were offered comfort and reassurance when needed, promoting emotional security. These nurturing approaches created a calm, secure environment where children were observed to be emotionally safe, well cared for and confident to explore and express themselves.

Transitions into and out of the service were carefully considered. Staff worked collaboratively with children, families and other nursery settings to ensure that children remained at the centre. This helped everyone feel ready, supported and well prepared for change. Families told us, "My child has adapted and adjusted so well to their new nursery, they love it here." When starting they would not let me leave, but now they can't wait to get in and start the day. Another parent commented, "Good relationships with the school nursery to support children transitioning, and the staff are very good at supporting children who have found it difficult settling into the setting."

Mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and sociable. Staff sat alongside children, promoting good eating habits and conversations. Children experienced nutritious meals that met their dietary needs, while supporting them to try new foods.

One family commented, "They won't try new things at home but do here at nursery which is good." Children had some opportunities to develop independence by serving their own side dishes, and support was provided to help them pour their own drinks. Children were encouraged to tidy their dishes following mealtimes promoting responsibility. Although, some children seemed unfamiliar with the tidy routine, similarly in hand washing routines prior to lunch. Providing more support during daily routines could help children become more independent.

The service had recently developed a peaceful and calm space for children to rest, sleep and relax. Mats and fresh linen were available. This provided children with a comfortable, safe place to sleep.

Children's personal care needs were carried out by nurturing staff who respected their dignity and privacy. Children were invited sensitively, and consent sought before providing personal care. This approach helped children feel respected and valued within care routines.

As a result, children responded positively and showed trust and confidence in staff. Children's medical and healthcare needs were managed through safe and effective practices. Medication was stored appropriately, consent was in place and most records were accurate and up to date. This supported staff to identify signs and symptoms promptly and administer medication safely. We identified a few minor gaps, for example, signs and symptoms within a child's documentation could have been clearer. These were addressed prior to feedback. As a result, children experienced safe, well managed healthcare that helped ensure their individual health needs were met.

Personal plans were in place to support children's health, wellbeing and safety. Where needed, enhanced plans had been developed in partnership with families and other professionals. Plans had recently been reviewed with families, ensuring information was up to date and reflected children's current needs. Families spoke positively about the support provided. One family commented, "Staff listen and support with anything my child needs." While some strategies to support children were in place, some were unclear and not all staff used these. This meant not all children received consistency and support that was right for them. Additionally, some documented wellbeing entries were strong, others were not. Strengthening the monitoring and recording of children's wellbeing would help staff identify patterns early and provide targeted support in a timely manner.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure each child receives appropriate care and support and their needs are met, the provider, manager and staff should ensure:

a) personal plans set out children's current needs and how they will be met

b) all staff are aware of, and understand the information within the personal plans, and use this to effectively meet each child's needs

c) strategies and wellbeing logs should be monitored and evaluated regularly, to demonstrate a positive and measurable impact on outcomes for children.

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

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	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good

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

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