# Elmvale Nursery Class
# Day Care of Children

Elmvale Primary School
712 Hawthorn Street
Glasgow
G22 6ED

Telephone: 01415 585 238

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
21 January 2025

**Service provided by:**
Glasgow City Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003003390

**Service no:**
CS2003014798

## About the service

Elmvale Nursery Class is registered as a daycare of children service. The service is provided by Glasgow City Council to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children. Of those 60 no more than 20 are aged 2 to under 3 years and 40 aged three to not yet attending primary school. On the day of our inspection, care was only being provided to children over three years of age.

The nursery is based within Elmvale Primary School. Children have access to a main playroom, an additional playroom on the ground floor and an enclosed garden. The service also makes use of the local area including visits to the nearby woodland and allotments.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 and 21 January 2025 between 09:30 and 16:00. The 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with eight children using the service
- gathered the views of nine parents
- reviewed documents
- spoke with the depute head teacher, team leader and staff.

## Key messages

- Staff were kind and caring in their interactions with children and knew them well.
- Children were happy, having fun and confident in leading their own learning.
- There was a strong emphasis on supporting families within their local community.
- Staff should continue developing their approach to challenging children's learning during play.
- Staff should deploy themselves in a way that ensures children's needs are met consistently across the day.

## 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 setting? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 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, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support**

Children were happy and confident within the service. Staff were kind and caring in their interactions with children. Two staff had recently joined the team after winter break. They were focussed on getting to know the children and developing relationships with them. Overall, staff knew children well and responded to their care needs. One parent commented, "They take good care of my child, they know what [their] needs are and support [their] needs, they are absolutely great with [them]." This contributed to the positive relationships children had with staff.

Staff knew families well and shared with us they felt this was a strength of the service. Parents and carers were warmly welcomed into the service and time was given to chat and share information. One parent told us, "Staff are friendly and welcoming, always happy to answer questions and give advice." An inclusive approach was taken to meet the communication needs of all families attending the setting. This helped them to feel valued and involved in planning their child's care. Various methods including the use of QR codes, digital translation apps and the use of interpreters at formal meetings ensured families were involved and their voices heard.

Leaders understood the importance of working in partnership with parents. Family engagement opportunities included a 'big breakfast' and 'big tea'. This encouraged families to spend time in the nursery with their children and staff, to eat, talk and read together. This contributed to trusting relationships between staff, children and their families. Families were supported more widely to access a range of support services within their local community. Strong links had been made with several local organisations that improved family life and ability to deal with challenges. This contributed to supporting positive outcomes for children and their families.

Each child had a personal plan that contained important information that supported staff to meet their needs. For example, language spoken, likes, dislikes and dietary needs. The quality of children's plans was variable. Some strategies were in place to help children achieve, but others contained too little detail. This made it difficult to understand what specific strategies should be applied to support children. We advised that personal plans would benefit from having more specific targets and strategies that outline individual support that children need to progress. This would ensure all children get the support that's right for them at the right time.

A very small number of children stayed for lunch. We observed lunchtime to be a relaxed and unhurried experience for children. Staff sat with children ensuring they were safe whilst eating and engaged them in rich social conversations. Children had opportunities to develop their independence skills through self-serving food and accessing drinks from the water cooler. Opportunities to be the lunch helper encouraged children to take on tasks such as setting the table and serving the pudding to their friends. This promoted children's confidence and sense of achievement.

We observed that drinking cups were not readily available for children to access water to drink throughout the day. When children asked for a drink they were given one. We discussed that not all children were able to ask for a drink and the importance for children to have free access to water in both playrooms and outdoors to ensure they are properly hydrated. We were satisfied that the team leader addressed this before the end of inspection.

There were opportunities for children to eat outdoors. We found this to be a less relaxed mealtime experience for children. Staff did not have a chair to sit alongside children and regularly had to leave children who were eating to offer support to children in other areas or carry out tasks. This meant children were not as well supervised as they could have been whilst eating. This had potential to impact on children's safety and opportunities were missed to engage them in social conversations. We advised the team leader that the addition of an adult chair outdoors and ongoing communication between staff would enhance children's outdoor snack experience.

**Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning**

We observed children having fun and being fully engaged in their play and learning. Children were confident in leading their own play and learning and this was further supported through having the freedom to transport resources to different areas. For example, a child had used playdough to make 'cupcakes' and took great delight in visiting children in the home corner and puzzle table to share them. Children told us, "it's fun in nursery." This had a positive impact on children's development and wellbeing.

In the main playroom, areas were fully resourced and set up attractively to spark children's interest, curiosity and engagement. Numeracy and literacy opportunities were threaded throughout the environment. For example, children used polished stones to experiment with making number outlines. We heard staff and children counting and chatting about colours during play. Staff shared songs and stories with children and children shared their favourite stories with us. One child commented "I love to read, reading is good." Stories reflected a diverse range of cultures that was representative of children attending the service. This helped children to feel valued and gave them a sense of belonging.

Children made good use of all the space outdoors and were busy and engaged in meaningful play. Lots of open ended movable materials captured children's imagination and encouraged them to solve problems. For example, crates were used for balancing and to make pretend beds. Guttering was movable to create different angles and gradients. Children rolled balls down them and spoke about mathematical concepts such as going faster, going slower, longer and shorter.

Planning for children was based on their interests. Staff used observations to establish their individual learning needs and what children liked to do. Staff played alongside children and sometimes supported their choices. For example, when children asked to play with playdough staff supported this interest. There were times staff didn't pick up on children's cues in relation to their play choices and meaningful play was stopped. We shared with the team leader how staff could benefit from further learning on how to support and challenge children during play and learning. Staff met regularly to discuss planning and recorded children's achievements and gaps in learning against the curriculum. Staff should use information gathered to inform next steps to support children's progress. A new online platform was being put in place to share photos and observations of children's learning with parents. We agreed that this was a positive step to involve families in their child's learning.

## How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities**

The nursery had its own separate entrance from the school, with a secure buzzer entry system. This enhanced children's safety and security when entering and leaving the building. Children had their own dedicated cloakroom space to keep personal items and multilingual displays were used to share information with families. This sent the message to children and families that they mattered.

Children were cared for in a comfortable and welcoming environment split over two levels. The large indoor playrooms offered plenty of space to meet children's needs. They had large windows that provided natural light and ventilation. Soft furnishings and little den areas created cosy spaces indoors, and an outdoor shelter also provided areas for children to rest and relax. One child using a cosy area told us, "I'm just chilling." Careful consideration had been given to children's stages of development and learning in the main playroom. Areas were furnished well and fully resourced with open ended natural materials to promote children's curiosity and imagination. The downstairs playroom was a helpful space, located close to the garden. Toys and materials in this room were not as accessible as upstairs. This meant children's choices in this room were restricted. We discussed with the team leader that opportunities for children would be further enhanced from the downstairs playroom being developed and further resourced. The team leader had recognised this and we were satisfied improvements would be made.

Children benefited from their own outdoor play space that was separate from the school playground. Although there was no direct access to outdoors, children's choice was encouraged and accommodated to provide them with daily opportunities to play outside. The addition of a new high fence and locked gate helped to ensure children were safe whilst playing outdoors. Snack was available outside and the use of a portable handwashing sink meant children had the choice to stay outside for extended periods of time. The outdoor space had been developed with loose parts objects such as crates, guttering, sticks and wooden stepping stones to enhance children's play experience. This supported children's imagination and curiosity. The area to the side of the outdoor shelter where children played contained some litter. We raised this with the team leader who shared litter picking was done as part of school janitorial duties. We advised that nursery staff also have a responsibility to keep areas clean and tidy to ensure children's health. The team leader shared this would be included as part of daily risk assessments going forward.

Children had regular access to the natural environment in the local community. Weekly visits to the local allotments provided opportunities for children to plant and grow fruit and vegetables. Children often took home what they had grown to share with their families. These opportunities promoted children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating and consuming a balanced diet. Plans were in place to establish regular visits to the nearby woodland area to enhance children's health and wellbeing through time spent in their natural environment.

## How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

**Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

Leaders were friendly, approachable and engaged well with the inspection process. They were receptive to feedback and willing to make improvements to ensure good outcomes for children and families. Staff told us they felt well supported and could approach the team leader if they needed help or support. One staff member commented "My team leader is always aware of their staff needs and support is offered if required." This meant staff were supported and motivated to provide care to children and their families.

The service improvement plan had clear priorities and targets to support improvement. Visual displays in the main playroom, containing key priorities from the improvement plan, supported staff to develop aspects of practice. Staff were encouraged to take on leadership roles to develop parts of the plan in daily practice. Due to recent changes in staffing this was in the early stages and not yet fully embedded to measure impact. We observed some evidence of progress being made within the plan. There were improved opportunities for mark making throughout the main playroom and outdoors. This supported children's early literacy skills as they practised writing and drawing in a variety of ways.

The team leader understood the importance of involving children and families in self-evaluation. Staff used a visual questionnaire with children to establish their wellbeing and motivation. Some results were positive, such as observing children smiling and engaging in nursery. Some results indicated children were finding it more difficult to share with peers and share their voice. We advised the team leader to use information gathered to inform actions that further support children's learning and development needs. There were opportunities for families to contribute views formally. One parent told us, "we are often invited to participate." We discussed sharing results of consultation with parents. This would help them understand how their contributions are valued to help develop the service.

We viewed evidence of best practice documents being discussed at team meetings. For example, Care Inspectorate guidance on how to keep children safe and accounted for. This gave staff the opportunity to come together and reflect on practice and make positive changes to enhance children's safety. The service should continue to reflect on good practice in relation to play and learning to help develop an understanding of their role in supporting children's play.

Procedures were in place to monitor and audit aspects of the service. This included monthly audits of information gathered on accidents and incidents. We advised how minor changes to paperwork would help identify patterns or risks to children's safety. This would support the service to identify and highlight any action taken to support children's care and wellbeing needs.

## How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment**

Overall, we found that enough staff were in place to meet children's needs. One parent shared "I have no issues regarding staff, for me, are always there compared to last year as they were short of staff." Staff were mostly able to respond to children's needs, providing the care they needed at the right time. We acknowledged the challenge of providing care to children over two levels. Staff mostly managed this well and were able to call for help if needed to meet a child's care needs. There were clear plans in place to manage staff breaks and absence. This ensured there was minimal disruption to children's routines.

We observed some good communication between staff during times of transition to ensure children were accounted for and safe. At times, lone working occurred for short periods of time. Staff had access to phones and walkie talkies to seek support if they needed help. There were times communication between staff could have been better. For example, a staff member busy with a group of children had to leave several times to help children in another area. Ongoing communication between staff would support a shared approach to ensure continuity of care for children.

Staff development within the service was actively encouraged. Supervision meetings had taken place and areas for staff development were identifed. Staff had attended training to enable them to meet children's needs and help offer positive outcomes. This included training on supporting children with additional support needs. This enabled some staff to develop alternative methods to communicate with children, including the use of Makaton hand signs and visuals. We discussed with the team leader how staff sharing what they had learned would ensure a consistent approach across the team. This could benefit all children's communication development.

There were clear processes in place to support new staff. This included an induction and a mentor for personal and professional support. This meant they were supported to offer positive outcomes to children.

## 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**

The provider should ensure that there are enough skilled and competent staff based within the nursery to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My needs are met by the right number of people" (HSCS 3.15).

**This area for improvement was made on 17 January 2024.**

### Action taken since then

There was enough staff to meet the numbers of children that attended the service. All staff were qualified and experienced. Contingency plans were in place to cover staff absence. We were satisfied current staffing levels ensured safety and wellbeing for children.

**This area for improvement has been met.**

## 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 setting? | 4 - Good |
|---|---|
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 4 - Good |

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

| How good is our staff team? | 4 - Good |
|---|---|
| 4.3 Staff deployment | 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.com

### Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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.