Law Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Law Primary School
Haddington Road
North Berwick
EH39 4QZ

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 June 2026

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Service no:
CS2003016988

About the service

Law Primary Nursery Class is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 120 children from age three years to not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The nursery is attached to Law Primary School, located the costal town of North Berwick, East Lothian. The nursery is located in a purpose built building. Children have access to playrooms, cloakroom area, kitchen/ serving area, toilets and an enclosed garden space. There is also a meeting area, staff and training room.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 09 June 2026 between the hours of 08:30 and 17:30. 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

-Spoke with children using the service,
- Gathered feedback from seven families through online questionnaires,
- Spoke with staff and management,
- Observed practice and daily life,
- Assessed core assurances, including the physical environment, and
- Reviewed documents

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure that 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

Staffing and most maintenance issues have been effectively addressed, creating a more stable and supportive setting.

Improvements in the environment and activities for children have led to increased engagement and more positive experiences.

Children's personal plans and individual observations could be further developed to better support them and further track their learning and progress.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes provide a good basis for ongoing development and improved outcomes for children.

Staff should remain aware of their deployment and work flexibly to support all children to sustain play, increase engagement and develop confidence.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	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

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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

The vision, values and aims had been reviewed to align with those used across the wider school. They had been shared with children through discussions during group times, and had been communicated to parents through the nursery newsletter. Further work was needed to ensure that the vision, values and aims were fully embedded within the ethos of the setting. They should consistently guide everyday practice and contribute to positive outcomes for children.

Self-evaluation processes were in place, that included areas for development identified by staff. This had led to improvements in the play environment, children's experiences, staff interactions and planning. This was beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. Moving forward, the service should ensure that all staff were fully engaged in and take ownership of self-evaluation. While some staff were involved, there were gaps which need to be addressed to ensure consistency across the team. In addition, some floor books had not been updated for several months, which limited their effectiveness as reflective tools. The service need to refine the approach to self-evaluation and focus on a smaller number of meaningful priorities. These should be developed collaboratively, fully implemented and reviewed to demonstrate their impact on children's outcomes. Strengthening this cycle would support more focused and effective continuous improvement.

Quality assurance systems were in place, with accidents and incidents reviewed, shared with staff and used to improve safety for children. Leaders had identified that the content and quality of learning journals were variable. They also had oversight of medication and personal plans; however, a small number of gaps were identified in both these areas. Leaders agreed that quality assurance processes would benefit from further development to ensure greater consistency and to better support positive outcomes for children.

Recruitment was ongoing and leaders have a plan in place to address staffing needs. Appropriate staff-to-child ratios were maintained, although at times under pressure. A parent commented "There are enough staff around. When we first started this didn't always appear to be the case but in recent months it's always felt well staffed". Leaders were aware of the need to keep staffing under review. However, the increased stability within staffing had positively impacted children's confidence and sense of security. Staff told us that they worked well as a team and this contributed to a positive and confident working environment. The service had undertaken profession staff reviews and this identified development needs. While most staff received an induction and mentor, a small number did not. The service should ensure all staff, regardless of role, receive a clear induction and mentor support to enhance development, confidence and consistency of practice. Therefore a requirement made at our last inspection regarding staffing arrangements was met.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Children experience high quality spaces

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.

Effective arrangements for welcoming children and families into the setting were in place and staff provided targeted support for children who needed reassurance. This was an improvement from the previous inspection. The cloakroom area had been reviewed and a mark-making space created, which created a more purposeful area. Progress had been made in developing the large indoor space, with strengths evident in the home area and a well-resourced quiet space that supported emotional regulation. However, some areas especially the music area, block play and the interactive whiteboard could be further developed to provide greater challenge and support children's learning and progress.

The requirement relating to risk assessments and maintenance had been addressed. A small number of items remained outstanding but had been reported to the relevant team. The service will continue to liaise with partners to complete work, particularly on drainage and door safety, to reduce the risk of finger injuries. The local authority provided assurance these issues would be resolved. Arrangements for drop-off and collection when at full capacity were identified as needing ongoing review to ensure children's safety.

The outdoor space offered a wide range of play opportunities and was valued by children and families. Resources, including loose parts, supported a wide range of play experiences. However, the size of the area sometimes made it difficult to maintain consistent engagement. At times, staff focused on supervision, which reduced opportunities to further extend children's learning. Increased flexibility in staff deployment and providing more responsive support would enhance children's play even further.

The introduction of provocations, opportunities for managed risk and approaches such as forest school would build on existing strengths and enrich learning experiences. Leaders should continue to reflect on staff deployment, interactions and resources to support ongoing improvement. Careful management of limited planning and set-up time within the new service model will also be important. The significant effort made to create engaging and stimulating play environments was recognised, and the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection were met.

Appropriate arrangements were in place for the safe storage of information within this local authority service. Staff regularly participated in training to support effective information management practices.

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.

Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of children, supported by improved consistency within the team. They responded well to children's interests and were increasingly attuned to their emotional needs, this reflected the progress made in supporting self-regulation. There were few instances of frustration throughout the day, which contributed to a calm and productive environment. This was an improvement from the previous inspection.

Overall, staff were caring and formed positive relationships with children and interactions to support and extend learning were generally strong. Staff were observed effectively promoting thinking and problem-

solving, with some high-quality individual support. Positive encouragement was also noted during routines, such as tidying up, where staff engaged children in a supportive and respectful manner.

Two group times took place during the session. The first, with children gathered with their key worker, was used effectively as a check-in to support children's wellbeing. These sessions were well planned, brief and purposeful and children were observed to be engaged. The setting's vision and values were discussed in an age-appropriate way. A second group time before lunch provided an opportunity for children to come together, reflect on the morning and support routines such as handwashing and reapplying sun cream. However, engagement in this session varied depending on staff delivery. This had been reviewed, with plans in place to remove the session after the summer.

There was a range of skill across the staff team in understanding child development and how children learn. Younger children were generally well supported, while older and more able children would benefit from increased challenge to extend their learning. Some children were able to sustain play independently for extended periods, demonstrating growing levels of engagement. A small number of children moved between areas without clear purpose and would benefit from more targeted support to enhance their play, learning and relationships. Although older children had opportunities to lead their play, some were less confident in doing so, particularly in the outdoor environment. Overall, children's engagement in play had improved.

Planning systems were in place, with a range of documentation to support staff input. The move to a term-time model was seen as an opportunity to further develop more in-depth planning approaches. This would support improved learning experiences and outcomes for children.

Paper-based learning journals had been introduced, children were enthusiastic about accessing them. These captured aspects of learning and included some links with home. Some staff used them effectively to support engagement with children. However, leaders noticed that the quality of observations was inconsistent, with a focus on activities rather than learning, limited next steps and no consistent tracking.. Although staff had received training, further support was needed to embed this practice consistently. Strengthening this area should be prioritised to improve observation quality, tracking and outcomes for children. The identified area for improvement relating to observations remained in place (see section: What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection).

Staff used tracking systems to assess children's learning and development. A staff member commented "I don't feel like planning/evaluating is always clear to staff. Can be a bit confusing". and another stated "We are now conducting fortnightly planning, tracking the children's learning and creating Learning Stories". Planning, next steps and tracking systems now need to be used more consistently and effectively to support children's play and learning. This would support appropriate challenge and clear progression for all children.

A parent commented "Very little seems to be done to offer opportunities or ranges of experiences and definitely nothing tailored to my child's development. Nursery vibes seem very much endless free play and fend for yourself". Whilst another stated "My child always seems to have a great time while at nursery, enjoying the activities both indoors and out". The service should continue to work with families to promote understanding of play-based learning through displays, newsletters, stay-and-play sessions, access to learning stories and twice-yearly learning events. This engagement should continue to ensure parents recognise and value the importance of play in children's learning and development.

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.

Staff had developed positive relationships with children and provided warm, consistent and responsive care. Children approached staff confidently and did not have to wait for their needs to be met. Improved consistency in staffing arrangements had strengthened children's sense of security and confidence. Children's views were respected and most staff demonstrated genuine interest in listening to and valuing what children had to say.

Transitions throughout the day were kept to a minimum and supported continuity for children. The session began with a calm and nurturing welcome which helped children feel secure. During group times, staff took a balanced, sensitive approach and gently encouraged participation while respecting children's choices. Lunch was a smooth and well-managed routine and most children appeared settled and confident in what was happening next. Transitions to primary school were supported through classroom visits, teacher engagement and a designated area with relevant resources. Transition passports which were in place to support children moving onto school. However, clearer understanding of their purpose was needed, along with more consistent use across staff. Increased leadership oversight would help strengthen this.

Snack time provided opportunities for children to develop independence by collecting utensils, self-serving food and pouring drinks. A baking activity also supported learning through practical experience. Most children brought packed lunches, and this was managed calmly and effectively with support provided where needed. Parents commented on the quality of the lunches provided by the service. While some guidance on healthy eating had been shared with parents, this should be revisited and strengthened to promote healthier choices. The service were aware that further work was needed to support the implementation of the "setting the table" guidance.

Information on individual children was available, with some auditing of personal plans in place. However, records were not always easy to use and key information was not clearly summarised. Parent reviews often indicated no change, which limited their effectiveness. Pastoral notes and information on additional support needs were inconsistent, support profiles were not regularly updated or fully aligned with professional advice. Clearer, more specific strategies were needed to support staff in practice. The identified area for improvement relating to personal planning remained in place (see section: What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection).

Engagement with families had improved and was expected to strengthen as parents became more involved in the setting. While some parents noted that communication could be inconsistent, they valued newsletters and strong relationships with key workers. A parent commented "my child's key workers are very attentive and we have a great relationship. Some other staff are also lovely and welcoming, other staff members look uninterested and disengaged". 'Stay and play' sessions and the introduction of a PEEP group (Peers Early Education Partnership) supported parental involvement, although attendance at PEEP sessions was currently low and would require ongoing promotion and review. Plans to involve parent volunteers in local trips would further supported partnership working. Overall, positive steps had been taken to strengthen partnerships, and this contributed to improved communication, engagement and outcomes for children.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 04 August 2025, the provider must ensure children's health, welfare, and safety. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure:

That areas identified through the risk assessment process as posing a risk to children's safety are addressed.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17)

This requirement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken on previous requirement

Most snagging issues had been addressed, with any outstanding items reported to the appropriate team. A small number of areas remained for consideration, including drainage and door safety to reduce the risk of finger injuries.

Arrangements for drop-off and collection at full capacity also require careful consideration and ongoing review as occupancy increases and new routines become established.

Reassurance was provided by the service and local authority that outstanding issues will be resolved in a timely manner.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 04 August 2025, to ensure that children's care and support needs are met, the provider must ensure staffing arrangements are effective to meet the needs of all children in the service. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) Assess the current staffing situation and develop a plan to ensure they have consistent staff with the appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise working in the setting.

b) Professional development reviews should be undertaken to ensure staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure consistent and effective high-quality practice.

This is in order to comply with section 7(1)(a) of the Health and Care (Staffing)(Scotland) Act 2019.

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 requirement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken on previous requirement

Staffing had been strengthened through recruitment, internal promotion, and the provision of longer-term contracts for supply staff, resulting in improved stability and consistency. Staff absence had reduced, and overall morale had improved.

Staff reported feeling well supported and able to seek guidance from the senior leadership team.

Professional Review and Development (PRD) processes had been completed, with the next cycle due. The format had been reviewed, and future training will be informed by evaluations of individual practice and service priorities. Plans for training also take into account inspection feedback and identified areas for improvement.

Recruitment remained ongoing, particularly in response to changes in the service model. While this has resulted in the loss of some experienced staff, processes were in place to address gaps. It is important that leadership within the team remains strong and focused to build on the solid foundations established and to support continued progress.

Met - within timescales

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 support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure children's personal plans reflect their needs. This should include, but not be limited to, recording children's care and support needs and how these will be met in practice with effective support strategies.

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

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken since then

Information was recorded for each child, and personal plans had been reviewed. However, records were not always easy to use, and there was limited evidence of a clear overview of each child, making it more difficult to develop a holistic understanding of individual needs and progress.

Parental reviews had taken place; however, many indicated no changes, limiting their effectiveness in supporting a meaningful understanding of the child.

As identified through the service's own audit, pastoral notes varied in purpose and quality. Greater consistency and clarity are needed to ensure these records are purposeful and effectively support children's wellbeing.

Area for Improvement remains under the heading: Children are supported to achieve.

Previous area for improvement 2

To help children to achieve their potential, the service should ensure that an effective cycle of high-quality observations supports and track children's individual learning and development needs. This should include identifying relevant next steps and ensuring they are measurable and achievable.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that:
'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken since then

Paper-based learning journals had been introduced, with children showing enthusiasm in accessing them. These captured some aspects of learning and included links with home, and were used effectively by some staff to support engagement.

Leaders identified variability in the quality of observations. At times, these focused on what children were doing rather than what they were learning, and many did not include clear next steps. There was also no consistent system to track whether next steps had been followed up. As a result, it was difficult to demonstrate how children's learning was being appropriately challenged and progressed, particularly for more able children.

Area for Improvement remains under the heading: Children play and learn.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children to be meaningfully involved in leading their play and learning, the quality of play experiences should be improved. This should include developing the provision for language, literacy and numeracy and supporting staff to develop their skills in effective questioning. This will help children to extend their thinking and consolidate their learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulates my natural

curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken since then

An increased range of literacy and numeracy resources was available throughout the setting, both indoors and outdoors, supporting learning across all areas. Children engaged well with books and made good use of creative spaces such as the drawing table. As the service model evolves, it will be important to ensure sufficient resources are available to meet children's needs. Further development of areas such as music, role play, and the use of ongoing provocations will continue to enrich experiences.

Staff had accessed training to develop their skills and expertise, with further support identified through the PRD process. Increasing staff stability had also supported the development of positive relationships, enabling staff to spend more time supporting and extending children's learning.

Attention should continue to be given to effective staff deployment to ensure staff remain responsive and actively engaged, rather than remaining in designated areas. This will support more consistent interactions and enhance children's learning and development.

Area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To further support children's interests, development and learning, the service should continue to develop the environment and play spaces. Staff should evaluate the spaces to ensure the resources on offer provide opportunities that spark curiosity and reflect children's current interests. This will ensure children engage in more purposeful play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.2)

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken since then

The service had reviewed the playrooms and was beginning to create a more welcoming and nurturing environment. As a result, most children confidently accessed the spaces and remained engaged and purposefully occupied throughout the day. The introduction of a defined play area within the cloakroom, supported by small barriers, had been effective in preventing it from being used as a thoroughfare.

Attention is needed to ensure all children are fully included in play, as a small number would benefit from additional support to develop friendships and social connections.

The new service model allows limited time at the beginning and end of the day for planning, preparation, and setting up the playroom. This will require careful management and ongoing review to ensure the environment continues to support high-quality experiences for children.

Area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To support children to be meaningfully involved and influence change in the service. The children's voice should be actively sought, recorded and responded to effectively. This would support children to be active participants in their learning and the development of the wider service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable to my age and stage, which stimulates my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27.)

This area for improvement was made on 26 May 2025.

Action taken since then

Self-evaluation evidence showed that children's views were increasingly being captured, particularly in the development of the environment. Staff were using responsive planning approaches, introducing provocations and beginning to evaluate their impact to inform future planning.

While this demonstrates positive progress, the full planning cycle was not yet consistently embedded. Observations within learning journals varied in quality, which made tracking children's progress less clear, and it was not always evident if next steps had been followed through.

Further strengthening this area will build on existing good practice and support more consistent observations, clearer tracking of next steps, and improved outcomes for children.

Area for improvement is 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

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

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
Children experience high quality spaces	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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