Yester Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Walden Terrace
Gifford
Haddington
EH41 4QP

Telephone: 01620 810 435

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 July 2022

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Service no:
CS2003016998

About the service

Yester primary school nursery is registered to provide a service to 20 children aged between three years and entry into primary school.

The nursery class is part of the primary school in the rural village of Gifford, East Lothian and comprises of a class room and toilet area. The classroom has a kitchen/snack area and outdoor play areas.

At the time of our visit the nursery operated 48 weeks of the year.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 06 July 2022 between 9:00am and 4:00pm. 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.

To inform our evaluations of the service we:
- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with four staff, centre manager and the head teacher
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents
- asked parents to comment about the service they and their child received.

Key messages

- Happy, motivated and busy children
- Attractive and rich learning environments
- Self-evaluation processes which were leading to improvements in the service
- Kind, nurturing and professional staff.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The collection of information about children and their needs, a personal plan, supported overall wellbeing. Information was gathered from parents, external professionals and from children. The personal plan had been regularly updated and reviewed to ensure that it met current needs.

Where children needed additional support there were detailed plans in place. These had been developed with external professionals. Where targets had been identified, these were regularly assessed to celebrate progress and ensure that this progress continued. These documents and children's development was regularly shared with parents to ensure a consistent approach to children's care.

Interactions between staff and children were warm and nurturing. Staff knew children very well and this enabled them to be attuned to their emotional wellbeing. Staff welcomed children and each other into the nursery and we saw many warm and sensitive interactions between staff and children which resulted in children who were connected to the people caring for them.

Over the summer period there were fewer children in the nursery. Staff acknowledged that this was a different experience for some children as their close friends had left nursery. Staff were supporting children to extend their friendship group and be confident in the smaller group of children.

Children enjoyed meal and snack time. They chatted to staff, who sat with them, and had opportunities to help prepare food, pour their drinks and develop independence. The meal at lunch was unhurried and staff made sure that children had enough to eat and drink. Throughout the day drinking water could be accessed and staff encouraged children to remain hydrated during the session.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were very busy and engaged in their play. They could choose to play indoors or outdoors for the whole day. Planned play experiences had been based on discussion with children and observations of what they were interested in. We also saw spontaneous play develop and be supported by staff who were able to engage children's imagination and enthusiasm to enrich their play.

The nursery floor books gave a very good flavour of children's knowledge and their learning throughout the development of a topic or activity. Children had been actively involved in the completion of the floor books. These were up to date and used by them to reflect on what they had been involved in at nursery and what they had learnt.

Each child had an All About Me folder which was a record of their learning and achievements. These folders provided a very good overview of the child's progress. Parents told us they valued being able to see these folders and share them with their child. Children's learning and development was tracked through local authority documents but also the summative report for parents and a progression record. One parent told

us that 'staff nailed my child's personality and capabilities in their report.' The documentation kept on children's learning and development showed an understanding of their achievements and the areas of learning that could be supported further.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

The nursery environment was presented and furnished to a high standard. The bright and comfortable space offered children a pleasant place to play. Throughout the day staff ensured that play areas were well resourced and encouraged children to appropriately tidy and help keep the room attractive and inviting. This helped children develop a sense of responsibility.

The hallway was well maintained to present parents with a range of community information. Displays to share the ethos of the nursery had been developed and current good practice documents which were in use within the nursery, were available for parent information.

Throughout the nursery there were clear procedures to ensure that the environments were safe, and that resources and furniture were clean. Toilets and nappy changing facilities were clean and well maintained throughout the day. They were arranged in a very child friendly way which enabled children to access them totally independently.

To enhance the space available for play children could always access the outdoor play areas during the day. The two outdoor environments offered a range of wider play experiences to include physical play and more opportunities for sand, water, role play and reading stories. Staff understood loose parts and were developing the use of these to allow children to use their imagination and creativity during their play. Parents commented positively about the extensive use of the outdoor areas and children told us they were outside 'All the time!'

As the nursery was based in a small rural village, staff had looked at ways to engage more with the local community. This had been impacted upon by Covid -19 but plans were in place to resume attending the Good Companions group which enabled children to engage with older members of the community. The staff also took children on local walks and used nearby woods for outings. These experiences enabled children to be connected to their wider community.

Information about children was kept securely on the Local Authority computer system. Paper information such as personal plans were kept securely in a locked cupboard. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed the information to meet children's needs. Staff had a good understanding of confidentiality, and this was reflected in their communication with parents.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The nursery was managed by head teacher. They were supported by a centre manager who was responsible for aspects of the service, especially over holiday periods, and held a wider local authority role. Within the nursery the senior practitioner led the team. Discussion with leaders enabled us to assess that although remits were still developing individuals had discussed and agreed their roles and responsibilities. This enabled effective leadership in the nursery.

Processes for self-evaluation were in place. The senior practitioner and head teacher met regularly to assess the quality of the setting and carry out moderation of processes such as planning for play and learning. To assist with the process of self-evaluation the leadership team were using the quality assurance document produced by the local authority. This used outcomes from current framework models. Improvement plans were in place and progress to meet improvements were shared with parents and regularly assessed.

Through the use of floor books we could clearly see that the opinions and suggestions made by children were used in self-evaluation. Communication with parents about what was going on in nursery was achieved using social media platforms, communication board, newsletters and daily discussion. To further engage with parents there had been opportunities to be involved in nursery life through the reintroduction of stay and play sessions, parent consultations and parents being involved in outings. This level of parental engagement helped establish that parents were valued as an important part of the nursery provision.

The implementation of the longer working day and different model of staffing had provided a challenge for the leadership team to arrange staff meetings. To address this the senior practitioner and nursery team had worked flexibly to enable some meetings to happen. Through the self-evaluation books we could see that the opinions and assessments made by staff had been taken into account when assessing the quality of the service and developing improvement plans.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Nursery staff held a suitable mix of skills and experience which were utilised to provide good quality outcomes for children. Where staff had interests or specialities these were developed and used to good effect. For example, staff who were skilled at displays had created a range of engaging and attractive displays of children's artwork or subjects of interest. Procedures to support staff who were less experienced were in place to enable them to progress with their personal development and expertise.

Professional development had been achieved by on-line courses, in service training and the reading and implementation of good practice documents. Staff were looking forwards to taking part in more face-to-face training to enable them to have more reflective discussions about practice with their peers.

Leaders understood the need for staff continuity. This was important in the small staff team as even small changes had the capacity to make a large impact. Careful consideration had been given to this and leaders had worked hard to ensure continuity of care for children where staff cover was needed. During our visit a relief member of staff was needed, this member of staff was very warmly welcomed by children with hugs and excited chat. To ensure that children knew who was caring for them staff made sure that they

welcomed children warmly when they arrived or said goodbye when they left. This helped to promote a feeling of security for children.

Staff were well tuned to the impact of the different day for some children. This was due to the extended model of working over holiday periods, where some children had siblings at home, or their friends were not at nursery. To address this, they ensured that there was continuity in certain aspects of the day. Th day followed a familiar pattern for children to ensure that they felt happy and safe in nursery. Staff also enhanced familiar routines for example having lunch in the playroom and going on more outings to make the day a little more special for 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 manager should ensure that staff are keeping accurate records of observations of developmental needs. In order to achieve this they should ensure staff observe, assess, record and monitor children's developmental progress and plan next steps on a regular basis. Each child should have personal plan which is updated on a regular basis or at least every six months with parents.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
Standard 6 - Support and development.

This area for improvement was made on 31 October 2017.

Action taken since then
Clear improvements had been made to the collection of information which makes up the personal plan for each child.

This area for improvement was met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The manager should ensure that a changing station is provided to change children's nappies on. This should safe guard children's dignity, adheres to infection control guidelines and safeguards staff health and wellbeing. National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2 - A safe environment.

This area for improvement was made on 31 October 2017.

Action taken since then
Toilet and nappy changing facilities had been improved and now met current guidance.
This area for improvement was met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The manager should review the group activity arrangements to ensure all sessions promote children's choice and independent learning. National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 5 - Quality of experiences.

This area for improvement was made on 31 October 2017.

Action taken since then
More responsive planning and the use of children's ideas and suggestion for play experiences was now used to plan play and learning.

This area for improvement was 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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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