Windygoul Primary School Nursery Class
Day Care of Children

Windygoul Primary School
Brotherstones Way South
Tranent
EH33 2QF

Telephone: 01875 619 739

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 March 2026

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Service no:
CS2007151532

About the service

Windygoul Primary School Nursery Class provides care for a maximum of 72 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is provided by East Lothian Council and is located in the town of Tranent. Children had access to two playrooms (Star and Owls) as well as an enclosed outdoor space. In addition to this there was also access to toilets and nappy changing. The children were able to make use of areas within the school, this included the gym hall, sensory room and lunch hall. The location of the school meant that the staff and children could have access to a variety of local amenities within the community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 10 March 2026 between 09:00 and 16:35 and Thursday 12 March 2026 between 09:30 and 16:35. 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:

- spoke with children using the service
- reviewed on line feedback forms from 25 families
- spoke with seven parents as they collected their children
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were warmly cared for and felt safe, secure and confident in the setting.
- Families spoke very positively about the welcoming, home-from-home atmosphere and the strong relationships they had with staff.
- Children experienced a wide range of enjoyable play experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- Children experienced some interruptions to their play, as gather times meant they often stopped meaningful play, which impacted their ability to remain engaged.
- The setting showed a strong commitment to professional learning and ongoing reflection to continually improve practice.
- Partnership with families was a clear strength, with personal planning helping ensure children's needs and interests were well understood and well supported.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources.

The setting had a clear and well-established vision, with values and aims that were easy to see throughout the environment and well understood by the whole team. Staff shared a genuine commitment to being responsible, positive and respectful and this came through naturally in the way they interacted with children. Conversations with staff showed a strong understanding of inclusion and children's wellbeing, reflecting a shared belief in what truly mattered for the children in their care. Families recognised this too, describing staff as warm, caring and professional and praising the positive, nurturing culture that the setting had created. The majority of families were highly satisfied with communication, reflecting strong engagement and effective information sharing between the setting and home.

There was a clear cycle of self-evaluation in place, supported by termly quality assurance processes, including red, amber, green (RAG) rated evaluations reviewed with the local authority. Self-evaluation was recorded through floor books, planning reflections and team discussions. These systems had helped drive improvements, such as recent efforts to strengthen the quality of observations and develop shared expectations around how children's learning was recorded.

Shared classroom experiences were used well to reflect on the learning environment, staff interactions and how children's voices were captured in their learning stories. This collaborative reflection enabled staff to clearly identify what was working well and where further development was needed. Staff also took part in thoughtful discussions about progress data, exploring possible reasons why some children may be off track and identifying changes to practice or the environment that could better support them. This reflective approach had created a culture that continually supported improvement.

Leaders had supported improvements in staff practice, including providing 'Learning Is Fun Together' (LIFT) training. Staff spoke positively about this, particularly in relation to supporting children with additional needs. Staff morale was strong and annual Professional Review and Development (PRD) processes helped identify individual goals and ensure access to training that matched the setting's improvement priorities.

Staff took pride in their roles, contributing to a warm and supportive team culture. Some aspects of the induction process, however, could be strengthened. In our staff questionnaire, completed several months before the inspection, some staff said their induction felt informal, overly procedural or overwhelming. Leaders explained that changes had since been made and we saw evidence that the setting was making use of the national induction resource to support new colleagues. Leaders also recognised staff feedback and agreed that adding a mentoring or buddy system would further support new staff feel more confident in their roles.

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.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing.

Children showed strong engagement, confidence and curiosity across both playrooms and outdoors. They greeted the inspector warmly, asking who was visiting and why, which reflected their sense of belonging. Engagement outdoors was particularly notable. Despite wind and heavy rain, children remained motivated, splashing in puddles and continuing their play with enthusiasm. Indoors, play was purposeful, co-operative and sustained.

Both the indoor and outdoor environments offered rich opportunities for sensory exploration, mark making, construction, creative arts and imaginative play. Families praised the setting as, "A fantastic environment, with a fabulous nursery garden and lots to do indoors." Children worked together to solve puzzles, retell familiar stories and followed interest led projects, such as kite making, over several days. The open door routine supported independence by allowing children to move confidently between spaces.

Children took pride in their learning. They independently shared their learning stories, pointed out photographs and spoke confidently about activities, including healthy messages such as, "Ronny Rhino tells us to drink water and stay healthy." When a child achieved something for the first time, their visible pride was met with warm recognition from staff, supporting confidence and a sense of achievement. Families echoed this, noting that staff, "Are always encouraging and celebrating the children's successes, no matter how big or small".

Children experienced some interruptions to their play, as gather times meant they often stopped meaningful play, which impacted their ability to remain engaged. Leaders felt these sessions supported wellbeing through emotional check-ins, story telling and practice of skills such as counting and learning the days of the week. Our observations showed that some stories were interrupted or unfinished, which reduced the quality of the experience and did not fully reflect the value of storytelling. This highlighted an opportunity to reflect on the purpose and delivery of gather times to ensure they consistently enhance learning and wellbeing (see area for improvement one).

Child-centred planning processes were developing well. Keyworkers tracked progress carefully and engaged thoughtfully with next steps. Learning stories were regular and valued by families, who felt their children had "achieved so much" and that confidence "is growing every day." However, some entries were theme driven rather than rooted in individual interests and certain next steps appeared repeated across children, suggesting a need for greater individualisation.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's engagement and uninterrupted play, staff should reflect on when and why gather times take place to ensure they are purposeful and add value to children's experiences across the day. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) that state: '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 2.27).

Children are supported to achieve — 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support.

The setting demonstrated a strong commitment to nurturing care and support, with warm, attuned interactions and child-centred practice. Throughout the visit, staff responded kindly and sensitively, offering emotional reassurance when needed. Children were met with gentle guidance and clear visual cues to help them understand routines. Families consistently described staff as, "exceptional", "warm and attentive" and "professional and reassuring" noting that staff "really see each child as an individual." This reflected the deeply nurturing ethos evident in daily practice.

Staff demonstrated a strong understanding of sensory regulation. They used sensory bags, bubbles and visual supports to reduce anxiety and help children stay regulated. Visuals were also used during toileting, nappy changing and transitions, which helped children feel secure.

Children were also supported through effective multi-agency collaboration. Staff showed a strong understanding of each child's regulation needs and early signs of escalation. Pastoral notes and support plans demonstrated clear links with external agencies. These strategies were evident in daily practice. However, they were not always fully reflected in written plans, indicating a need for documentation to more accurately capture the strategies used in daily practice.

The Care Inspectorate's character SIMOA was visible throughout the setting and used naturally in staff conversations with children. By discussing how they 'inspect, monitor, observe and act', staff helped children understand what keeping safe looks like in their nursery. Children contributed ideas about "how we keep safe", helping them feel confident, informed and actively involved in safeguarding. This demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring children's voices shaped approaches to safety and wellbeing.

Snack times offered a calm, unhurried experience where children could join when ready. Involvement in snack preparation supported independence, confidence and a sense of contribution. Visual routines helped all children understand expectations and staff ensured no child started the day hungry by offering toast promptly and with dignity.

The lunchtime routine in the large school dining hall involved several stages, with periods of waiting in a busy environment. Children's independence was limited and some experienced reduced interaction, resulting in a less nurturing experience than observed elsewhere in the setting. Leaders responded quickly during the inspection, reflecting on the lunchtime routine and introducing adjustments. This led to a more positive experience by the second day, demonstrating responsive leadership and a commitment to improvement. For children who might find the larger dining hall overwhelming, the option to eat lunch in the Star playroom offered a nurturing alternative. This reflected staff's deep understanding of individual needs, providing a quieter sensory space with predictable seating and attuned adult support.

Family engagement was a notable strength. Families shared that 'stay and play' and 'share my learning' events helped them feel included and informed. They described the setting as welcoming and supportive, with staff who were, "A very reassuring presence" and who always made time for questions. Warm handovers, collaborative healthcare planning and sensitive support for sibling relationships contributed to strong, trusting partnerships.

The front entrance reflected purposeful partnerships with families and the community. A well used food share, created with a local shop, gave families daily access to surplus supermarket items. The clothes share, offering everyday clothing, nursery uniform and seasonal items such as Halloween costumes, helped reduce financial pressure and promote inclusion. A large 'junk monster' bin encouraged families to donate

recyclable materials for creative play, enriching children's opportunities for imagination and problem solving while supporting shared environmental responsibility. Together, these initiatives created a welcoming, community centred environment where families felt supported and children benefitted from strengthened learning, wellbeing and sustainability awareness.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good

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

Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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