# Maidenhill Nursery Class
# Day Care of Children

Maidenhill Primary School
2 Maidenhill Grove
Newton Mearns
Glasgow
G77 5GW

Telephone: 01415 773 288

**Type of inspection:**
Unannounced

**Completed on:**
15 November 2024

**Service provided by:**
East Renfrewshire Council

**Service provider number:**
SP2003003372

**Service no:**
CS2019374509

## About the service

Maidenhill Nursery Class is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 120 children from three years of age to those not yet attending primary school.

The service is provided by East Renfrewshire Council and operates from a large open plan playroom located within Maidenhill Primary School, Newton Mearns, Glasgow. In addition, children have free-flow access to an extensive, secure, adjacent outdoor play area. The service is close to shops, schools, transport routes and other amenities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on the 14th and 15th November 2024. The inspection was carried out by three 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 and seven of their family
- Gathered feedback from fourteen families through online questionnaires
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

## Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and having fun on the days of inspection.
- Children were cared for by a nurturing and responsive team on the days of inspection.
- The team should continue with plans to embed new responsive and intentional planning approaches to support high quality play and learning for children.
- The service had made changes to the environment and resources available to support children's curiosity.
- The service had established a culture of self evaluation which supported ongoing improvements to the nursery.
- The impact of training undertaken, and newly established processes and procedures were beginning to influence positive outcomes for children.

## 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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

On both days of inspection, we observed children were happy, confident, and having fun. They experienced warm, nurturing, and responsive care from staff which helped them to feel welcomed and loved in the setting. We observed staff provide comfort and reassurance which meant attachments and relationships were strong, resulting in children feeling safe, and secure in the service. One parent told us the strength of the service is the "Incredible relationships the team have with my child."

Following the previous inspection, the team had focused on improving the mealtime experience and could now recognise the routine as a rich opportunity to promote close attachments and healthy eating habits. We found children enjoyed mealtimes that were relaxed, enjoyable and sociable. Children were encouraged to be independent by self-serving their drinks and food choices. Food choices were nutritious, and water was available to ensure children remained hydrated across the day. We made some small suggestions on how to further develop the mealtimes which the team began to action on the days of inspection.

The team had developed a new template for children's personal plans. We found plans contained relevant core information about individual health, welfare, and safety needs. One parent told us "My child's key worker met to discuss personal plans and my views were taken into account." The team should now focus on streamlining information gathered to enable staff to clearly identify meaningful next steps and strategies that will support children's health, wellbeing and learning needs.

The team communicated effectively with most parents through daily conversations at drop off and collection times, parent's meetings and sharing information through online platforms. Some parents asked that more information be shared about their child's day at pick up times. The team agreed to reflect on this.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported by a clear administration of medication policy and procedures. We sampled the nursery's medication policy, consent forms and storage of medication and found these were in line with current best practice guidance. We have asked the team to consider re-establishing health plans for children with emergency rescue medication.

Children experienced sensitive and nurturing support for their individual personal care needs. Staff could access appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). We asked the team to revisit nappy changing guidance in relation to some aspects of infection prevention control routines.

Following the previous inspection, the service had made improvements to the sleep space available for children. There was now a designated sleep area, separate from the main playroom. This provided a quiet, peaceful and cosy space for children to relax and rest. Sleep was monitored and recorded by staff in line with best practice guidance. We asked the service to continue to review and monitor safe sleep practices if more children require a rest during their day at nursery.

Children's wellbeing and safety was protected by a clear and concise child protection policy. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. They had recently attended child protection training and knew how to address any concerns appropriately.

Children were visibly happy, content and actively accessing all activities on offer on the days of inspection. Children benefited from a variety of play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. We observed some adult directed and freely chosen activities which supported children to develop some key skills in problem solving, risky play, woodwork and mark making. One parent told us "The nursery always appears to have various things set up in the morning for the children to explore and play with." We asked the team to be mindful of the impact of staff absences on continuous provisions and areas with the nursery.

Throughout the inspection we observed opportunities to develop children's language, literacy, and numeracy being naturally woven throughout their day. There was a range of literacy, numeracy, and STEM resources available to support children's learning. We asked the team to reflect on their delivery of group time to ensure it was a stimulating and meaningful experiences for children of all stages.

We observed the teachers, and some staff utilised effective questioning skills to extend children's thinking and understanding. The senior leadership team should continue to support all staff to develop the depth of their knowledge and skills to successful scaffold children's play and learning in the nursery.

Planning approaches were currently being reviewed and developed with the team. This was still in the early stages. The focus of the planned changes were to ensure a clear child centred approach was embedded into the nursery with a balance of intentional and responsive play and learning experiences. The team now met to review their planning approaches and identify some areas of learning to focus on across the nursery. The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to embed, sustain, and evaluate the planning process to ensure high quality experiences for children in their care. We requested the team continue to monitor and review provocations set up each day to ensure children are continuously challenged and engaged in their play and learning.

Staff were conducting some observations and assessments of children's learning. This was then recorded on learning journals online. However, we suggested a consistent approach to recording evaluative and meaningful observations should continue to be embedded and monitored by the senior leadership team to develop children's individual next steps and strategies. We also suggested new ways to record the learning journeys across the nursery more effectively.

The team had developed children's opportunities to access their local community following discussions at the last inspection. Children now went for regular nature walks and forest school was a welcomed addition to weekly activities. This enabled children to develop their sense of belonging and strengthen connections to their local community. One child told us "I like going outside to play". One parent told us "My child's connection with nature has been driven by nursery through walks, playing outside."

## How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced an environment that was clean, warm, and welcoming. The room had natural light and was well ventilated with open windows and doors. Following the last inspection, the team had worked hard to develop the indoor space through consultations with children and utilising environmental audit tools. We could see the positive impact the changes had made to children's experiences and outcomes. We suggested the team now consider developing more cosy, homely spaces with low lighting and soft furnishing to provide children a calm space to relax and rest over their day.

Children could lead their play and learning as they could easily access toys and resources at their level on tables, shelves, and baskets. Natural, opened ended materials were available, sparking children's curiosity. Loose parts play was also available for children within the playroom. We asked the team to continue to monitor and review the resources available to children over their day to empower them to play together and extend their learning without adult involvement. We also suggested the team consider extending sensory based resources.

Free flow access between the indoor playroom and enclosed outdoor garden supported children's abilities to lead their play and learning. The outdoor area provided children the opportunity to engage in some active and imaginative play with elements of risk taking. We would agree with the team's plans to focus on developing the treehouse and outdoor area to a high standard.

Some infection prevention and control practices needed to be reviewed by the manager and team to prevent the spread of infection. The spaces children accessed were clean. Children and staff were confident in handwashing routines. However, we requested the senior leadership review the ventilation and size of the mat available in the dedicated changing room. We also highlighted the Care Inspectorates Space to Grow and Thrive guidance which states "There must be a minimum of one nappy changing facility for every 10 children using nappies". The team should continue to review the needs of children attending and ratios stated above to ensure they remain in line with best practice guidance.

Risk assessments were in place for all areas and activities within the setting. Mitigation measures were well considered and realistic. Monitoring and supervision had been established in the nursery to ensure children were always accounted for. Busier times of the day such as parent drop off and pick up times were planned to ensure children remained safe and secure in the environment. There was a secure entry system in place which was monitored by staff, this supported children's safety when attending the nursery. We asked the team to consider introducing walkie talkies for staff outdoors to make it easier to communicate with colleagues indoors.

Accident and incidents were being recorded and shared with parents, management were conducting monthly audits to identify any areas of risk and action changes required to support a safe environment for children.

## How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service had experienced changes in leadership and staffing over the past year which meant professional relationships were still forming in the nursery. However, it was encouraging to hear the team discuss their commitment to continue to help the service develop to ensure positive outcomes for children in their care. This showed us the service had good capacity to change. We found the three senior leaders in the nursery were passionate and brought a wealth of knowledge to the nursery. This will help drive improvements in the nursery when effective with cross working and clear roles and responsibilities are established.

The manager, in partnership with staff, should continue to develop quality assurance processes which will support sustained improvements in the service.

This should include:

- Further development of the responsive and intentional planning.
- Streamlining tracking of children's learning and observations to ensure individual next steps and strategies are clear and consistent.
- Continuing development and evaluation of children's engagement in the environment and provocations available.

The team had worked hard to develop strong relationships with families. Parents and family members were welcomed into the setting every morning. We saw meaningful conversations happen at transitions times for children. Effective communication ensured families felt connected to their child's nursery. Parents told us about the changes and developments within the nursery they had been involved in. Regular consultation through questionnaires, parent's meetings, parent forums and stay and play sessions had ensured parents felt part of the service. One parent told us "The staff involve parents in the nursery setting."

The senior leadership team, with support from the local authority, had made significant improvements to the setting following the previous inspection. The leadership team in the nursery had introduced a culture of self-evaluation within the team to support the improvement agenda. They had introduced opportunities for the team to self-reflect on training and the impact this had on their practice. Staff were also developing lead/champion roles. We could see the impact of this on the service provision, environment, and engagement with children. Staff we spoke to told us they felt involved in the improvement process and their ideas were valued and respected at team meetings. The team should continue to embed and sustain new practices to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

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

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The service had some changes in staffing over the past year, with new staff members joining the team. This meant the team were still forming and building professional relationships with each other. We found all staff engaged well in the inspection process. They were open and honest during discussions.

We found staff were deployed effectively throughout the indoor playroom and enclosed garden which supported high levels of interactions and promoted the wellbeing and safety of children. We asked the team to continue to work together to ensure the effective supervision of children when moving between the indoors and outdoors across the day.

Staff communicated effectively with each other throughout the days of inspection. For example, when moving between areas in the playroom, going outdoors and when completing tasks. They were respectful in their engagement which supported a positive ethos within the service.

Parents made many positive comments about the staff in the nursery. They told us "The staff are very friendly, helpful and caring towards all of the children." "All staff are welcoming and approachable" "Teachers are very patient and understanding the needs of each child very well."

Staff had attended a variety of training to support their learning, development, and practice.

We could see the impact of training emerging in the environment, interactions and play experiences offered to children. We would encourage the team to continue to reflect on their practice and continuous professional development to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

We found systems were in place to carry out regular supervision meetings with staff. These helped to set goals for individual team members and identify their training needs to further assist them in their role within the service. All members of the team were registered appropriately with the Scottish Social Services Council or General Teaching Council Scotland.

## 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 care, learning and development the manager and staff should develop consistent communication and monitoring approaches that ensure individualised personal plans are created and shared with parents.

This should include but not be limited to the following areas:

• The recording of meaningful and specific next steps for individual children covering key aspects of their care, support, learning and development.

• Plans should be created and regularly reviewed in partnership with parents and carers as a minimum every six months.

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 14 November 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

A new personal plan template and approach to completing them had been implementing into the service. Plans were completed with families and reviewed regularly with key workers in line with current best practice guidance.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 2

To support children to achieve their full potential through play staff should;

(a) Implement planning and observation strategies that develop children's sense of ownership of leading change related to their self-chosen collaborations in play

(b) Review the indoor and outdoor play spaces and the quality of available resources to ensure all areas are presented in a way that capture children's curiosity and imagination and sustain their interest and engagement.

(c) Ensure children get the right balance of adult directed structured experiences and free flow play across the day

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life. "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)

**This area for improvement was made on 14 November 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Children benefited from a variety of play-based learning opportunities within the nursery. We observed some adult directed and freely chosen activities which supported children to develop key skills in problem solving, risky play, woodwork and mark making. The service had reviewed planning approaches to ensure they were responsive and child led. The team had audited and made changes to the environment to extend children's play and learning. We would encourage the team to continue with plans to further embed new planning approaches to support positive outcomes for children in their care.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that children receive care that is right for them, the manager should ensure that staff are deployed in a way that meets children's needs. This should support high quality staff engagement and interaction with children at mealtimes. It should support staff to be deployed in sufficient numbers to scaffold and facilitate children's engagement and sustained interest in play experiences throughout each day.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19), and "My needs are met by the right number of people". (HSCS 3.15)

**This area for improvement was made on 14 November 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

We found staff were deployed effectively throughout the indoor playroom and enclosed garden which supported high levels of interactions and promoted the wellbeing and safety of children.

Staff deployment during mealtimes had improved to provide children a rich, safe and sociable experience.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 4

The provider should ensure that children have access to a sleep and rest environment that is in line with best practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.19: "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me."

**This area for improvement was made on 14 November 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had reviewed the space available for children to sleep and rest, if required.
Children now accessed a separate room that provided a quiet, relaxing, cosy space for sleep. We asked the service to continue to review and monitor safe sleep practices if more children require a rest during their day.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

## 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 |

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