

# Gore Glen Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Gore Glen Primary School  
Whitehouse Way  
Gorebridge  
EH23 4FP

Telephone: 0131 444 9026

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 8 February 2018

**Service provided by:**  
Midlothian Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002602

**Care service number:**  
CS2016347684

## About the service

Gore Glen Primary School Nursery has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since August 2016. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children at any one time from the age of three years to entry into primary school.

The service is provided by Midlothian Council and operates from purpose built accommodation within a recently built primary school in Gorebridge. It has its own safely enclosed outdoor play area where children can enjoy a range of activities in the fresh air. Children also have access to school facilities both indoors and outdoors.

The main aims of the whole school community are:

- develop a curriculum where one size fits one.
- ensure our curriculum engages, excites and extends our learners to achieve and soar beyond their full potential.
- support our children as visible learners.
- enable our children to use growth mindsets and embrace challenge.
- work in partnership with families and our local community to provide excellent learning opportunities for our children.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC); Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC supports children and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

## What people told us

There were 27 children present on the first morning of our inspection visit and 15 in the afternoon. We observed that children were clearly comfortable with nursery staff and familiar with the environment and routines. During the session children were able to independently choose activities both inside and outdoors. Some of the children confidently chatted to us about what they enjoyed at nursery. Their comments included:

"I'm going round and round and round to make an orange rainbow." (Four year old girl drawing on a table that had been covered with paper.)

"I'm a superhero and this is my friend." (Two boys involved in imaginative play together.)

"I'm making a car park for the teachers and this is where they live." (Four year old girl who had moved resources from elsewhere in the playroom to extend her play with the garage and cars).

"I'm playing with penguins in the snow." (Three year old engaged in solitary play).

We asked for 20 questionnaires to be distributed to parents/carers whose children used the service; 15 of these were completed and returned before our inspection. All respondents strongly agreed that overall they were happy with the quality of the service. Nine had written additional comments about what the service did well and where it could improve:

"My child is always eager to go to nursery he loves joining in with daily activities and seeing his teachers and friends. Although we receive newsletters etc, I would like to be more aware of activities etc of what's going on throughout the year i.e. photographer called trips etc but don't feel they outline if nursery children are involved."

"I think the staff at Gore Glen are exceptional. The nursery environment is warm and welcoming, staff communicate openly, respectfully and are always available to speak to. Nursery activities and play equipment are used creatively to maximise the variety of activities and opportunities available to children, and it is clear there are regular and frequent improvements in what is being offered. My daughter absolutely loves going to nursery now, in contrast to her previous placement. The staff do an excellent job of meeting and adapting to the children's needs and of the group as a whole, and manage the differing age group's needs brilliantly. As a parent, I feel listened to and valued, and I feel confident staff look after my daughter well. An absolutely exceptional nursery."

"Being a new nursery the information for the start of term was not great. I never received a written offer of placement or general information about times, uniform etc. however, I believe this was due to unique circumstances and will be better going forward. Overall the staff are outstanding and my daughter loves going and I can see her developing some lovely friendships."

"Overall, in my opinion an excellent nursery, where I feel at complete ease leaving my child. I can't praise the staff enough, I feel like my daughter has blossomed so much since attending and she has structure, this is very important to her."

"My child is happy and very confident and loves coming to the nursery."

"Very happy with nursery and receive feedback as/when necessary."

"Very happy with the quality of care my child receives at nursery. He loves going and is always happy at pick up and I believe this is down to the great staff!"

"My daughter loves going to nursery each day. She always has lots of exciting stories to tell me. The staff are always very approachable and friendly and I would highly recommend the nursery/school."

"When my child was joining the service, the afternoon session was a new service they were providing. We had a welcome day on the first day to be introduced to the service and have a look and the first week was a settling in week. We could have visited before but were unable to. The school were helpful when I telephoned them for information."

We also spoke with seven parents during our inspection who spoke highly of the quality of the service and the professionalism of staff.

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated the service priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of their provision.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

We found that communication and relationships were a strength of the nursery. All of the parents we spoke with emphasised that staff were very approachable, knew their children well and worked with them to ensure there was a consistent approach with their children: for example, toilet training and promoting positive behaviour. Where needed staff had worked with external agencies and with families to introduce tools, such as communication strategies that supported children's development. This made it more likely that all children would be included, respected, nurtured and achieving.

Staff gathered information about children in the different parts of their personal plans using user friendly language. For example, there were 'family books' that tracked children's individual learning and development and 'able files', which used GIRFEC wellbeing indicators to identify if children needed additional measures to support their health, welfare and safety. We encouraged the service to provide signposts between these documents to give a holistic picture of each child and how their next steps were supported by staff. Providing an overview would also help ensure that personal plans were updated at least every six months.

Healthy lifestyles were encouraged within the nursery. We observed children enjoying a healthy snack of fruit and water or milk. Some of the children were proud to demonstrate how they purchased the fruit from the local delivery van while others helped prepare the snack for their friends. This gave children rich learning experiences: including numeracy and literacy through planning and mark making to compile their shopping list and handling money in a real life situation. This contributed to children being healthy, responsible and achieving.

At feedback we discussed how systems for the administration of children's medication could be improved. We acknowledged that management was in the process of reviewing the medication policy and intended using our good practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services' (2014) to inform this task. For example, we advised it was good practice to audit children's long term medication details every three months to ensure that the instructions were still relevant. The manager should also consider keeping children's emergency medicines, such as inhalers, in the playroom rather than the school office so that they would be readily available when needed by children. (See recommendation 1).

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. The service manager should review the policy and procedures for the management and storage of children's medication to incorporate best practice.

Management and staff should refer to Care Inspectorate good practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Services' (2014)

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2: A safe environment and Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The nursery was a new service that was part of a purpose built primary school within a growing community. As such the staff had trialled different systems and uses of areas to improve the quality of children's experiences. For example, they had moved the entrance to avoid congestion between people entering the nursery and main school. Their priority was now to further develop the outdoor areas and they should continue with these plans.

We found, and parents agreed, that the nursery provided a safe, caring environment where children could play, learn and develop as individuals. The organisation of the environment meant that children could choose activities or select resources to extend their play ideas. There was a very good balance of natural and good quality resources that were labelled to be easily identified by children. We saw that there were lots of other visual prompts to promote children's independence.

Throughout their session, children usually had access to free flow play between their indoor and outdoor environment, which encouraged them to explore, be curious and be challenged: including risk assessing their own activities. We particularly liked that staff had created cosy dens both indoors and outdoors where children could escape the bustle of nursery or chat to a friend as well as having opportunities to join larger group activities. This helped to build children's confidence and resilience. We observed all children helping to tidy up the playroom at the end of each session. In this way children were safe, responsible and achieving.

Children had accompanied access to other facilities in the wider school that included the gym hall, sensory room, soft play and library with ICT resources. Supporting children to become familiar with the geography of the school and the people in it helped them feel safe and included in the school community as well as easing their transition to primary one.

Staff had created informative display boards to explain the life and work of the service and activities being organised for the whole family. Some of the displays were child led where children explained their activities and what they wanted to learn about next. Staff were using 'Building the Ambition' to plan and evaluate children's environments with them. Building the Ambition is Scottish Government's national practice guidance on Early Learning and Childcare linked to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This made it more likely that the service would deliver positive outcomes for children.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

Staff were committed to a child centred approach within their practice. They understood their role in keeping children safe and participated in regular training updates on child protection. We observed staff welcoming children and their families into the service in a warm and caring manner and noted the happy ambience throughout the inspection visit.

We found that the small staff team had a very good mix of skills and experience. Staff we spoke to were knowledgeable about the needs of individual children and worked with them to plan activities around their interests. Staff had participated in training to help them to meet children's individual needs, such as signing, autism and nurture through nature. They were also keen to involve parents in the life of the nursery, for example, one member of staff was working with the service manager to deliver the PEEP programme that supported parents and children to learn together. Although staff told us that they had plenty of opportunities to talk about their practice, both during their working day and within staff meetings, they agreed that it would be beneficial to formalise the structure of staff meetings. For example, by providing an agenda and minute of meetings they would have a record of their professional dialogue, including training that had been shared or evaluation of how their playroom plans were working.

The school headteacher was the registered manager for the service but delegated day-to-day management of the nursery to the senior practitioner. Staff were positive about the support provided by the management team and the training opportunities made available to them. The service provider, the local authority, had an appraisal system in place that was responsive to the continued professional development needs of individual staff. As a new school, the service manager had put in additional support measures such as buddying to help staff be reflective practitioners. Valuing staff had contributed to a motivated team that were committed to delivering good outcomes for children. The manager should continue with plans to adapt the buddying model to be more effective in giving nursery staff individual support, for example by matching critical friends with similar roles.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

# Quality of management and leadership

## Findings from the inspection

The service provider, Midlothian Council, had restructured how early learning and childcare (ELC) was managed and staffed within their authority. This meant that the service was part of a primary school and managed by the headteacher. The school was part of a learning community and within this the ELC community was supported by a principle teacher for the locality. Network meetings within the learning community gave opportunities for staff to share good practice across similar settings.

The nursery team had been meaningfully involved in determining the vision, ethos and direction for the school community. Parents spoke highly of the strong leadership from the school headteacher and praised the caring ethos throughout the school. They appreciated that shared approaches, for example the school uniform made it more likely that children would have a seamless transition when they moved from nursery to school.

Staff were enthusiastic about areas of work that they had chosen to take forward and could tell us how training had been used to support their leadership roles, such as Signalong and PEEP. All of the parents who responded to our questionnaires also confirmed that the service had involved them and their child in developing the service. We saw evidence of this in 'two stars and a wish' completed by parents on what they considered to be strengths of the nursery or where it could be improved. They knew that if they wanted to become more involved in decision making for the school community, they could join the Parents' Committee. This highlighted that everyone felt their opinions were respected and included.

The nursery was included in the whole school improvement plan. Priority areas for the nursery to develop had been set out in a separate action plan extracted from this. At feedback we discussed nursery having more autonomy for setting their own priorities for improvement to ensure that these were relevant to children's needs and the nursery's stage of development.

The management team agreed that the systems for monitoring the nursery could also be improved to help assess the quality of the service and track how good outcomes for children were supported. During our inspection management were very open to suggestions for improving the service and, where appropriate, made immediate changes. For example, the way that children's attendance was registered. This helped ensure children's safety and wellbeing.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

## Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

## Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

## Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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