

# East Craigs Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

79 Craigmount Brae  
Edinburgh  
EH12 8XF

Telephone: 01313 397 115

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
14 December 2022

**Service provided by:**  
City of Edinburgh Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002576

**Service no:**  
CS2003015841

## About the service

East Craigs Primary School Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of 75 children at any one time aged between three years and primary school entry. A maximum of 50 children at any one time will be cared for from the premises at East Craigs Primary School Nursery, 79 Craigmount Brae, Edinburgh, EH12 8XF. A maximum of 25 children at any one time will be cared for from the forest kindergarten at Cammo Estate, Cammo Road, Edinburgh, EH4 8AW.

The service is provided by City of Edinburgh Council to provide early learning and childcare to children. Situated on the grounds of East Craigs Primary School in a residential part of Edinburgh, the service benefits from local amenities and transport links. The service is housed in a self-contained building with a large playroom, office space, a family room and a cloakroom area. Toilets, a kitchen space and a secure garden can be accessed from the playroom. Parents also have the option for a blended placement, where children attend a combination of setting and forest site days.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection on Wednesday 07 December 2022 between 09:00 and 15:00. We returned for an announced visit on Tuesday 13 December 2022 between 09:45 and 13:55. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and invited parents to offer feedback - we did not receive feedback from parents
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life in both the nursery and forest setting
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service.

We gave feedback to the manager and provider representative by videocall on Wednesday 14 December 2022.

## Key messages

Children's needs were met in a nurturing and responsive way to ensure they were involved in their own care.

Children were having fun and were learning in a rich environment which stimulated and challenged their interests.

A safe environment was provided, as risks were discussed and minimised in partnership with children.

Children benefited from a staff team which was committed to continual improvement through self-reflection and evaluation.

Quality assurance processes could be enhanced so they can effectively highlight areas requiring development.

## 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?	4 - 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 made an evaluation of very good for this key question, as major strengths in supporting children's outcomes were demonstrated.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were nurtured and supported throughout their daily experience. Compassionate and supportive staff supported children to settle into the setting. Staff understood the importance of involving parents in this process to support children's wellbeing. This resulted in children who were confident, relaxed and learning through play. Warm and calm interactions made children feel valued. Their needs and wishes were noticed and responded to which kept them involved in deciding their own care. Children were cuddled, wrapped up warm and given cosy places to be, which was comforting and containing for their emotional development. Personal care routines were respectful, giving children privacy, dignity and choice.

Meals and snacks were relaxed and sociable times where children could spend time chatting with their friends at their own pace. It was made safe through staff being present and the preparation of food according to best practice guidance. Children were learning new skills as they helped to prepare snacks and self-serve their own lunch. They were being independent and taking responsibility as they cleared away their own dishes. These were all life skills which children will continue to expand on.

Children's individual wellbeing benefited from effective use of personal planning. Each child had a personal plan consisting of key information about their needs and preferences. Working alongside parents, forest staff and other agencies meant that information was up to date and consistent for children, between all people caring for them. Staff were knowledgeable about children's needs and how they were being supported. The service took steps during the inspection to make personal plans more accessible for staff so they could be updated and referred to when necessary.

Medication and health needs were planned for and known by staff, which meant children were likely to get the right support at the right time. Small changes were made during inspection which further enhanced staff knowledge of all health needs and the actions they should take to support children. This would contribute to continuity of care for children.

To further develop the effective use of personal planning to support children, the service could develop ways to check that children are being consistently cared for according to their personal plan. We have reported on this further in 'Key Question 3: How good is our leadership?'.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun as they experienced play, learning and development opportunities. The setting had a positive and fun energy. Children were laughing, chatting, working together and resolving differences. They were practising skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, negotiation and empathy. Children had space and time to fully immerse themselves in their play. They were leading their own play with their ideas evolving in response to their thoughts and the environment around them. Staff often joined in with the fun which children seemed to enjoy.

Children could be further empowered to be involved in their play and learning through interactions and

actions of staff. Children were supported to be curious, develop critical thinking and be resilient in the face of challenge. Staff understanding of child development and learning through play was demonstrated in their interactions. Their calm approach provided children with a supportive base to explore from, such as the working out of frustrations during play.

Planning processes were child-centred and flexible to be led by changing interests of children. As a result, children were able to follow their interests and realise their own next steps in learning. Online learning journals were used to track children's learning and share it with parents, providing opportunities to extend it at home. The service continues to work on capturing next steps in learning. This would further aid the planning of learning opportunities to meet children's needs.

## How good is our setting?

## 5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question, as major strengths in supporting children's outcomes were demonstrated.

### Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience quality facilities

The setting was well-furnished, comfortable and homely. Children were welcomed into a warm and inviting space which had good ventilation and natural light. The cloakroom area was informative for children and parents, celebrated children's artwork and invited families into consultation or evaluation activities. Children had space for their belongings. This nurturing environment gave children a strong sense that they mattered.

Within the playroom, children had spaces to rest and relax. These are continuing to be developed indoors and in the garden. The fire scene on the screen was enticing for all and gave a cosy atmosphere - children gravitated towards it often. The forest site provided children with homely comforts when needed, such as heat/warmth, cosy areas and shelter.

The setting's indoor and outdoor environments were developmentally appropriate spaces. The large playroom was structured well to offer children space to play and easy access to a range of resources. A range of resources were readily available for children to explore, create with, experiment with and move around as their play required. For example, dough, sand, water, materials. Loose parts and real items featured in all areas. This made the spaces intriguing and filled with endless possibilities. The rich space challenged children to have high aspirations and push forward with their thinking. The setting reflected children's interests in transport and directions, creativity and mark-making, water and ice.

A secure garden was accessible throughout the session from the playroom. This was a natural environment where children could experience the elements with different surfaces, nature and open-ended resources. Some children attend the forest site for whole days as part of their ELC experience. The forest site was a combination of open spaces and natural areas for rich learning. This offered children a different type of experience in the fresh air and all the variety that nature brings.

The setting and equipment were safe, secure and well-maintained. Whilst children were being independent in nose-wiping, hand hygiene was not always considered. Best practice is to wash hands before and after food, on coming in from outdoors and at relevant times such as toileting or nose-wiping. The service should consider closing the toilet door as it is situated quite close to the meal table.

Risk and personal safety were prominent features in children's play and interactions with staff. Children were enabled to consider risks in their activities and decide on actions to be taken. For example, using

effective questioning, staff helped a child explore the risks of standing on a large tube. The child's assessment of the risks was respected; and children carried out a risk assessment of the forest site each day to identify and remind each other of the boundaries.

Contingency plans for the forest were in place and checked on regularly to ensure a quick and smooth transition for children if needed.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as a number of important strengths outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

A shared vision positively informed practice to ensure quality outcomes for children. All those involved in the life of the service were working together to create new aims and a vision statement. The service received by children and parents was reflecting the vision identified. For example, a welcoming space, warm interactions and happy children. Working in partnership to create a shared vision meant that staff could reflect on and plan for how people felt about the service and what they wanted in the future.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in a number of ways and were influencing change within the setting. Parents were informed, involved and consulted with through methods such as survey monkeys and talking walls, which were fun and interactive. Parents were accessing the setting again which aided their connections and involvement with the daily life of the nursery.

Staff's responsive and flexible approach supported children's involvement daily. Staff knew what children wanted and needed by observing and listening to them. Floor books were used to capture children's reflections on learning and interests for further planning.

Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans were in place and were generally contributing to continuous improvement. An improvement plan set out priorities for the year in response to staff, children and parents feedback. Shared leadership was evident as staff took the lead on specific projects, such as parental engagement and play space development. This was empowering and contributed to a shared commitment to improvement. The provision for children was continually enhanced as staff identified gaps and solutions. For example, the development of the tool table and the cosy areas were still evolving in response to children's use of the spaces.

Quality assurance processes were carried out to monitor the progress of children's care and learning but were inconsistent in their impact. For example, children's personal plans were spot checked to ensure content was relevant and current, however the inspection processes highlighted gaps in personal planning. This had the potential to result in missed opportunities to support children in a consistent way. Swift action was taken by the service to ensure key information was updated.

Moving forward quality assurance should be guided by best practice such as, `A Guide for Providers on Personal Planning: Early Learning and Childcare` (Care Inspectorate 2021) and `Management of medication in daycare and childminding services` (Care Inspectorate 2014) to support benchmarking and to identify areas for development. This would ensure children's personal plans were consistently reflecting their current needs and how they were being supported.

**How good is our staff team?****5 - Very Good**

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question, as major strengths in supporting children's outcomes were demonstrated.

**Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment**

Deployment and levels of staff were effective, ensuring good quality outcomes for children. The service was running with more staff per child than the suggested national minimum. This meant a comfortable flow to the day where staff could respond to children's play and care needs easily. For example, a child was supported with personal care, whilst that area of the room continued for other children; and forest children could choose to move from the group to pursue their own interest or need.

Children were familiar with all staff and looked comfortable in their presence. Cover staff had spent time in the setting and so were knowledgeable about the approach and routines. Permanent staff took the lead on routines and children's care to ensure continuity for families.

The team had a good mix of skills, knowledge and experience and demonstrated their willingness to develop and improve. Staff were flexible and supported each other to work as a team to benefit children. They communicated well with each other to ensure their movements did not interrupt children's experiences. Busier times of the day were planned for to keep children's experiences supportive and responsive. Forest staff were mindful about peer wellbeing, particularly in the extreme weather. This was reflective of the nurturing approach of the whole service.

## 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 service should have a system in place to record children's learning and development and any identified next steps. This should be shared with parents to allow them to comment and share information about their child.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16  
Standard 4: Engaging with children.

**This area for improvement was made on 14 November 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

All children had online learning journals which showed regular observations of children's interests and learning. The observations were specific to each child and were detailed. Parents have access to their child's journal and can comment on the observations or share learning from home. Consistently capturing children's next steps in learning is currently being worked on within the team. This should ensure all children have quality next steps which reflect and extend their interests and stage of development.

This area for improvement has been met.

## 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).



## 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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

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

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