

## Edzell Pre School Class Day Care of Children

Edzell Primary School  
High Street  
Edzell  
BRECHIN  
DD9 7TA

Telephone: 01356 237135

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 November 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Angus Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000043

**Service no:**  
CS2003016850

## About the service

Edzell Pre School Class is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 35 children, from the age of three years to those not yet attending primary school. The setting is a purpose-built service located within Edzell Primary School.

The service provider is Angus Council.

The setting consisted of one main playroom, a general-purpose room, and a secure large outdoor space, which includes a sheltered outdoor classroom.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 November and 28 November 2022. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection.

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:

- received feedback by email from seven parents of children who attended;
- spoke with the children, staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff were kind, caring, respectful and nurturing in their approach with children.
- Staff knew the children well and supported their individual needs.
- Planning approaches and play and learning experiences were child centred and responsive to children's interests and needs.
- Positive working with families and other professionals supported children's wellbeing.
- The indoor and outdoor environments were clean, bright and welcoming and of a high quality.
- Children's health and wellbeing as well as their physical development was strongly supported through the delivery of high-quality play and learning opportunities outdoors.
- Staff were flexible and worked well as a team which supported positive experiences for children.
- The management team and staff were committed to the ongoing development of the service, promoting a strong ethos of continuous improvement, leading to improved outcomes for children.
- Management and staff worked well together creating a culture of shared responsibility.

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

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing care from a staff team who respected each child as an individual. Interactions between staff and children were warm, responsive and engaging, which supported children in their learning and helped them to feel safe and secure. There was a relaxed pace which took good account of children's individual needs and routines. Throughout the day the atmosphere was calm, offering children a nurturing learning environment. Children's personal care, although not observed was discussed with staff, and procedures ensured care was carried out in a way that supported children's dignity and privacy.

Positive relationships had been formed between children and staff, and discussions with staff highlighted that they knew the children in their care very well. This allowed experiences, care and support to be tailored to children's individual needs which contributed to them feeling safe and respected. Staff were very in tune to children and their needs, responding to children's requests and picking up on their cues. Children were provided with comfort and reassurance which contributed to positive attachments being formed and supported them feel loved.

Children's wellbeing was enhanced through effective personal planning with families. Children received consistent care, as information recorded in plans and learning journals was up to date. This allowed staff to respond sensitively and compassionately to changes in children's lives. It was clear staff knew children's likes, dislikes, and interests, and used this to help influence the care given to children and the planning for the day.

Staff recognised the benefits and importance of partnership working with parents and other agencies in supporting children to achieve and progress. Regular communication and consultations supported the development of shared strategies and approaches, which contributed to a continuity of care for children. This meant that children received care which was individualised and right for them.

A rolling snack throughout the morning session provided children with choice in when they ate. Children had the opportunity to develop self-help skills during mealtimes by serving their own snack and clearing and washing dishes. This supported children's independence and encouraged them to be responsible. Staff and children sat together during meals, creating a positive social experience, and provided the opportunity to develop children's language and communication skills. Mealtimes were unhurried and relaxed, allowing children time to enjoy food at their own pace. Food choices were nutritious with dietary needs and allergies supported well, which ensured children were given foods that were healthy and safe.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were clearly at the heart of the service. Children's voices and views were respected by the staff team, and it was evident that children and staff enjoyed each other's company. We observed everyone having fun together and heard laughter throughout our visit. One child told us, "I love nursery and wouldn't change anything!".

Children were actively involved in leading their play. This was encouraged through a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences that reflected children's interests. We observed children engaged in learning and confidently taking ownership of their play experiences. Child centred approaches were evident, and the service had developed 'responsive planning' documenting of children's learning which supported planning that was inclusive of children's ideas and suggestions. This approach contributed to children feeling valued, involved and empowered. As a result, children were progressing well, and learning was individualised and meaningful.

Children's ideas were listened to and respected by staff. Staff responded well to children's initiations of play and supported them to further develop their own learning opportunities. For example, children were engaged outdoors in developing a boat using loose part materials and resources. Staff supported to extend and enrich play by responding to children's suggestions, sourcing materials to extend their learning, providing an experience that was meaningful and responsive to children's needs.

Children's creativity, curiosity and thinking was promoted through staff's skilled observations, interactions, and timely interventions. Staff had a very good awareness of when to step in to extend and support children's play to develop, and when to allow play to develop naturally. Children were supported by staff who had a good understanding of child development, theory, and practice, resulting in knowing when to intervene to build on children's learning experiences.

Children's achievements and progress were recognised through observations of their learning and development. Staff identified next steps to support children's progress and to plan learning to meet children's needs. Children's achievements were recognised which helped consolidate their learning, and observations and assessments were used effectively to track children's development.

Floor books had been used to gather children's ideas and gauge interests. These were used to stimulate discussions with children and support including them in documenting their learning and experiences. We discussed how these could be used more consistently and effectively across the team to further develop the opportunities children had to discuss, plan and reflect upon their learning.

Children experienced an environment that was rich in opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills, with a very good selection of resources available across the nursery. Children benefitted from the effective use of loose parts play materials. This meant children's creativity and sense of wonder was promoted as they were able to develop their problem solving and imaginative skills.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a clean, welcoming, and inviting environment. The nursery was homely, and children had opportunities to rest and relax in safe and cosy spaces. This enabled them to seek out quiet areas where they could have some individual time if they needed it, which supported their wellbeing and times of relaxation. Play resources were well presented and accessible to promote children's curiosity and engagement. Spaces were sensitively structured to take account of all children's stages of development and learning.

Children were confident moving around the play spaces and between the indoors and outdoors. This showed us children felt safe and secure in the nursery environment. There was ample space for children to play alone or as part of a group. Children led their play and were able to independently select resources of their choice. We saw children who explored happily, confidently and were engaged in their play.

The health and wellbeing of children was promoted through learning outdoors for a sustained amount of time. Opportunities were available for them to engage in active and physical play, such as climbing, running and cycling on bikes. All weather clothing was provided, and sheltered spaces allowed children to experience outdoor learning comfortably in all weathers. A free flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces ensured children were given choice in where they played.

Children benefitted from an environment that was safe and healthy. Risk benefit assessments for the service were carried out to keep children safe and allow staff to identify and action any arising safety issues. Measures were in place to minimise the spread of infection and support wellbeing. Rooms were well ventilated and regular cleaning took place. Hand washing practices were promoted and supported, and children had a good understanding of routines to keep them healthy.

Children were accessing the wider community as nursery was an integral part of the school community. This promoted a sense of belonging and inclusion. Trips within the surrounding area promoted children's connection with their local community and supported children's understanding of the world around them.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Families benefitted from a service that was committed to a culture of continuous improvement. The service had recently consulted with staff, children, and families to review and update their vision, values, and aims. This ensured that everyone knew what was important to the setting and was given the opportunity to contribute their views and suggestions, effectively supporting partnership working.

Self-evaluation was well embedded into daily practice and allowed the team to identify strengths and areas for improvements and ensured that high-quality learning through play was at the heart of improvement planning. A plan was in place that identified key priorities for development and staff reflected well together, enabling them to track progress, measure impact and identify next steps in their improvement journey. This had influenced changes within the service and contributed to positive outcomes for children. Self-evaluation and improvement was led well by the senior practitioner and management team, and was inclusive of staff ideas, creating a culture of shared responsibility.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance were underpinned by strong consultative relationships between the staff team and families using the service. The setting recognised the importance of consulting with families and had established a variety of methods to support their contribution to evaluating the service. Feedback was regularly gathered through questionnaires and daily discussions, and the team used the input to plan future developments and improvements, supporting family's involvement in the direction of the setting.

The inclusive ethos promoted by the service was enhanced through regular consultation with children. Daily discussions with children and responsive planning allowed staff to capture children's views and ideas and provided the opportunity for children to evaluate current provision and make suggestions to develop experiences. This approach was embedded into daily routines and ensured children's voices played a key role in improvements and change.

### How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

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

#### 4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were warm and responsive in their approach. We observed staff that were respectful towards children, showing genuine compassion and care. They joined in children's play and followed children's interests, and knew the individual needs of children, which allowed them to offer individualised support and care. We found the team to be enthusiastic and motivated, and our discussions highlighted that they were passionate about their role and securing positive outcomes for children.

A visible management team worked alongside staff and played a key role in promoting best practice, supporting improvements, and provided good opportunities for professional discussions. This ensured that children received high quality care and learning. Staff engaged in team meetings and were encouraged to reflect on their practice in a meaningful way, which supported continuous development for the service and them as individuals. Leadership roles provided staff with the opportunity to be responsible in leading service improvements and share expertise with colleagues.

The team were deployed effectively to maintain quality engagement with children and were flexible and responsive in their approach. For example, staff breaks were planned to minimise disruption and to ensure a high level of care and support for children was provided throughout the day. We observed good communication across the team, with opportunities to discuss children's needs, information and to offer support to colleagues. This contributed to effective supervision and continuity of care in meeting the needs of each child.

A mixture of skills, knowledge and experience in the team contributed to a variety of positive experiences for children. Staff had the opportunity to take part in training and were enthusiastic and committed to continuing with their professional development. A wide range of training supported develop knowledge, skills and high-quality provision. Staff were encouraged to record and reflect on training which allowed them to measure the impact professional learning had on their practice and outcomes for children and their families.

Children benefitted from a service that valued their rights to play and experience high quality learning, with a staff team who were committed to providing care and developing positive relationships with those using the service. As a result, children and their families were very happy.

## 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?	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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