

St. Nicholas Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

189b West Main Street
Broxburn
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 January 2026

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003016158

About the service

St. Nicholas Primary School Nursery is a daycare of children service provided by West Lothian council. The service is registered to provide a care to a maximum of 50 children from three years of age up to entry into primary school.

The service is in the town of Broxburn, on the same site as the primary school. The accommodation comprises of a large playroom split into two areas which has direct access to a fully enclosed outdoor play space. It is near local shops, community initiatives and public transport routes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 January 2026, between 09:30 and 16:30 and 28 January 2026 between 09:30 and 12:30. 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:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from 19 families
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children consistently experienced warm, kind, nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well and were responsive to their individual needs.
- Children benefitted from rich, varied, and developmentally supportive learning environments, both indoors and outdoors
- Self evaluation, improvement planning, and quality assurance processes were well established and contributed to continuous improvement, with staff committed to reflection and development.
Positive, trusting relationships with families were embedded.

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	5 - Very 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.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children, families, and staff benefitted from a committed leadership team. They promoted high aspirations for all children. This created a happy and welcoming ethos in the service promoting a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. The vision, values, and aims clearly reflected the ethos of the service. These were strongly embedded in the daily life of the nursery and were evident through staff practice, interactions, and the overall culture experienced during the visit. Families had been involved in shaping these, which strengthened shared ownership.

There was an ethos of continuous improvement across the setting, with self-evaluation embedded in daily practice. Staff worked collaboratively to reflect on practice and demonstrated passion, commitment, and a strong desire to continually improve outcomes for children. Documenting reflections and progress in SWAY provided a clear visual representation of the nursery's journey. Priorities for improvement were well-established and contributed to children experiencing high-quality care, play and learning. The improvement plan was meaningful, clearly linked to outcomes for children, and was used actively as a working document. Staff were reviewing progress regularly and demonstrated a clear understanding of the priorities. Staff leadership roles were well established and aligned effectively with the improvement plan. They spoke confidently about their responsibilities, such as leading literacy development and story massage, demonstrating how these initiatives were benefiting children's learning and wellbeing. These roles contributed to continuous improvement and had a positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality assurance processes were used effectively to review and monitor aspects of the service in a focused and meaningful way. The service was responsive to suggestions made to ensure that monitoring across all areas of practice is consistently robust. This will support children to continue to experience high-quality care and support throughout the setting.

The nursery fostered strong family partnerships, creating a collaborative and inclusive culture. Families were actively involved, and their views sought across a range of areas. Parents reported feeling listened to and valued. Their comments included, 'Parents are regularly welcomed into the nursery for stay and play sessions, we receive newsletters and the staff communicate with us via seesaw' and 'We are always encouraged to say our views'. Opportunities such as Stay and Play sessions, Family Fridays, and the use of QR codes to share information helped strengthen relationships and maintain transparency. These approaches enabled families to contribute meaningfully to the life of the nursery and supported a strong sense of community.

Children play and learn 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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children were happy, confident, and having fun as they played both indoors and outdoors. They accessed a wide variety of opportunities that motivated them to learn, be curious, and supported their engagement across the session. It was evident that children's right to play was central to the ethos of the service, with play forming the foundation of their daily experiences.

Children experienced a broad range of skills through an enabling environment. Opportunities for risky play, creativity, and carefully planned provocations enabled children to explore their interests and curiosities while extending learning. As a result, children were encouraged to be curious and build on their interests. One parent commented, 'The activities are always thoughtfully planned, engaging, and perfectly suited to my child's stage of development, which has helped build their confidence, curiosity, and social skills. It's clear that a huge amount of love and effort goes into each session, and my child is always excited to attend. As a parent, I feel completely reassured knowing my child is supported, encouraged, and celebrated in such a positive and stimulating setting'.

Staff used skilled and responsive interactions to support children's learning and development, drawing on a range of communication techniques to meet the needs of children at different developmental stages. This included the use of open ended questioning to extend play and learning, as well as single words, gestures, and visual aids to engage and support others, helping children feel valued and included within the nursery. Across the playroom areas, experiences provided very good opportunities for progression in literacy and numeracy, with emergent writing materials readily available and age appropriate books easily accessible to enrich play. Staff took time to read stories and sing with children, fostering a love of reading, strengthening relationships and supporting language development and communication skills.

The setting had developed positive partnerships within the local community. For example, children had opportunities to develop their understanding of the growing cycle from seed to harvest with visits to the local community garden. Children were given a range of experiences out with the nursery which included visits to the local care home and library, helping them to strengthen community connections. Families commented positively on these experiences.

Staff effectively used observation and assessment to plan experiences that provided children with support and challenge in their play. Staff used this information to plan in a responsive and intentional way, ensuring children's evolving interests and developmental needs were central to the experiences provided. Daily reflections had recently been reviewed, and staff were beginning to strengthen the use of these to inform planning more effectively. Tracking information was used to implement additional supports and provided a holistic overview of children's progress and ensured support strategies were targeted and meaningful. As a result, children were confident and engaged in meaningful play experiences.

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.

Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, kind, and nurturing interactions from all staff. They were consistently offered comfort, reassurance, and affection, which supported their emotional wellbeing and sense of security. It was evident that staff genuinely cared for the children and knew them extremely well, responding sensitively to their cues, preferences, and needs. This contributed to positive attachments and children feeling safe and secure. Parent comments included, 'I find the teachers to be engaging, caring and nurturing with the kids. They seem to genuinely know all the children and parents and show an interest' and 'Staff really know the children and make them feel important'.

Care was responsive and tailored to each child. Personal care routines were carried out respectfully, with staff ensuring that children's rights and dignity were upheld. For example, during nappy changing, staff used a calm voice, singing and talking softly, which helped build strong emotional connections. These moments were used intentionally to strengthen relationships and support children's attachment.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning approaches. Staff knew children very well, and personal plans were reflective of their individual needs. Support strategies had been clearly identified, regularly reviewed with parents, and consistently implemented across the day. Children who required one to one support received this appropriately, meaning their needs were met by the right number of adults at the right time. This meant children were well supported to reach their potential.

Children experienced sociable, unhurried mealtimes. Children were encouraged to be independent and benefited from opportunities to self serve, pour drinks, and tidy away their dishes. Staff sat with the children, using the time to connect, model positive interactions, and promoted social skills. Interactions during lunch were warm, relaxed, and supportive of language development.

Staff knew families well, and interactions demonstrated warmth, respect, and genuine partnership. Parents described the care and nurture provided as 'second to none' and highlighted the welcoming atmosphere they experienced each day as a key strength. This contributed to families feeling valued and reassured, supporting continuity of care for children. One parent commented, 'I just want to say how grateful we are for the care, passion, and effort that goes into the nursery. It truly feels like a community and that makes such a difference for both children and parents. The team create such a warm, inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels welcome and supported'. The service had created meaningful opportunities to build positive connections with families. Initiatives such as, family Friday, and stay and play sessions enabled parents to spend time in the environment and engage in their child's experiences. As a result, strong, trusting relationships with families had been developed.

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	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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