

# Greenlaw Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Queens Row  
Greenlaw  
Duns  
TD10 6XJ

Telephone: 01361 810 756

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
2 March 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Scottish Borders Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001976

**Service no:**  
CS2003016102

## About the service

Greenlaw Primary School Nursery is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 21 children aged from 2 years to not yet of an age to attend primary school at any one time. Of those 21 no more than 5 are aged from 2 years to under 3 years.

The nursery is situated in an annexe attached to the primary school providing early learning and childcare. Greenlaw is a rural village in the Scottish Borders. The nursery comprises of a playroom with kitchen area and children's toilet and nappy changing facilities. The playroom has access to a outdoor space and the larger school playground.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 February 2026 between 09:30 and 15:30. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke/spent time with children using the service
- received four completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with staff and the senior leadership team
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- 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.

During this inspection we 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 enjoyed warm, nurturing relationships that helped them feel safe, valued and confident within the environment.
- Children benefitted from rich, high-quality play and learning opportunities, which encouraged exploration, creativity and imagination.
- The setting demonstrated strong, meaningful family partnerships that supported children's wellbeing and positive outcomes.
- Staff skilfully used effective questioning to support children to extend their thinking.
- A reflective and skilled staff team promoted ongoing improvement, which ensured consistently high-quality outcomes and experiences 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

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.

### Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service had recently reviewed its vision and values to ensure they matched the care it provided. This helped keep them relevant, easy to understand and in line with current early learning and childcare practice. The updated statements were clearly displayed in the hallway so children, families, staff and visitors all shared the same understanding. Staff had taken an active part in the review, which allowed everyone to share their views and ensured the vision, values and aims reflected the ethos and belief of the whole team.

Staff showed strong ownership and commitment to the direction of the service. The vision placed children at the centre of everything, emphasising the importance of children feeling safe, listened to, encouraged and valued. The aims of the service included helping children learn through play in a calm and caring environment and working closely with families to build strong relationships. Together, these statements showed a clear and consistent focus on wellbeing, positive outcomes and high quality experiences.

A well established culture of self evaluation supported high quality care, play, and learning. Any changes were well planned, informed and reviewed, which made sure they were meaningful and introduced at a pace that helped children thrive.

Staff regularly took part in self evaluation, using recognised best practice guidance to support their work. They had recently taken part in cluster in service days and had begun using 'A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors' and focused on child protection and mealtimes. This meant they reviewed their practice and shared ideas with colleagues from other settings. Staff shared what they had learned at team meetings, which helped maintain positive outcomes for children.

Quality assurance processes were robust. Regular audits and monitoring helped staff reflect on their practice, identify what needed to improve and make clear, measurable changes. For example, tracking how children used different play areas and reviewing personal plans, observations, and tracking sheets helped staff understand agreed standards and expectations. Improvement planning was effective and purposeful. The pace of change and the number of priorities were carefully managed, ensuring that developments were relevant and achievable within the context of the setting.

The medication record missed some key information. Including the date the medication was first given to the child, the dosage to be administered within the setting and signatures when medication was signed out. Strengthening consistency in completing these sections would support clear and accurate record keeping.

Staff used a variety of methods to gather feedback and share updates about improvements with families. Weekly stay and play sessions, regular updates through Showbie, and individual discussions with parents gave families meaningful opportunities to share their views. One parent said, "I've attended a stay and play recently and really enjoyed it. It gave me the opportunity to see the nursery routine and I loved seeing my child in the setting." Another stated, "They send questionnaires to ask if we are happy and to get our opinions." This showed families' voices were valued and acted upon.

The service benefitted from a skilled, stable and consistent staff team, which supported strong continuity of care for children. Staff collaborated effectively and demonstrated flexibility in responding to children's individual needs. One parent commented "There are three members of staff and my child's needs are always met. My child always speaks so highly of them all". Another commented "My child is always so excited to attend and that is down to the friendly, welcoming, hardworking and dedicated staff". This contributed to children and families experiencing reliable relationships and steady, predictable support.

Regular team meetings gave staff time to come together to discuss children's progress, planning, next steps, focus areas and quality assurance processes. Informal notes were taken during these meetings. Introducing more formal minutes would strengthen the quality assurance process by clearly recording discussions, agreed actions and staff's individual responsibilities. This would support staff to follow up on actions and provide evidence of improved experiences, learning opportunities and outcomes.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were busy, happy and fully engaged in their play and learning. Staff used open ended questioning and wondering aloud to extend critical thinking and problem solving skills. Staff were confident and offered experiences that were well matched to each child's developmental stage. Children had access to a wide range of opportunities that supported numeracy, literacy, curiosity and creativity. Books were thoughtfully positioned to build on children's interests and deepen learning. A variety of sensory, schematic and suitably challenging activities further supported the development of thinking skills. These experiences enabled children to make progress at a pace appropriate to their individual needs.

Interactions were warm, kind, nurturing and fun. Staff had formed strong attachments and knew each child's needs very well. Children played positively with peers and developed secure friendships. One parent said "The staff here are a credit to Scottish Borders council, my children are and have always been so excited to come in to the setting and I know that all of their needs, both physical and emotional will be met in this setting. They really enjoy what they do and that is so apparent in the way that they welcome the children in each morning". As a result, children and families experienced a strong sense of belonging within the setting.

Planning was recorded through individual children's observations, focused tracker information, learning books and responsive planning sheets. Children were consulted during planning, helping ensure experiences were tailored to their choices and interests. Children's comments were recorded alongside photos, supporting them to revisit and reflect on their learning. Staff used trackers to identify gaps in children's learning and plan targeted experiences. This meant children received timely support that helped them progress in their learning.

Individual observations recorded on Showbie captured children's achievements, experiences and voice. This meant children's success and achievements were shared and celebrated with parents. Next steps were identified, which identified some challenge to children's learning. A stronger focus on personalised goals would further enhance progression.

Parents strongly agreed that their children had good opportunities to play outdoors. One parent described

the outdoor area as "a wonderful space" with both a structured garden and a woodland area for adventurous free play. Another highlighted how much their child enjoyed the mud kitchen. Although the garden door was open, we did not observe children using the nursery garden during the inspection. Children played outdoors in the playground after lunch, using balls, hula hoops and a large connect four game. Staff joined in, and children had a positive experience alongside school children. Staff reported that children were less inclined to go outside in colder weather but used the garden frequently during warmer months. Staff should encourage children to use the outdoor space throughout the year. This would further enhance their play and learning experiences.

There were several structured routines throughout the day, including three group times and two tidy-up periods. Staff advised that these routines lasted longer than usual on the day of the visit. Staff should remain mindful of the level of structure to ensure children have ample free-flow play and choice.

At the end of the day, children got ready and waited in the story area until parents arrived, before being taken outside by staff. The service should consider allowing parents access into the service for daily drop off and collection. This would strengthen communication, rebuild connections and create a more welcoming and supportive experience for children and families. The service agreed to review this approach to make sure it meets the needs of children, families and the setting.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

Staff created a warm, nurturing, and emotionally supportive environment that helped children feel secure and valued. Their calm, caring and responsive interactions supported children to express their feelings and build early self-regulation skills. There was a calm zone in the cloakroom area and we saw children using this when they needed time by themselves or one to one with a staff member. These practices showed that children's emotional needs were understood and consistently met.

Staff created a warm, welcoming environment where children and families felt valued. A parent commented "The nursery isn't too big and busy so there is a real bond between staff and children". Families had regular opportunities to discuss their child's care and development, both formally and informally. Individual settling visits, stay and play sessions and family events supported this. These opportunities helped families feel welcomed and included. As a result, strong partnerships were built, that supported smooth transitions and enhanced children's emotional security.

Staff carried out regular headcounts and the nursery had a fully enclosed outdoor area. Staff had undertaken safeguarding training and knew the procedures to follow if they had a concern. We asked staff to be mindful when completing paperwork around medication to ensure details were fully completed. This would help keep children safe.

Children benefitted from sociable and unhurried mealtimes. Opportunities for preparing snack, self-serving and pouring their own drinks supported children's independence and skills for life. Staff were knowledgeable about children's routines and dietary needs. They positioned themselves at the tables to aid engagement with children and provide support when needed. This promoted opportunities to socialise with peers and chat with staff supporting language development.

Children's health and wellbeing needs were supported through effective and meaningful personal planning. Chronologies were detailed and some children had care plan+ or medical plans in place. This ensured children were provided the right support at the right time. Plans were child centred and created with children, families and other professionals when needed. They were reviewed regularly to keep them relevant and meaningful. This meant children's rights were respected and families felt included and listened to.

Children washed their hands at appropriate times. Nappy changing procedures promoted dignity, however, the positioning of staff at the unit restricted bathroom access for other children. There was no adult sink available. We have asked leaders to ensure that all staff consistently follow infection prevention and control procedures, in order to keep both themselves and the children safe.

## 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

Along with senior management, nursery staff should be involved in the self-assessment process of the service.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 13 - Improving the service and Standard 14 - Well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

Self-evaluation remains a key priority within the nursery and is supported by a robust quality assurance system. Quality assurance processes are documented and signed off by the EYO and subsequently monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

Staff are actively involved in evaluating both the nursery environment and their own professional practice. These evaluations are well recorded and form part of regular team discussions.

Children are central to all planning, with activities and resources designed to reflect their interests and support their engagement.

The playroom environment is routinely audited to identify elements that are working well and areas requiring further development.

With a clear focus on numeracy and literacy, staff also provide activities or resources that effectively supports the developmental needs of individual children.

This recommendation/area for improvement is met.

## Previous area for improvement 2

Senior management should review ways in which to further involve parents in the service.  
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 14 - Well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2016.**

### Action taken since then

Families were routinely involved in the life of the service. Regular stay-and-play sessions were offered during designated weeks each term, providing parents with the flexibility to attend when it suited them. Showbie was used effectively to support communication with families, offering opportunities for individual discussions, sharing observations of children's learning and provided weekly learning updates.

Daily conversations, questionnaires and regular reviews of personal plans ensured families remained well informed and actively engaged in the setting.

This recommendation/area for improvement is met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

The complaints policy and procedure should be reviewed and updated to include the contact details of the Care Inspectorate. This should be included in the nursery handbook for parents information.  
National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 14 - Well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2016.**

### Action taken since then

The complaints policy and procedure still refers to the Care Commission. The service agreed to update the wording to reflect the Care Inspectorate.

This recommendation/area for improvement is 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

<b>Leadership</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
<b>Children play and learn</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
<b>Children are supported to achieve</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

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