

Ednam Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Ednam
Kelso
TD5 7QJ

Telephone: 01573 224 172

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 February 2026

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Service no:
CS2003017368

About the service

Ednam Primary School Nursery provides a care service to a maximum of 18 children aged between 3 years and primary school entry at any one time.

Between 20 August 2025 and 2 July 2026 children may be cared for in a composite class early learning and childcare (ELC) and Primary one (P1). During this time a maximum of eight ELC children may attend the service with a maximum of 14 children in the shared space at any one time. Should the composite arrangement cease the numbers will revert to those previously in place (detailed in paragraph one above).

Adult:child ratios will be a minimum of:

- 1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day or
- 1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day

The manager is also the manager of Sprouston Primary School Nursery CS2003017380.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 February 2026 between 09:00 and 16:30. One Inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, registration 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.
- Considered feedback from 13 families through an online questionnaire.
- Considered feedback from staff through an online questionnaire.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents relating to the care of children and the management of the service.

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, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within the leadership heading.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how service supports 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

- Ongoing self evaluation supported collaborative improvement, with staff, children and families contributing to review the service and make improvements.
- Strong nurturing practice, effective personal planning and positive family partnerships supported children's wellbeing.
- To further secure children's health and safety the service should strengthen their risk assessments, as gaps in recording, induction and implementation limited their effectiveness.
- Children were confident, happy and mostly engaged in a range of play and learning experiences.
- Observations and assessments effectively recognised children's achievements and supported learning.
- Staff worked collaboratively and reflected on planning approaches to ensure they met the needs of all 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	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - 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 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service had experienced a period of significant change, including shifts in leadership, staffing and the development of a composite early learning and childcare (ELC)/ Primary one (P1) class. The service had begun a review of vision and values after recognising these no longer reflected changes within the service. Although at an early stage, the manager had put in place a structured and inclusive process involving children, families and staff. This early progress demonstrated reflective leadership, effective self evaluation and a clear commitment to children and families.

Continued self evaluation supported the team to manage recent changes and identify ongoing priorities for improvement. Families agreed they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service and commented, "They recently changed to a ELC/P1 composite which I believe is working very well. Our children seem to be thriving within this environment". Staff used planning meetings and in service days to reflect on practice and were beginning to reflect on their practice using 'A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors', with a focus on play and learning. Leaders had also started work to strengthen ELC children's involvement in the self evaluation process, particularly in relation to developing the learning environment. This demonstrated a growing commitment to working collaboratively and using best practice guidance effectively to improve children's experiences.

A quality assurance calendar was in place and monitoring activities were well timed in most areas, such as learning journals, planning and personal plans which positively influenced ongoing improvements. While the calendar supported regular checks in certain aspects of practice, some gaps reduced the service's capacity to monitor and ensure consistent, high-quality provision in some areas. For example, sleep experiences, maintenance and staff appraisals were listed on the calendar but no monitoring activity had been carried out. This resulted in missed opportunities to strengthen practice, such as developing clearer procedures for where children slept or formalising the recording of safe sleep checks. Recent changes in leadership and staffing had resulted in some staff appraisals becoming overdue. Leaders identified this as a priority going forward and this would support staff during periods of change.

An improvement plan was in place and demonstrated insight into what needed to improve in the service. Progress was at an early stage and was ongoing. Improvements had already been made to planning, end of day transitions and mealtime experiences. These benefited children as planning formats were adapted and new approaches were trialled and evaluated. Improvements to the end of day ensured a smooth transition where staff spent time to feedback to families on their child's day and reviewing mealtime routines promoted self-service and children's independence. Key areas would benefit from further development, such as the outdoor environment, which the service was continuing to address through planned improvements and continued evaluation of the service. Overall, the service was using self-evaluation and improvement planning processes which needed time to strengthen and embed into daily practice.

In general, staff identified hazards for children and took action to reduce the risks. However, further work was needed to strengthen some procedures to ensure children were consistently kept healthy and safe. For example, further developing collaborative support arrangements for all children during nappy changing.

Outdoor risk assessments also needed strengthening including to ensure all visiting staff were clear about out of bounds areas and procedures for supervising children across separate garden spaces. Families strongly agreed their child was cared for in a safe, secure, well-maintained environment and told us, "It has safe and well-maintained spaces inside and out". The service identified risk assessments required updating. Improving staff induction, strengthening understanding of procedures and ensuring all risks were documented and acted upon would have enhanced children's safety.

Staff received induction and mentoring to enhance their knowledge of the service. During inspection it was identified that visiting staff would benefit from induction procedures outlining the role of adults within the composite model. This would ensure roles and routines consistently supported children. Staff feedback highlighted some pressures linked to staffing levels and the composite model during nappy changing and when supporting individual needs. The team had opportunities to discuss this regularly at team meetings and leaders implemented supportive measures. Strengthening expectations and enhancing visiting staff's understanding of the composite model would support greater consistency in experiences and outcomes for children.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing.

Children were confident, happy and mostly engaged in a range of play and learning experiences. Families spoke highly of the inclusive and varied opportunities provided. Children enjoyed gym, small world play, construction and stories. At times during the inspection, children moved within two distinct groups of ELC and P1 reducing opportunities for shared play-based learning in the composite class. However, we were assured by staff that this was not the normal practice and children in the composite class usually had daily opportunities for shared play-based learning. There were some positive examples of shared learning between ELC and P1 children, such as an ELC child joining a P1 session and being warmly included. The child's enthusiastic reflection on "becoming a P1 for the day" demonstrated the value of these meaningful interactions.

Staff worked hard to make areas engaging however, inconsistent set up following a holiday break reduced opportunities for children's choice and to lead their learning. Key areas, including water play and dough were not accessible for children to use and the creative and home corner spaces went unused by children. Staff shared that these spaces were regularly used by children and continually adapted in response to the children's interests and needs. Work had been undertaken to reflect the interests of primary one children using a documented approach, ensuring their voices and ideas meaningfully shaped the environment. The service was committed to extend this approach to ELC children to better capture their views and use this feedback to adapt play spaces. Continuing this work and ensuring ELC children's voices continued to inform the design and use of the environment would continue to strengthen their ownership, increase meaningful access to resources and improved levels of choice, engagement and purposeful play.

Free flow access to the garden was available at planned times which meant that children's choices were limited. Staff had identified outdoors as an ongoing improvement priority. Outdoors, children engaged with a range of loose parts that supported creativity, problem solving and physical development. They demonstrated imaginative play, for example creating balance tracks and mixing paint with wet chalks.

Families praised the variety and regular updates to the outdoor provision and valued opportunities for gardening at a local garden, PE and local nature walks. Some areas of outdoor play such as the tuff tray and sand required better preparation to ensure they were inviting and accessible. Overall, children were happy, active and motivated outdoors which supported their wellbeing and physical development.

Staff were continually developing routines to meet the needs of the newly created ELC/P1 composite class. There were several structured routines throughout the day and staff acknowledged that this arrangement had the potential to limit ELC children's choice and independence. Staff were reflective and continually adapted routines to work towards a more considered daily flow that would enhance opportunities for free-flow, uninterrupted play and choice. This work should be continued to ensure children are enabled to follow their interests, sustain meaningful learning, support their choices and fully benefit from a play-based approach.

Staff interactions were warm, responsive and child centred. Staff used a range of skilled approaches such as observing, waiting and listening. Staff getting down to children's level supported children's emotional security, communication and social development. Meaningful dialogue with effective open ended questioning during snack encouraged vocabulary development, turn taking and listening. Staff had begun to embed 'sign-a-long' following recent training, strengthening inclusive communication for all children. Overall, high quality interactions positively impacted children's learning, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Observations and assessments effectively recognised children's achievements and supported learning. A digital portal used for sharing observations and encouraging families to contribute from home strengthened home to setting continuity. Focused child observations improved staff understanding of individual progress and supported clear next steps, with evidence of these being followed up. Overall, observation and assessment approaches positively influenced children's learning.

Intentional planning for play and learning was strong and staff demonstrated a clear commitment to continually improving practice. Staff worked collaboratively and reflected on planning approaches to ensure they met the needs of all children. Core experiences such as snack had been intentionally planned to ensure rich learning experiences. A curriculum overview was used to identify and plan for areas not covered through core experiences which ensured a broad range of learning opportunities. Monthly planning meetings enabled staff to discuss intentional learning opportunities and maintain a child focused approach. Responsive planning was in place and approaches for this continued to be developed. Continuing to develop responsive planning approaches to strengthen the balance of child led to adult led experiences would continue to further develop the planning approaches. This would strengthen the use of children's interests being used to plan their play.

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 demonstrated warm, nurturing relationships with children, who were settled, confident and secure in their care. Families spoke highly of the supportive environment and the trusting relationships staff built and one family commented, "All of the staff are friendly, enthusiastic, and highly professional. Their dedication really shines through, and it's clear that the children are at the heart of everything they do and it's clear to see the children have a lovely bond with all of them". Overall, staff practice promoted emotional security and contributed positively to children's wellbeing.

Children's personal care needs were met in a way that promoted dignity and respect. Nappy changing was carried out discreetly on a dedicated changing unit within the toilet area. Personal care was delivered with kindness and sensitivity and 1:1 interactions were attentive to children's cues, helping them feel valued and emotionally supported. Staff used appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and aprons and robust hand hygiene routines were followed by both staff and children. Further consideration was needed to ensure all children continued to be supported whilst staff carried out personal care tasks. For example, increasing shared play based or joint gather opportunities with P1 during times when staff supported personal care would have helped maintain continuous nurturing interactions and ensured consistent support for all children. The area for improvement from the previous inspection relating to infection control had been met (see area for improvement in section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection').

Children's health and wellbeing was effectively supported. Although no children required medication at the time of inspection, the service had appropriate procedures in place to ensure safe administration when needed. Opportunities for rest and sleep were available and staff demonstrated awareness of safe sleep practices. Staff had recently refreshed their child protection training and demonstrated a clear understanding of safeguarding concerns and reporting procedures. Overall, staff practice was responsive, contributing to children's safety, ensuring they were protected from harm and their wellbeing was promoted.

Mealtimes were calm, well organised and nurturing. Staff sat alongside children to ensure safe supervision and created a sociable atmosphere. Families consistently reported that children were offered a healthy, varied menu that reflected their individual needs and many described increased willingness to try new foods as a result of staff encouragement. Staff knew children well and were responsive to dietary preferences. We observed some opportunities for self serving, such as children serving salad and pouring drinks, which supported emerging independence. Mealtime audits had identified the need to further increase independence through self serving and involving children in snack preparation and these practices were not yet fully embedded. Continued development of these opportunities would further promote children's independence and life skills.

Children's wellbeing was well supported through effective personal planning. Plans were developed in partnership with families and clearly reflected children's needs, interests and preferences using the wellbeing indicators. Families described positive collaboration, noting that staff listened, offered helpful advice and worked with them to support their child's development. One family commented, "If I ever have any concerns staff are always willing to discuss this, often offering grateful advice. Always with the best interest of the children at heart. Forming plans together to get the best from our child's development". Personal plans were updated and reviewed at least every six months to ensure information was current. Chronologies were mostly used well to record significant information and monitor progress. Staff revisited entries to ensure support strategies remained relevant. The previous area for improvement relating to personal plans had been met (see area for improvement in section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection').

Connections with families were supported by regular opportunities for families to discuss their child's care and development. Parents reported feeling consistently welcomed, informed, and involved, highlighting regular digital portal updates, parent consultations, stay and play sessions and daily conversations at collection times as key strengths. They valued the personalised approach afforded by the smaller setting noting that staff took time to share meaningful information about children's experiences and progress. Staff celebrated children's achievements alongside parents, demonstrating a nurturing ethos and shared understanding of each child's needs. Overall, the setting showed strong partnership working that positively impacted children's wellbeing, sense of security, and the quality of their transitions.

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 further develop systems to gather information about children and work with parents and carers to develop children's personal plans to ensure the health, welfare and safety of service users. Care plans must be accurate and updated every six months or sooner if the needs of the children change.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 3 - Health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 26 February 2018.

Action taken since then

A robust personal plan format had been developed to gather information about children. Plans were developed in partnership with families and clearly reflected children's needs, interests, and preferences using the wellbeing indicators. Families described positive collaboration, noting that staff listened, offered helpful advice and worked with them to support their child's development. Plans were reviewed every six months or sooner. This is reported on within the heading 'Children are supported to achieve' within this report.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The provider should put systems in place to ensure that infection control practices within the nursery are monitored to ensure they are in line with best practice guidance.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2 - a safe environment.

This area for improvement was made on 26 February 2018.

Action taken since then

The service ensured infection prevention and control practices were in place such as appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and was in line with best practice guidance. This is reported on within the heading 'Children are supported to achieve' within this report.

This area for improvement had 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.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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