

Hailesland Early Years Centre Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 March 2026

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003015644

About the service

Hailesland Early Years Centre is a registered daycare of children service provided by City of Edinburgh Council and is registered to provide care to a maximum of 56 children not yet attending primary school. Of those 56 no more than 12 are aged under two years.

The centre consists of three playrooms and outdoor play spaces. The centre has a number of community spaces for parent classes. This service operates from 08:00 to 18:00 and opens all year round.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 March 2026 between 08:30 and 16:30 and 17 March 2026, between 08:30 and 11:00. Feedback was shared with the service on 17 March 2026. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration, complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received five completed questionnaires from families and 10 from staff
- spoke to staff members and the management 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, physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

During the 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 received warm, caring and nurturing interactions that helped them feel safe and secure.
- Staff knew children well which supported positive relationships.
- Management was committed to making improvements within the service.
- Planning and learning journals captured children's experiences. The service should ensure next steps are identified in children's learning and development.
- Children's Personal Plans should be reviewed every six months or sooner if needed.

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	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The service had a vision, values and aims in place which were being reviewed in consultation with staff, children, and families. This ensured that they remained relevant and meaningful to the service.

A quality assurance calendar had been created which highlighted key tasks to be completed throughout the year. These included the audits of medication and accidents and incidents. The service should continue to embed quality assurance processes into practice to sustain a culture of continuous improvement. Accident/incident audits required further development to ensure risks and mitigations were effectively identified. This manager agreed to review this in consultation with staff.

A detailed improvement plan was in place and clearly outlined the service's priority areas, including the ongoing development of high-quality outdoor play experiences. Staff contributed meaningfully to these priorities and demonstrated a shared commitment to continuous improvement, which strengthened the service's capacity to deliver sustained, positive change. Staff commented, "Staff are fully involved in the self-evaluation of the service. We meet during in-service days to review the improvement plan, reflect on our progress, and discuss priorities for development".

Staff had completed mandatory training including child protection and first aid. The staff team completed more specific training to improve play and learning outcomes for children. Staff shared key learning during team meetings. We discussed with the manager, that it would be beneficial for staff to complete reflections on their training. This will help staff identify the impact training has had on their practice and improved outcome for children.

Induction checklists were in place which supported new staff into the service. One staff member commented, "New staff receive an induction led by the head of centre, which includes becoming familiar with the building and resources, reviewing policies, and accessing online learning". We discussed with the manager who acknowledged the use of the National Induction resource as part of this process to enhance staff's knowledge and understanding.

Policies and procedures were in place to support the effective running of the service. However, some policies required clearer guidance such as simple flow charts or step by step guidance. The manager agreed to review and update the relevant policies, adding clearer guidance. This would help ensure all staff feel confident in emergency situations, such as a missing child.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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.

Children had free flow access across two playrooms and a garden, enabling them to make informed choices about their play. This supported the development of their independence and confidence within the environment.

We observed positive interactions between staff and children, which helped children feel safe and confident in their environment. This was supported by staff's knowledge of children, which enhanced the quality of relationships.

Some staff used effective questioning and commenting to extend children's learning. Effective questioning prompts were displayed in the environment and supported staff with developing these skills. Continuing to support all staff through discussions and training will ensure children are supported to develop critical thinking skills.

Signalong and visual aids were used to support children to communicate and understand the daily routines. We observed where this worked well to support children, for example, when a child got changed and choosing areas to play. The use of signalong and visual aids helped staff judge when to interact and when to wait and observe. 'Learning Passports' further supported individual children to participate meaningfully in their play and learning.

Planning approaches had recently been reviewed to support practitioner's understanding of how responsive planning can inform intentional learning experiences for children. Management agreed that ongoing reflection as a team on what's working well will ensure high-quality and responsive play.

Observations of children's play and learning were recorded in floorbooks and online journals. Reviews with families supported shared understanding of children's progress and next steps. However, once next steps were identified, they were not always clearly visible or demonstrated progression over time. We discussed with the service using one tool to document children's learning and progression over time. This would contribute to children, families and partners working together to understand children's learning journey.

Children are supported to achieve **4 - Good**

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

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.

Children experienced warm, nurturing interactions that supported their wellbeing. Staff knew children well and had a good understanding of their needs and support strategies.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected, and consistent strategies were in place to support individual needs. For example, staff getting down at their level and using visuals/object of reference. As a result, children's rights were respected and made them feel valued.

Mealtimes were unhurried and sociable, allowing children to develop independence skills such as self-serving, pouring, and clearing away. Staff sat with children and engaged in conversations, offering support when required.

Children had individual personal plans developed in partnership with families. However, inconsistencies in reviewing these meant that some plans did not contain up-to-date information reflecting children's current

needs, support strategies, or progress. The service needed to ensure all personal plans were reviewed at least every six months, or sooner if significant changes occurred, to support continuity of care and positive outcomes. We signposted our guidance 'Guide for providers on Personal Planning'. (See area for improvement 1.)

The service liaised with partner agencies, including health visitors, Home Start and Speech and Language, to support children and families. They maintained current information, which enabled them to provide appropriate support and contribute meaningfully to families' decision-making process in relation to their child's support.

Medication procedures were in place; however, inconsistencies were identified including unsigned three-monthly reviews and being signed after medication was administered. These gaps had the potential to impact children's health and wellbeing needs. Management agreed to review and strengthen medication procedures to ensure documentation is completed correctly.

Families were invited to take part in Family Learning Together programme, Stay and Play and Bookbug sessions, which strengthened relationships and promoted family engagement. Staff showed a genuine interest in each child's wellbeing, creating trust and a sense of belonging. Transitions were well planned, helping children feel safe and secure, and parents received updates at the end of each session, contributing to an inclusive environment that valued families. One parent commented, "We have good communication and nice conversations" while another shared, "Staff are really understanding and great at communicating with me when I drop my child off and when I pick them up".

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and development personal plans should be updated at least every six months or sooner if there are changes in a child's needs.

This is to ensure that care, play and learning is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 15).

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	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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