

Stockbridge Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 March 2026

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003017060

About the service

Stockbridge Primary School Nursery is located within the grounds of Stockbridge Primary School in Edinburgh. The service is registered to provide a care service for up to 40 children under primary school age.

The children are cared for in a large playroom and have access to a snack and outdoor play space as well as the main school hall, offering opportunities for energetic and active play. The service operates during term-time hours.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 March 2026 between 09:00 and 17:00. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since last inspection.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke/spent time with 27 people using the service and four of their friends and family
- received eight completed questionnaires from families and six from staff
- spoke with staff 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, 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 experienced kind interactions from staff who knew them very well.
- Children were having fun, actively leading their own play, and were fully engaged.
- Children benefitted from daily access to outdoors and positive connections to the wider community.
- Personal plans should be developed to capture strategies of support.
- Children's learning observations should show clearer next steps and progression to support ongoing achievement.
- Families were warmly welcomed into the setting and had opportunities to be involved, included and speak with staff about their child's care and play experiences.

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	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 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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.

The service had a well embedded vision, values and aims, 'Safe, Ready and Respectful'. Recent consultation with children and families had strengthened their understanding of these and ensured the values remained meaningful. These values were evident in children's play and in staff interactions. Children had created a display which supported them to connect with the values and understand what these meant for them.

Improvement plans were in place and identified two clear priorities: parental engagement and literacy and communication. Staff showed a strong understanding of these areas and were actively involved in taking them forward, which developed their leadership skills.

Targeted training had strengthened staff skills, enabling them to lead approaches such as parent workshops. Drawing Club and Story dough were offered which supported early literacy and creative skills. These experiences were having a positive impact on children's learning and were helping to strengthen relationships with families. A parent said, "The staff seem well trained to offer a good and educational experience for the children".

Quality assurance processes were structured and guided by a detailed calendar of monitoring, supervision and review activities. This approach supported regular reflection and timely identification of improvements. Self-evaluation processes helped staff consider current practice, next steps and impact. A staff member said, "We are very good at discussing as a team and observing and reflecting on changes". Regularly revisiting the impact of change would help ensure key learning and progress were clearly recorded.

Staff had used environmental audits to adapt play spaces to increase children's exploration, choice and independence. Families had opportunities to provide feedback, for example, after Peep sessions they highlighted strengths and what they valued. Introducing a clearer method for showing how this feedback led to action, would have provided clearer evidence of how family views influenced ongoing improvements.

Weekly team meetings provided valuable time for staff to share information and reflect together. The use of reflective questions supported meaningful professional dialogue and helped maintain a culture of continuous improvement. Staff valued the training available to them and spoke confidently about how it had strengthened their practice and improved outcomes for children and families. Appraisals took place twice a year. This offered structured opportunities to discuss professional learning, leadership roles and future development needs.

Policies and risk assessments were in place to promote safe practices and were routinely reviewed to ensure they reflected current guidance. New staff completed the national induction resource, which helped ensure consistent messages across the team and supported a confident, well-informed start to their roles.

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.

We observed a well-balanced range of child led and adult led play experiences that supported breadth and depth in learning. We observed children independently access resources with confidence. They were keen to show the inspectors what they were doing. Staff were observed to hold back and intervene when appropriate to provide support and extend children's play and learning. For example, a group of children were going on a bug hunt and were using language such as, "I am going to find a big one' and "I wonder where is best to find them". Staff provided responsive interactions which resulted in them tuning into children's interests, joining their play and extending ideas through open-ended questions. Resources such as books, art and materials were used creatively to promote curiosity and inquiry. Observations, mind maps and shared learning discussions, demonstrated that children were actively involved in leading their play and making choices. One parent said, "Children have opportunities to learn freely about what they want; it seems like everything is very child centred". There was scope to build on children's input by involving them in identifying their own next steps. The manager agreed to discuss this with staff and consider how this could be progressed.

Children moved freely between indoors and outdoors. The outdoor environment offered open-ended toys with lots of different possibilities for problem solving and imaginative play. It also provided active play resources that promoted physical wellbeing. A parent said, "It is great that the children are allowed out into the playground whenever they want in the day. This is something, as a parent, I really like about the nursery". Children were busy, happy and engaged throughout the visit, spending extended periods in chosen experiences. This meant that resources were age appropriate, challenging and stimulating. Bookbug and library visits supported children to develop an early love of books and literacy. The wider community was used well to enrich learning. A parent shared, "The trips to Botanic Gardens, local bookshop, a local garden, and the castle this year have been excellent".

Numeracy and digital skills were actively promoted within children's play experiences. Observations of children's learning were shared with families online. This allowed them to view the experiences their child took part in. This could be strengthened by making new skills, achievements, and next steps in children's learning and development, clearer to families. Systems for tracking and monitoring learning were in place. Making more visible how this information informed next steps and support for children would have provided clearer evidence of the learning achieved through this approach. The manager was beginning to use data to show the impact of tracking and showed commitment to how they could develop this further.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good**Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support**

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 relationships were evident across the setting. Warm, compassionate interactions supported secure attachments and helped children feel safe, valued and confident. Quiet spaces were available to help

children rest and regulate their emotions. A parent shared, "Thank you so much to all Stockbridge Nursery staff for their hard work and creating a caring, inclusive environment". Another shared, "I feel very comfortable having them care for my child. You can tell they want the best for the children".

Lunch routines were calm and unhurried. Children chose when and where to eat, contributing to a relaxed mealtime experience. Organisation of outdoor lunches could be improved. For example, a dedicated resource station, and picnic benches would have further supported comfort and independence. The setting is looking at funding to develop outdoor spaces and lunch. Families expressed that more than one lunch option would enhance children's choice. The setting valued this feedback and planned to share with the catering team. More options would support children's right to make choices about their meals. Reflecting on and observing lunchtime practice will help ensure routines continue to evolve in ways that promote comfort, choice, independence and wellbeing.

An effective transition programme helped children build confidence and familiarity with the wider school environment. Children took part in regular visits to school spaces, supporting familiarity and confidence during transitions. Staff knew children well and provided individualised care with kindness and consistency.

Personal plans were reviewed at least every six months; ensuring changes are clearly recorded. To strengthen clarity and support consistent, responsive practice, we asked staff to confirm if there were no changes. Key information about children's care and support was shared at team meetings. This enabled staff to provide coordinated support in a timely manner as they had current information.

Procedures for the use, storage and administration of medication were effectively followed by staff. These included three monthly reviews involving parents to ensure information remained up-to-date and reflective of children's needs. We discussed reviewing accident forms regularly to ensure best practice was followed. For example, ensuring parents signed documents and identifying any trends or patterns. This could support the setting to respond proactively and further improve safety for children. This will be now added as part of their quality assurance processes.

Families consistently reported feeling welcomed and confident in the care their child received. The setting actively celebrated family preferences and cultures, promoting inclusion, respect and enriching children's understanding of the wider world. A parent shared, "Their efforts to acknowledge and celebrate the different cultures of the children in the classroom have been invaluable in strengthening my child's sense of cultural identity". Families had daily opportunities to speak with staff about their child's care, with more formal consultations also available. We found there was a range of opportunities to support engagement such as coffee mornings and stay and play sessions. These helped families feel included and strengthened positive, trusting relationships with staff.

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	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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