HMIE | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

4 August 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In June 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Cowgate Under 5's. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and worked closely with the head of centre and practitioners.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the centre's work.

- The head of centre has led change across the setting very effectively. She has ensured children receive a broad curriculum that reflects national guidance while respecting the Froebelian approach that influences the work of the nursery.
- Staff interact very skilfully with children to extend their learning and deepen their thinking. The team engage in extended conversations which enable children to share their ideas and follow their fascinations.
- Children's and family's wellbeing is central to the work of the centre. Senior leaders and staff have used a range of strategies to create a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment that values and celebrates diversity.
- There are strong partnerships with the local community and parents. Children benefit from the many opportunities they have to visit places of interest and local greenspaces to learn about their community and the natural world.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the head of centre and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council.

- As planned, the head of centre should continue to introduce digital technologies into the curriculum. Senior leaders, staff, and parents should collaborate to ensure children develop skills for life and learning through a wide range of technology.
- Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop and embed approaches to planning and assessing children's learning. Staff should better consider what children might learn next to ensure they make the best possible progress in their learning.


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We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate some of the setting's work using three quality indicators from the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors. Quality indicators help early learning and childcare settings, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each setting, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish early learning and childcare settings are doing.

## Here are HMIE' s evaluations for Cowgate Under 5's

| Quality indicators | Evaluation |
|---|---|
| **Curriculum** | **good** |
| **Learning, teaching and assessment** | **good** |
| **Wellbeing, inclusion and equality** | **very good** |
| Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors | |

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the HMIE website at:
Cowgate Under 5's | Inspection Report | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland

**What happens next?**

We are confident that the setting has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents/carers about the setting's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its settings.

Sandra Kehoe
HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland


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