

Summarised inspection findings

The Royal High Primary School Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

27 October 2026

HM Inspectors gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the ELC's work using two quality indicators from the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors. This document provides our summarised findings.

Key contextual information

The Royal High Nursery Class is part of Royal High Primary School and is accommodated in a separate building in the school grounds. The nursery class has one large playroom with direct access to an outdoor area. The leadership team consists of a headteacher who the registered manager is and an early years officer who is in charge of the day-to-day running of the nursery. There are three full-time early years practitioners, one part-time early years assistant and one domestic assistant working in the setting. A local authority peripatetic teacher has recently started working in the setting four days per week.

The nursery is open from 8.30am to 3.15pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am to 12.00pm on a Friday. The nursery is registered for 30 children aged three to those not yet attending primary school. Currently, there are 24 children on the roll, with almost all attending on a full-time basis. The setting has recently welcomed 16 new children.

Learning, teaching and assessment	good
<p>This quality indicator focuses on how children benefit from access to high quality spaces and well-established routines that help them feel secure and ready to engage. It explores how children are supported to build positive relationships, regulate their emotions, and purposefully participate in a wide range of motivating learning experiences. It demonstrates the importance of staff having a high level of skill supported by strong pedagogical leadership. This includes a clear understanding of pedagogy, the concept of play, how children learn, children's rights and children's behaviour.</p> <p>It places value on high quality relationships, consistent expectations, and skilled interactions that enable children to sustain engagement, follow routines, and build independence in their learning. This indicator highlights the importance of observing and interacting sensitively with children to plan and assess their learning. It recognises the value of involving children fully in planning their learning indoors, outdoors and within the local community. This quality indicator emphasises the importance of robust tracking and monitoring of children's progress to ensure practitioners know all children very well as learners.</p> <p>The themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• children's learning and engagement• interactions to support learning• planning and assessment• tracking and monitoring	

- All staff have highly positive relationships with children and families. Their use of daily routines, which are predictable, help children to feel content and to settle. During free flow play, almost all children are motivated and show sustained engagement. Staff should now review their 'gather time' experiences to ensure they are meaningful and encourage children's curiosity and creativity. This should help to maximise children's engagement in learning and provide challenge to meet their developmental needs.
- Children experience a range of high-quality learning experiences indoors and out. Staff increasingly make use of the wider community to enrich children's learning through visits to the

library, beach and nearby wildlife garden. Staff have embedded effectively, literacy and numeracy experiences throughout play spaces with children creating their own menus and discussing money as they play. There is scope for staff to develop a few spaces further to promote children's curiosity and provide real life experiences.

- Staff engage in sensitive interactions with children as they play. Almost all staff consistently interact in a way that supports and extends children's thinking very well through questioning and commentary. This supports children's learning environment to be calm and purposeful. Staff have made a positive start to embedding meaningful digital technologies in the setting using tablet devices. A few children are learning to use these to share their learning and record their views. Staff should now continue to support children to engage with a wider variety of digital technologies in order to further enhance children's learning.
- Staff use online journals well to document children's learning and achievements. Parents engage with these very well and share learning and information from home. A few children can access their journal and upload learning that they want to share. Children's learning targets are increasingly individualised. Staff have recently reduced the number of active targets for each child. This is supporting the team to carefully consider next steps and how they will plan for these. Staff should continue to review the effectiveness of their observations of children's learning to ensure they capture successfully significant learning. More concise and focussed observations should help staff build holistic assessment information for each child.
- Staff have recently reviewed approaches to planning children's learning. They have further plans to develop and refine their approaches alongside colleagues in the cluster. They should continue to develop approaches to ensure all planning is proportionate and manageable. Staff have weekly planning meetings where they discuss observations and use children's interests to plan for children's learning. Staff's approaches to responsive planning, and provocations work effectively to capture children's interests and extend children's learning in the moment. Staff's use of intentional planning is not yet fully providing appropriate support and challenge for all children. Staff should now ensure intentional planning supports better engagement and meets the developmental needs of all children.
- Senior leaders support staff well to monitor and track children's progress. They make good use of the local authority developmental milestones and tracking formats to consider each child's development. Staff are now reviewing children's progress as a whole team more regularly. As a result, staff are building a stronger understanding of each child as a learner and how they can be supported in the setting. Where barriers to progress are identified, staff work proactively with families and partners to plan supports and interventions. Staff use parent consultations twice per year and informal opportunities at drop off times well to discuss and review children's progress with families.

Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	good
<p>This quality indicator highlights the importance of positive relationships and children's wellbeing. It recognises the importance of providing high quality, inclusive, and appropriate rights-based support.</p> <p>These approaches result in improved outcomes for children's learning, wellbeing and participation. It takes full account of children who may require additional support to access and benefit fully from their entitlement to high quality ELC. This includes identifying and assessing their learning and wellbeing needs in a timely manner and providing personalised and targeted support.</p> <p>This quality indicator recognises that strong, collaborative partnership working between those supporting children is essential. It highlights the importance of meaningful engagement with children and families to inform decisions about how children's needs should be met.</p> <p>This quality indicator emphasises the important role senior leaders play in ensuring all staff have relevant and worthwhile professional learning to meet the diverse and sometimes complex needs of children.</p> <p>The themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive relationships and wellbeing • universal support • Identifying and assessing learning needs and targeted support • inclusion and equality 	

- Across the setting, staff promote positive, nurturing relationships with children. At this early stage of the session, staff place a high emphasis on supporting new children to settle and become familiar with nursery routines. As a result, most children are happy and are becoming increasingly confident and independent. A few children are benefiting from a more targeted approach to help them settle. Staff welcome children and families warmly at the start of each session. Families value the care and kindness shown to them and their children. Staff are positive role models for children and as a result, most children are kind and caring to each other. They are learning to share and take turns during both adult and child-led activities.
- Staff support children well to talk about and describe their emotions. As children arrive in the setting, they select an 'emotion stone' to share how they are feeling. Staff make positive use of this information to support children across the day. Staff have introduced different successful approaches to help children separate confidently from their parents, for example, waving at the 'rainbow window'. This is working well to support both children and families.
- Children are developing a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Staff use a range of resources to help children talk about the wellbeing indicators in different contexts. This includes the eight-wellbeing teddy bears which children can take home and share with their families. Staff use the bears across the setting to enable children to have regular discussions about their wellbeing. For example, 'Mr Safe Bear' was used to help children use scissors safely. Children talk about the healthy food choices they make at snack and at lunch and as they help to prepare snack. Children are developing good self-help skills during a relaxed and unhurried snack and lunch experience. Staff should extend the opportunities children have to be active in

more spacious contexts, for example, in the school playground. Staff promote children's rights well across the setting and as planned, they now need to develop further, children's understanding of their rights.

- As an established team, senior leaders and staff work well together to promote the wellbeing of children, families and each other. They ensure children's wellbeing is central to everything they do. Staff have fostered respectful relationships with families and are taking very positive steps to become more familiar with families new to the setting. They demonstrate a great emphasis on securing positive outcomes for all children and families. This includes strong partnership working and involving families effectively in their child's learning. Staff have effective processes in place to encourage children's attendance at nursery. They follow up on absences promptly when they occur.
- Staff know all children very well and are attuned to their individual needs. They work effectively with families and partners to take full account of children's learning and development needs. Each child has a personal plan which staff use well to build on prior learning and plan appropriate next steps. Staff regularly review and update children's individual next steps. Helpfully, these are shared with families. Senior leaders and staff have effective assessment procedures in place to identify children who may require targeted support. They create appropriate plans to ensure all children make the best possible progress.
- Staff engage in professional learning to strengthen their knowledge and skills in promoting children's wellbeing. Recently, staff undertook professional learning provided by health professionals to help them to be confident in supporting a few children in the nursery. Senior leaders should continue to support staff to engage in professional learning to enable them to continually improve their practice.
- Staff have created a welcoming and inclusive setting where all children and their families are treated fairly and with respect. Staff offer a wide range of opportunities to support children to learn about different cultures and lifestyles. They gather key information for each child to ensure that they celebrate events and festivals which are special to families. Across the playroom, there are a range of resources which help to develop children's understanding of equality and diversity.

Safeguarding

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the setting and the education authority.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

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