

Summarised inspection findings

Greenbank Pre-school

The City of Edinburgh Council

10 September 2024

Key contextual information

Greenbank Pre-School is located in a purpose-built wing of Greenbank Parish Church in Edinburgh. It is in partnership with the local authority to provide funded places. The spacious accommodation comprises an open-plan playroom, with a garden area accessed directly from the nursery. Part of the playroom has to be cleared each night to accommodate a range of evening clubs and activities organised by the church. The setting is registered for 30 children aged three to five years attending at any one time. There are currently 30 children on the roll, most of whom access their 1140 hours by attending from 8.25 am to 2.35 pm each day during term time. A few children do not access their full entitlement and parents of a few children pay for additional hours. The pre-school is managed by a committee comprised of church members and parents. Staffing includes a manager, a deputy manager, five early years practitioners most of whom are part time, and one early years assistant. Staffing has been very stable over many years.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- All children enjoy their time at the pre-school. They are happy, motivated, highly engaged and creative in their play. The well-organised indoor and outdoor spaces support children to explore, investigate and use their imagination. Practitioners' child-led approaches encourage children to be independent and provide opportunities for personalisation and choice. Almost all children persevere well and show sustained engagement in their activities. Children have opportunities to play alone, in groups, and to take part in whole-group story, yoga or music sessions.
- Practitioners are very good role models for children and support them well to show kindness and empathy towards each other. Staff's skilful interventions and reassuring explanations acknowledge children's feelings and help them to deal calmly with disagreements. As a result, children behave well and take responsibility for their actions. Staff's work to promote positive behaviour helps raise children's awareness of their rights and responsibilities through the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Practitioners have developed very positive and supportive relationships with children. They praise and encourage children, building their confidence. The playroom ethos is nurturing and relaxed. This environment helps children to settle and explore confidently, at their own pace. All practitioners use a wide range of open-ended questioning very well to extend children's thinking and deepen their learning. Staff's professional knowledge results in skilful, well-informed interactions. Practitioners plan spaces to take full account of children's emerging interests, which supports children to feel fully involved and consulted.
- Practitioners' planning is based mainly on responsive approaches which take account of children's ideas and interests. Staff also use more intentional planning. This helps to ensure

that children cover seasonal activities and festivals, and that they experience a broad and well-balanced range of learning opportunities. Playroom planning makes very effective use of staff's areas of expertise. These include practitioners leading on technologies, creative arts, forest education, and cooking and baking. This enhances children's overall learning experiences. Staff are highly attuned to children's responses and adjust the rhythm of the day to meet their changing needs. Practitioners now need to enrich learning further by developing a range of experiences in digital technologies.

- Practitioners know children very well as learners. They observe children at play and record information about their learning using an online platform. This detailed information records examples of children's learning and includes their own comments. Practitioners also use the local authority developmental milestones very effectively to track children's progress. Staff are working on further developments to children's journals. These should enable more effective tracking of children's progress over time.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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 school and the education authority.

3.2 Securing children's progress

very good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children are making very good progress in communication and early language. They listen carefully at story time, joining in with actions and retelling the story in their own words. A majority communicate confidently using full sentences and, at times, complex vocabulary. They show a good understanding of poems and nursery rhymes and can identify words which sound alike. Most children recognise and write their own name. A minority of children are ready for more challenging opportunities in early reading and writing.
- Children are making very good progress in mathematics. Almost all count to ten and beyond. Most can identify number symbols and match sets of objects to their numeral. They understand simple mathematical concepts of more than and less than. Children explore how blocks fit together and accurately identify a range of two-dimensional shapes. They are learning about volume and capacity as they pour water into different sized containers, and about money as they purchase train tickets at 'Greenbank Station'.
- Children are making very good progress in health and wellbeing. They discuss healthy food choices and contribute towards menu planning through the 'Friday Café'. Almost all children confidently self-serve and clear their plates after eating. Children are now ready to take on further responsibilities in contributing to mealtime experiences. Almost all children demonstrate very good independence skills, for example as they change clothing to go outdoors and after water play. They confidently explore their local environment and assess risk at weekly forest sessions. Most can balance, climb and dance confidently.
- Overall children have made very good progress over time since they started at the pre-school. A few children could make brisker progress if they are provided with a greater level of challenge.
- Children are developing a wide range of skills for learning and life. The pre-school's environmental work and their focus on recycling and sustainability are helping children to be responsible citizens. Children develop their creativity very well as they explore the paintings and styles of famous artists. They take part enthusiastically in music and movement activities.
- Practitioners ensure a strong focus on promoting equity for children. They provide sensitive, regular and valued support and advice to children and families. Staff know the local community well. They ensure family learning events focus on including all the participants fully. Parents report feeling comfortable approaching staff if they have concerns or queries.

- All practitioners value and respect children and families and know each child's family circumstances well. They are aware of any potential barriers to learning and are proactive in addressing these. Children who require additional support make effective progress as a result of staff's targeted interventions. Where children need more specialist support, staff work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that the support being offered meets each child's needs well.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland 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.