

# Summarised inspection findings

**Elmwood Nursery**

East Renfrewshire Council

1 July 2025

## Key contextual information

Elmwood Nursery is located in Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire. The nursery extends across two bungalows, which have been extended and developed creatively. There are five playrooms and extensive outdoor spaces. The nursery is registered for 87 children and offers extended year places to children aged from birth to those not yet started school. The nursery is in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council to deliver funded early learning and childcare for children aged three years and over.

The nursery has experienced significant change in recent years. This includes a change of ownership, which has seen the introduction of aspects of the Hjalli model from Iceland. This includes a focus on children's individual needs and their environment. Staffing has been consistent and includes one nursery manager, 17 practitioners and one support worker.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**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

#### Children aged under three years

- Practitioners support children aged from birth to three years to settle very well within a nurturing and caring environment. Children have access to a range of well-considered indoor and outdoor experiences, which take account of their age and stage of development. All children are happy and confident in their environment, engaging very well in their daily routines.

#### Children aged three years and over

- Practitioners across the nursery have created an environment which is rights based and puts children at the forefront of everything they do. A warm welcoming ethos ensures all children settle quickly, are happy, safe and secure. Practitioners have developed strong relationships with children and parents that are nurturing and friendly. They effectively role model positive behaviour and support all children to be respectful and kind to their peers. Children display exemplary behaviour and interact with others in a respectful way.
- Children benefit from the opportunity to engage in a range of spontaneous and planned learning experiences. They participate enthusiastically, both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy spending extended periods of time in the exciting range of well-developed garden spaces. For example, they engage enthusiastically in risky play, as they navigate and climb the trees in the front garden. Practitioners support children very well to lead their own learning. They effectively support children to develop their curiosity, creativity and inquiry skills as they engage with a wide range of loose parts play.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of child development and continue to develop their approaches to early learning pedagogy. Their interactions are sensitive, caring and responsive,

which promotes children's confidence and independence very well. Practitioners listen effectively to children and most practitioners use commentary well to extend children's thinking. They understand when to stand back and when to intervene in children's play. Children can access a tablet computer to research an area of interest or look at their online learning journal. Practitioners continue to review how they make use of digital technology to ensure it is relevant and meaningful for children.

- Practitioners record observations of children's learning in their online learning journals well. They have developed their observations over time to ensure a clear focus on capturing children's significant learning and possible next steps. They link children's experiences to Curriculum for Excellence and helpfully track coverage. Practitioners capture children's engagement in learning experiences on attractive displays, in floorbooks and learning journals. They share children's learning experiences with parents on a regular basis, with a few parents expressing an interest in receiving more frequent updates.
- Approaches to planning, tracking and monitoring are an area for continued development. Practitioners have recently evaluated previous and existing approaches to planning and tracking to inform future direction. They need to develop further their approaches to planning. In doing so, practitioners should ensure they record the range of planned and responsive learning experiences on offer to all children. Practitioners also need to consider their approaches to tracking children's learning. This will help to identify potential gaps and support practitioners to plan next steps for children's learning.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

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

- Almost all children are making good progress in communication and early language. Children engage in conversations and express with confidence their thoughts and ideas. They listen with respect to adults and peers and can wait and take turns. Most children engage in early mark making and can write their name and other words. They are beginning to engage in writing for a purpose. A few children show interest in reading books. Children would benefit from more opportunities to hear stories read aloud during the nursery day, for example, during small group times.
- Almost all children are making good progress in mathematics. They can confidently count forwards and backwards within ten during play and daily activities. A few children can count and recognise numbers within 100. Children are developing their understanding of shape by identifying and naming common two-dimensional shapes during play. They can match and sort objects and can recognise and create simple patterns. Most children are beginning to explore early measurement concepts through play and can compare length using appropriate language. Children are developing their problem-solving skills and should continue to engage in opportunities to develop their skills further. For example, through real-life contexts.
- Almost all children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. Almost all children demonstrate well-developed physical skills, through a range of opportunities indoors and outdoors. For example, children confidently run, jump, climb and balance on a range of surfaces. They take part in risky play and enjoy using loose parts to create obstacle courses, which they navigate skilfully. Children develop an awareness of healthy lifestyles through daily routines such as snack, lunches, handwashing and toothbrushing. Most children have developed their social skills very well, confidently expressing their feelings and emotions and manage conflict well. Practitioners should continue to support all children to manage and talk about their emotions.
- Almost all children are making good progress in their learning, as a result of their nursery experiences. Practitioners should continue to capture and build on what children know and can do. This will help support all children to make continued progress in their learning.
- Practitioners capture evidence of children's achievements on an attractive display and use praise and encouragement effectively throughout the day. This supports children to be confident and successful learners. Practitioners should continue to encourage parents to share children's achievements from home.

- Practitioners build trusting and respectful relationships with all families. They make very good use of information gathered from families to understand the needs of individual children. They use this information to implement effective interventions when required, which allow all children to achieve and feel included. This is helping reduce potential barriers to learning and ensure equity for all.

## 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.