Fort Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

25 North Fort Street
Edinburgh
EH6 4HF

Telephone: 0131 554 4077

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 October 2018

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003015652

About the service

Fort Early Years Centre, referred to as the centre in this report, is a service provided by City of Edinburgh Council. The centre is registered to provide a service to a maximum of 99 children aged between birth and entry into primary school. Thirty nine of those may be under three years of whom a maximum of nine may be under two years.

The centre is situated in a residential area of Leith and offers a range of childcare places including pre-school nursery class for morning and afternoon sessions, child and family placements on a referral system, affordable childcare places, eligible two-year old places as part of the government 600 hours pledge and wrap around care.

A range of services are provided by the centre including outreach to families, group work and individual parent and child work. The centre building has a number of playrooms for children. At the time of the inspection four playrooms for three age groups were in use. There was additional space for other groups and parenting sessions. There is a hall for indoor play with a large soft play area, staff facilities, office and meeting spaces. The centre has several large
garden/outdo play areas.

A mission statement for the service had been developed and included:
'In order to promote each child's, welfare, learning and development, we will aim to work in partnership with parents and carers and other agencies to provide an inclusive flexible service which meets the needs of each family and maximizes their potential.'

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

We spoke to a number of children during our visit to the centre. Children were very proud of their centre and some older children showed us their playroom and outdoor areas. Children told us they liked coming to 'nursery' because it was exciting and fun. Younger children who could give us their verbal views were observed to be relaxed and very engaged in their play.

We issued a care standard questionnaire to parents as part of the inspection. We received seven completed forms. We also spoke to several parents/carers during our visit to the centre. Comments from parents were very positive. Parents highly valued the service for children under three years and the quality of learning provided for children in the nursery class. The staff group were said to be professional, helpful and motivated across the centre.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

The ethos of the centre was one of family involvement. Staff were very good at engaging with parents and carers to help them understand and strive to achieve positive outcomes for children. Staff were skilled and consistent in gathering a very good range of information about children and developing relationships with parents and the wider family. They did this through the effective use of a key worker system and open and professional dialogue with parents. A number of opportunities to be included in the life of the centre were offered to help parents share and develop skills and become part of their child's learning and development. These opportunities included the small market garden, regular stay and play sessions, a cooking group and parent helper opportunities.

Staff were respectful and nurturing in their interaction with the children. They gave praise and encouragement to children during their play and their achievements were recognised. These strategies helped develop children's self esteem and confidence. Behaviour was managed in an age appropriate manner and good strategies were used by staff to help promote self regulation and the development of self awareness.

Very good links had been made with other childcare professionals to enable staff to seek advice and develop strategies for children who may need additional support. Staff were aware of the child protection policy and were well supported by senior staff in this area. Staff received regular child protection training to enhance confidence and knowledge in this area.

The playrooms throughout the centre provided children with attractive and engaging environments, which were maintained to a very high standard. Very good use had been made of displays, lighting, mirrors and natural resources to create cosy and welcoming playrooms for children. A particular strength was the provision of role play resources through dressing up, home corner, small world resources and loose parts to help develop curiosity and imagination. Staff were aware of the importance of attractive and welcoming environments in making children and their parents feel valued. Staff throughout the centre had a good understanding of planning for children's play experiences through being responsive to children's ideas, interests and suggestions.

Since our last visit the number of playrooms had been adapted to better meet the needs of children. This had resulted in each age group having direct access to a large outdoor area for their age group. The outdoor areas provided children with an exciting range of learning opportunities. The mixture of tarmac for wheeled toys, grass areas, the use of willow and fruit trees and small wooded areas had been imaginatively developed by staff. Additional resources including loose parts had been used to support a full range of play and learning

experiences. Children told us how much they liked playing outside, this was further evidenced by how engaged in their play children were outdoors.

What the service could do better

We asked staff to assess the routine for the end of the session in the two-three year old playroom (Buttercups). They should evaluate if group time offers children a positive experience as some children were not engaged in this part of the day. Staff had already identified that a different strategy was needed at this time as it made the parent pick up time, busy and a little fractious.

There had been a number of accidents in the room for two-three's (Buttercups) on the day of our visit. When reviewing accident records we noted that there were a significant number of accidents across the week. We acknowledge that this age group have a number of bumps and a number of age related altercations. Accidents should be monitored to identify if there are patterns which could be avoided.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
10 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good
22 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
19 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good
26 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
21 Oct 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed

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