Hope Cottage Nursery School
Day Care of Children

Cowans Close
East Cross Causeway
Edinburgh
EH8 9HF

Telephone: 0131 667 5795

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 9 November 2017

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Care service number:
CS2003015864

About the service

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate in 2002.

Hope Cottage Nursery School is a service provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. It is situated in a residential area in the heart of Edinburgh close to the city centre. The nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 46 children aged three to entry into Primary School. A mixture of full and part day places are offered though mostly full-time places are the new norm. The nursery has two large playrooms and a large mature garden. Most of the children are bilingual, speaking 13 different languages. The ethos of the nursery includes to:
Provide a safe and secure environment in which children, staff and parents feel welcome and valued.
We wrote this report after an unannounced inspection by one Care Inspectorate inspector between 8.25 and 12.15 on 6 November 2017. 29 children were in attendance. We gave feedback on findings from the inspection to the manager from 8.30 on 9 November to the manager.
As requested by us, the service sent us an annual return. We issued 15 questionnaires to parents of children who used the service and ten were returned by the time of writing the report.
Management and staff continued to build on their participation strategy ensuring that families who used the service were included in changes and improvements in the nursery. We saw evidence of this throughout the nursery.

What people told us

Comments taking carers' views into account which we received from parents and carers during the inspection were supportive of the work of the nursery and they included:
"Very good. Pleased with everything and the children are very happy."
"It's run very well. Staff are friendly, happy and enthusiastic."
"Through learning journals we get feedback and you know how he's getting on."
"It's clean and I've no problems."
"I looked around a few nurseries before deciding on this one. I liked the structure in it. It really suits us. I liked the friendly atmosphere. The staff are particularly brilliant."
"It took her three hours to settle and from then on she loved it. The environment is so very good."
"I am very happy in terms of how well she is progressing. She is making good friends. It took her a while but then she settled down and now we have no concerns. They are very straight forward here. If she does something to put herself at risk they tell her so I have no concerns."

Comments received on the Care Inspectorate questionnaires included:
"We have been really happy with Hope Cottage Nursery. The staff were fantastic and put so much effort into getting to know the children and helping them develop. I believe they put a lot of effort into identifying different ways to help the children learn and reach milestones. The garden space is particularly good and used imaginatively and well. Growing fruit and veg was a great activity for my son. I know that the staff listened to his feedback and ideas and created activities based on this."
"It would be better if they could circulate freely between indoors and outdoors."
"Staff all take a very child focus approach and are very good at supporting the emotional wellbeing of all the children. You feel the ethos permeates the whole school. The settle in period was stretched out completely in line with his needs and they were so gentle and supportive of the whole family."
"He is disappointed in the school holidays that it is not on."
"As a result of him being in the nursery we have been able to observe how the staff manage and integrate all

the children's diverse needs and behaviours and to really appreciate their skill and caring manner in using the non violent communication and attachment based approaches."
"I feel there could be more of a focus on free play and more creativity sometimes. I've observed my son's creativity and seen my son's concern about drawing things the right way. He loves woodwork and fire making, den building tree climbing etc too."
"The most important thing for my child has been the emotional, nurturing and attachment focused care that he has been given - very friendly and welcoming. They do so much work with the children in helping them develop in confidence and learning - also keeping the parents well informed. I love the idea for the learning journey as all parents can log in and see the progress their child has made. They do so much work with the children in helping them develop in confidence and learning - also keeping the parents well informed."
"Hope Cottage is a good nursery and my child has enjoyed being there. There is more they could do to involve parents in learning and feedback on how we have all enjoyed gradually becoming part of a friendly school community that is always welcoming with approachable staff ready to listen and talk about how your child is doing."
"Hope Cottage is outstanding. They meet the needs of our child exceptionally well. To the extent that we do not need to ask for anything extra. We are completely satisfied with their work. The staff are wonderfully skilled."
"I am really happy with the staff, services and all support provided."
"I would say Hope Cottage is one of the best nursery's there is. Staff can comment too."
"The garden is relatively big but the outside area could be much better designed and used including provision of 'loose parts ' and going to nearby green spaces too."
Care Inspectorate Comment:This had been largely addressed since these comments were made.
"They could use neighbouring green spaces and other amenities more - they don't go out very often."
Care Inspectorate Comment: We saw that outings and use of the community had increased since this had been written and following comments from parents and cares. Forest Kindergarten was also just beginning at the time of the inspection.
"Parent classes have been very supportive."
Care Inspectorate Comment: A PEEP class had been very popular and had led to a parent group promoting non violent communication.
"The lunches that you can buy if you buy extra hours have shocked me. This is delivered by the Council and it seems that healthy eating has by passed the nursery menu."
Care Inspectorate Comment: The nursery accepts that this was accurate when written but it has been addressed to our satisfaction since this comment was written by a parent.

Children's comments received during the inspection included:
"I've made a fishing rod for catching fish."
"We went for an Autumn walk."
"We went to the Botanic Gardens. I saw a big greenhouse."
"I was building with the blocks with my friend."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their 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	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Hope Cottage Nursery provided a welcoming and friendly service where staff knew children and families very well and worked closely with parents. We saw that children were happy, safe and secure. The key principles of Building the Ambition, the National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare, were embedded into practice with a great emphasis on nurture, attachment and extending communication with children and families, especially where, with so many, English was not their primary language. Positive and nurturing relationships were evident throughout the nursery and children readily approached staff for reassurance and support.
Children were supported to lead their own play and to be creative and curious. Staff used their powers of observation effectively to support children's independence and recognised when their intervention would enhance the children's experiences and learning.
Children were well supported by skilled, enthusiastic, highly committed staff who had a wealth of experience and a broad range of qualifications which they used to provide very good learning opportunities for children, who were developing and thriving very well in the setting. We saw that staff worked hard to encourage children's confidence and independence and offered fun activities to follow their interests.
Children were learning boundaries, to play co operatively, negotiate with their peers and were learning to be responsible and independent. Staff were encouraging them to share and to promote respect. Children told us of the friendships they had made and we saw how children were included in different activities indoors and out. We saw staff's respectful interactions with children as they all had fun together throughout the day.
All children benefitted from learning Signalong, particularly those with English as an additional language and those with hearing impairment and with additional needs. All staff had been trained in signing and a system had been set up to share videos with staff of a child signing at home with parents to encourage an inclusive culture.
A Theraplay session had been started within the nursery working with sensitive children in need of additional support. By helping to build and enhance attachment, self esteem and trust in others staff were able to encourage healthy interaction between parent and child which was personal, physical and fun.
Individual members of staff took on the responsibility for developing projects such as PEEP (The Peep Learning Together Programme) encouraging parents and carers to join in with their children for songs, music, games and story sessions. As a result it encouraged learning together.
The nursery had worked in partnership with the National Gallery to encourage more parents and young children to enjoy arts and the galleries. Together they devised a session for children and parents to look at the construction of the gallery observing the different shapes used.
Children's curiosity, enquiry and creativity was apparent as they investigated their outdoor surroundings deftly using litter pickers to move leaves in the garden to search for hedgehogs and rabbits in the undergrowth.
Children played in small groups piling up tubes and plastic bottles one above the other to see what would

happen in the water tray. Staff were skilled at supporting and extending their learning.
Taking into account the restraints of the building we felt that children had very good access to the nursery garden for outdoor play and learning. The outdoor area provided children with very good opportunities to explore the natural environment as well as providing them with experiences using more traditional resources. Forest Kindergarten started during the inspection with one member of staff trained and experienced in this area of work. All staff were excited about the introduction of this regular area of learning and development for the children. Although this wasn't embedded in practice it was expected to continue and progress on a weekly basis. Children had been involved in raising funds for new garden resources. Comments from children during play with leaves, logs, nuts and blocks included: "We've made a house for hedgehogs." We also saw tyres on the frame in the garden which had replaced the old swings, a tepee, and good use of the bushes for children to climb and hide, along with imaginative use of an old boat and a 'dry river bed'. This ensured that the children were offered a rich learning environment outdoors within an 'oasis' in the city as described by one of the parents. The addition of 'Loose Parts' had increased opportunities for children to be creative, imaginative and to problem solve.
Parents were involved in the self-evaluation and auditing of the nursery. They had recently completed "Parent views" questionnaires. Staff told us parents were given the collated responses from the questionnaire showing them that their views were having an impact on improvement and would contribute to them feeling respected and included
We saw that the nursery worked in partnership with a variety of other agencies such as health visitors, paediatricians and speech and language therapists. Feedback from these professionals supported the view that the nursery was very effective in supporting children and families.

What the service could do better

We saw that some accidents were not logged with sufficient detail although all bumps to the head were seen to be clearly logged. The service should monitor this as part of the auditing process.

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	
31 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
7 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed

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