Inveralmond Early Years Centre
Day Care of Children

Willowbank
Ladywell
Livingston
EH54 6HN

Telephone: 01506 280015

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 February 2023

Service provided by:
West Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002601

Service no:
CS2003016164

About the service

Inveralmond Early Years Centre is provided by West Lothian Council and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children aged 2 years to not yet attending primary school at any one time. No more than 10 children are aged 2 years to under 3 years.

Other condition information includes:-

Adult:child ratios will be a minimum of:

•2 years to under 3 years -1:5
•3 years and over -1:8 if the children attend more than 4 hours per day, or
•1:10 if the children attend for less than 4 hours per day

The registered manager is also the registered manager for Ladywell Nursery School - Livingston CS2003042522.

The service is located within the Livingston area of West Lothian with local amenities and transport links nearby. The accommodation consists of a foyer, office space, toilet facilities, staff room and a large open plan playroom. There is also direct access from the playroom to the fully enclosed outdoor garden space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on the 21 February 2023 between the hours of 09:10 and 16:50. We also returned on 22 February 2023 between the hours of 9:50 and 13:40. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff, the manager, depute manager and the early learning and childcare support manager (ELCASM)
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents in the service
- Invited 20 families to provide feedback to us via email sent via the service. We received no responses.

We provided feedback to the manager, depute manager, ELCASM and the lead officer for the early years team for West Lothian Council on 27 February 2023 by video call.

Key messages

- Children experienced a welcoming environment where there was a culture of respect and inclusion. As a result they were settled, confident and engaged in their play and learning experiences.
- Staff knew the children in their care well. This meant that children's needs were supported effectively throughout the day. For example, dietary requirements and medical needs.
- Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they routinely had access to fresh air and outdoor experiences throughout the day.
- Further action was needed to develop risk assessment information and prompts for staff to assist with the robust assessment of potential risks in the environment and how these would be minimised to support children's safety.
- Management understood the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed to support the wellbeing of children.
- Plans were in place to improve upon the environment. This was to include identifying the source of and addressing damp areas of the building and intermittent issues of the water pressure and temperature in the children's toilets.
- Quality assurance processes helped the management team and staff to self evaluate and support a culture of continued improvement. These processes were to continue to be developed to further outline the action taken to enhance children's experiences, the resources and any improvements to the environment.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff and this had helped establish positive relationships. Staff knew the children in their care well and this meant that they were able to support children's individual needs effectively. When children were unsettled or needed additional help at different points of the day, they were sensitively supported, soothed and reassured by staff. Children were valued and respected which demonstrated that staff understood the importance on the rights of the child.

Children experienced mealtimes that were unhurried and relaxed. Staff were knowledgeable of how to keep children safe and this included serving food to minimise the potential of choking and ensuring dietary requirements were met. The service acknowledged lunches were delivered to the setting and progress was ongoing to ensure that the menu was in line with best practice guidance. Staff sat with children to support social interaction and provide help when needed at lunchtime. During snack time, staff nearby were often task orientated and we discussed the importance of availability of staff to support good role modelling and provide assistance when needed. To support life skills and independence, children collected their own plates, cutlery and cups and took them to their table. This meant that at times, children did not have the appropriate plates and bowls to enable them to serve their foods appropriately and needed further staff support. Some children did not serve themselves a drink and this meant that there was a potential for children not to be hydrated at this time. The service were to continue with their audit of mealtime experiences to ensure these were set up and effectively planned to ensure a consistent approach for all children.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported as they all had a personal plan. This included information about their individual care and support needs such as their individual learning and development targets, all about me information, dietary requirements, allergies and any medical needs. Where children had any additional support needs, there was also information about the strategies of support including any links with other professionals. As a result, information gathered was taken into account and planned for to ensure that children were supported to reach their full potential. Personal plans were monitored by management on a regular basis to ensure these were up to date and targets had been reviewed with families. There was a lot of information in children's personal plans and we discussed ways to have an overview of significant information held.

Where children had any medication needs, a copy of the strategies of support was stored with their medication. This meant that staff had access to the relevant information to help support children's needs quickly and effectively. Flow charts were used to support staff practice for the administration for certain medications or medical conditions in consultation with families. The flow charts were to continue to be reviewed with families to ensure that the action outlined was reflective of children's individual care and support needs.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children were able to have fun and experience a variety of play and learning opportunities throughout the

day. For example, outdoor experiences, woodwork, the smart board for yoga activities, reading and art and crafts. This meant that they could lead their own play and make choices from a range of experiences. Not all areas of the nursery were well used by children and some resources needed to be replaced or enhanced. For example, the home area. Further action was planned by the nursery to continue with their audit and observations of spaces to monitor children's use of specific areas and provide additional resources to enhance children's learning.

Children's skills in language and literacy were supported a variety of opportunities. For example, story telling, puppets, rhymes, songs and the lending library. As a result, this benefitted children's confidence and communication skills.

Staff skills and their planning approaches meant that children's play and learning experiences were responsive to their interests and life experiences. Floor books outlined photographs and children's feedback about experiences which were linked to the wellbeing indicators. As a result, the majority of children were confident and engaged in their play. Staff effectively responded to children during their play experiences and their effective use of questions helped extend children's learning and thinking skills. For example, children worked together to problem solve in the garden to roll the ball across the guttering as this also needed to be high enough for those on bikes to be able to go under this.

Children's experiences and their progress were assessed and evaluated by staff with some information and photographs shared online with families. Not all families had accessed this information and as a result further communications with families about how this could be supported was to continue to take place. For example, through ongoing parents' evenings and when parents reviewed their child's personal plan information. This would ensure that all families were kept up to date with information about their child's play, learning and development.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as there were a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a welcoming environment which was warm, well furnished and comfortable. There was also plenty of natural light and ventilation to support children's wellbeing. Children's safety was maintained as there was a secure entry system to the building. Planned improvements to the environment were due to take place which included addressing the damp areas of the building and the intermittent water pressure and temperature. In the interim, arrangements were in place to monitor this and maintain child safety.

Daily visual risk assessments of the environment were carried out by staff to assess the safety and suitability of the environment. At times, we found that there were missed opportunities by staff to identify and action issues within the environment. For example, some areas needed further attention to detail prior to use such as the broken planters and pallets in the garden following tree cutting, replenishing of soap and the cleaning of cupboard doors and toilet cubicle doors. To support staff, further action was needed to develop written risk assessment information and prompts to outline potential risks and how these would be minimised. This information should include documenting the action taken as a result of any issues identified. This would support effective checks to be carried out on the environment and the consistency of staff practice to support child safety (see area for improvement one).

The majority of indoor play areas were well presented and attractively set up to support children's stages of development, current interests and learning. The layout of the environment also provided children with cosy and comfortable areas within the busy playroom to enjoy a quiet space. For example, the book area and the sensory area.

The fully enclosed outdoor area was accessible directly from the playroom. To facilitate children's access to the area in all weather, staff helped children to choose coats and footwear provided by the service. This meant that their own clothing was kept clean and dry during their outdoor activities. The outdoor spaces provided children with a variety of experiences including loose parts resources to enable children to explore and lead their own play. We discussed the development of the outdoor space as part of the assessment of the setting and to consider the provision of further outdoor cosy spaces for children to use.

Areas for improvement

1. To support a safe environment for children, the provider should ensure that risk assessment information and prompts are developed to help identify potential risks or issues and how these would be minimised. This would support effective and consistent checks of the indoor and outdoor environment to be carried out by staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:
'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17) and 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.22).

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as there were a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

There was a shared vision, values and aims for the service. This helped to inform staff practice and their understanding of the importance of meeting the needs of children and families. Children's views and opinions about their care, play and learning were valued by staff and this meant that children were respected and included.

The manager of the service was also the manager of a nearby service provided by West Lothian Council. This meant that there was a joint improvement plan which identified the priorities to develop the service. Information about achievements and proposed improvements were to continue to be shared directly with families. For example, plans for a community garden. This would ensure that families were kept up to date and have opportunities to influence change within the setting.

Children and families benefitted from the service's culture of continuous improvement. Team meetings and staff training opportunities helped staff to reflect on their practice, learning and development. For example, the self-evaluation of children's rights. An induction was carried out with new staff and this included ensuring their knowledge and awareness of the child protection procedures. This meant that they would know who to contact in the event of any concerns. Review meetings with staff also helped identify areas of success, challenges and any training that may be need to support them in their role.

Quality assurance processes supported the management team to assess what worked well in the service and identify areas for development. For example, identifying the need for further rhyme activities and observations of spaces to support children's learning. The quality assurance processes should continue to be developed to ensure that the action taken and the impact as a result are monitored and documented. For example, further assessment of the indoor and outdoor environment, resources and mealtimes. This would help support the ongoing culture of improvement and self-evaluation to enhance outcomes for children.

To further support ongoing improvements and reflective practice, we discussed information that staff could access on the Care Inspectorate's website and 'The Hub'. For example, the improvement and support questions in 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-age children' (Care Inspectorate 2022).

How good is our staff team? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as there were a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The management team recognised the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed throughout the day. There was a varied working working pattern for some staff and this ensured that the full day was covered effectively. Relevant information about the day was shared with staff when they arrived and this helped promote continuity of care and minimise any impact on children.

There was a clear approach to identifying staff roles and responsibilities and this included distributive leadership roles and staff taking responsibility for the setting up of and working within specific areas of the playroom. Staff also demonstrated that they were flexible in their approach to support team working to support positive outcomes for children. This included staff communicating effectively with each other when they were moving out with their area to carry out a specific role. For example, to support a child to transition into another activity.

The mealtime routines were a busy time and only one member of staff was deployed to the snack and breakfast routine. At times, this meant that they were carrying out associated tasks in the kitchen area as well as supporting children when needed. Whilst other staff were nearby, we discussed that staff deployment should be further considered. This would ensure that the snack experience for all children is monitored and any support identified where needed.

Families and children used the register to sign in and out each day. Due to the different patterns of attendance, this meant that children arrived and left at different times. The number of children in attendance was also documented on the board. Further progress was needed to ensure that these records were monitored by staff to ensure they were kept up to date. This would ensure that the registers reflected the correct number of children in the event of an emergency and to assist with staff deployment when shift changes took place.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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