Prestonfield Primary School Nursery
Day Care of Children

Peffermill Road
Edinburgh
EH16 5LJ

Telephone: 01316 671 336

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
31 May 2023

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003017048

About the service

Prestonfield Primary School Nursery is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 64 children at any one time aged between 3 years and primary school entry.

The service is located within Prestonfield Primary School in Edinburgh with local amenities and transport links nearby. The accommodation consists of a main open plan playroom, toilet facilities and dining room for lunch. There is also direct access from the main playroom to the fully enclosed outdoor garden space. Other designated spaces were also available to use when needed including an additional playroom and rooms for small group time activities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 24 May 2023 between the hours of 09:45 and 17:00. We returned on Monday 29 May 2023 between the hours of 9:20 and 15:50 to continue with the inspection. 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 head teacher and depute head teacher
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents in the service
- invited families to provide feedback to us via email sent via the service. We received six responses.

We provided feedback to the head teacher, depute head teacher and the early years quality improvement education officer for City of Edinburgh Council on Wednesday 31 May 2023.

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 individual needs were known and supported throughout the day. Further progress was needed to ensure a consistent approach to the reviewing of children's personal plans and to clearly outline the strategies of support for children including any dietary needs.
- Children's health and wellbeing was supported as they routinely had access to fresh air and outdoor experiences throughout the day.
- Quality assurance processes helped the management team and staff to self evaluate and support a culture of improvement. These processes were to continue to be developed to consider the action taken as a result or the impact changes have had to support positive outcomes for children.
- Management understood the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed to support the wellbeing of children. Further progress was needed by the provider to ensure a consistent and effective approach to staffing levels for supporting children's individual needs.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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 resulted in positive relationships being established. Most staff knew the children in their care well and new staff or supply staff had a briefing each morning to share relevant information. When children were unsettled or needed additional help at different points of the day, they were sensitively supported, soothed and reassured by staff. For example, after an accident or to remind children of the safety boundaries of their play. Children were valued and respected which demonstrated that staff understood the importance of the rights of the child. Key staff worked proactively with families and other professionals to support children's individual needs. This included home visits as part of the settling in process to get to know families in their own environment. Feedback from families included "Fantastic Nursery. Wonderful, caring and compassionate nursery teachers and staff. Always make sure the children have a wonderful exciting and interesting learning experience through play".

Children experienced mealtimes that were unhurried and relaxed. Snack time took place in the main playroom and children were able to choose when to have this. Lunches were served in the dining room and took place over two sittings. Staff were knowledgeable of how to keep children safe and this included minimising the potential of choking and also ensuring any dietary requirements were met. To further support this, we discussed that the allergen overview sheet should be developed to include details of all children with any dietary information and the action to take as a result. Lunches were delivered to the setting and staff were able to provide feedback about children's response to the foods provided and make any suggestions. This helped ensure that children benefitted from nutritious meals that they enjoyed. Some staff sat with children and other staff generally assisted children during the mealtime routine. This meant that social interactions were supported and children received help or assistance when needed. To help learn life skills and independence, children collected their food with the support of staff and served their own drinks at the table. Children were able to self serve their own foods at snack time and we discussed that further opportunities to also be able to do this at lunchtime would further benefit children's independence.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported as they all had a personal plan. This included gathering information about their individual care and support needs. Where children had any additional support needs, information was in place to outline any strategies of support including any links with other professionals. As a result, information gathered was taken into account to help children to reach their full potential. Systems were in place to review personal plan information on a regular basis with families to ensure these were up to date. We discussed that there should be a consistent approach to ensure that all personal plans have been reviewed and outline any information updates or changes. Where children have individual care needs such as dietary requirements, the stepped approach and strategies of how these would be supported should be clearly outlined in their personal plan. This would ensure that information accurately reflects children's current care and support needs and how these would be met. We signposted the management team to the Care Inspectorate guidance: 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning: Early Learning and Childcare' (Care Inspectorate, 2021).

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, indoor and outdoor experiences including water play and making puddles, den building, story telling and crafts. This meant that they could lead their own play and make choices from a range of experiences.

Children's skills in literacy and numeracy were supported through a variety of opportunities. For example, group time activities and discussions with their key worker, story telling, resources in the home area, songs and measuring how high the potatoes had grown and how tall they were. Two staff spoke additional languages and they used these and English with some children to communicate or translate the routines of the day. As a result, this benefitted children's confidence in the nursery.

Staff skills and their planning approaches meant that children's play and learning experiences were responsive to their interests and life experiences. This included taking on board children's comments, feedback and ideas. As a result children were engaged and confident during their play. The majority of staff responded effectively to children during their play and learning experiences and this helped extend children's learning and thinking skills. For example, children helped prepare snack and with staff support and demonstrations, children were successful in making sandwiches for their peers. However, it was difficult at times throughout the day for staff to extend children's play experiences whilst being responsive to other children's needs and requests.

Children's experiences and progress were assessed and evaluated by staff with information about their progress and areas for their next steps being shared with families. Other communications about their child's progress and achievements were shared through parents' evenings and progress report updates. This helped include families and ensure they were kept up to date with information about their child's play, learning and development. Feedback we received from families acknowledged the weekly update sent out by email and information provided on the online learning journals. However, some feedback indicated that they would like to see further information and pictures of children's day to day activities.

How good is our setting? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

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 by a secure entry system to the building and the garden was fully enclosed. Since the previous inspection, planned improvements to the environment had taken place to enhance the outdoor garden space and the toilet facilities had been refurbished. This demonstrated that the service understood the importance of children being able to access well maintained and developmentally appropriate spaces. Feedback we received from families included "Beautiful nursery and garden. The parent council and new head teacher have made great changes and worked hard to create a warm welcome space".

The 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, reading a book

independently or with staff.

The fully enclosed outdoor area was accessible directly from the playroom. To facilitate children's access to the area in all weather or when using water play resources, children had access to waterproof clothing and boots. 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 which enabled children to explore and lead their own play such as den building.

Daily visual risk assessments of the environment were carried out by staff to assess the safety and suitability of the environment. Risk assessment information was documented to outline the action taken to minimise any potential risks for key activities, outings and in the outdoor space. Children were supported to identify any risks outdoors and helped assess this space with staff prior to using this and through ongoing discussions. For example the importance of wearing the helmets prior to using the bikes to keep themselves safe. We discussed that to continue to support child safety, the service should further develop the written risk assessment information for the indoor environment to outline potential risks and how these would be minimised. This information should include documenting information about the additional spaces used by children. For example, some group time activities took place in other parts of the nursery. We also discussed that the sand play area outdoors was not accessible for all children and potentially restricted some children's play experiences. This was to be further reviewed by the management team to consider the safe accessibility of this area and alternative options available for children.

How good is our leadership? 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

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. An improvement plan identified the priorities to develop the service with regular monthly updates shared with families. This ensured that families were kept up to date and had opportunities to influence change within the setting.

Children and families benefitted from the service's culture of continuous improvement. Children and families' views were actively sought. This included seeking their views through discussions, questionnaires, offering parental consultations, stay and play days for families, family cooking sessions and family outings. These opportunities contributed to relationship building and supported children to reach their full potential.

Quality assurance processes supported the management team to assess what worked well in the service and identify areas for development. For example, progression meetings to support practice and peer learning videos helped lead to continuous improvements. Staff also routinely had opportunities to reflect on their practice through daily meetings and regular staff meetings. This included looking at making positive changes to support outcomes for children. Review meetings with staff also helped identify areas of success, challenges and any training that may be needed to support them in their role. We discussed that quality assurance processes could be further enhanced to outline the action taken as a result or the impact changes have had on outcomes for children. For example, any changes made following any discussions, staff training or use of best practice guidance.

Staff inductions and training helped ensure staff knowledge and awareness of how to safeguard children in their care. This meant that they knew who to contact in the event of any concerns. We discussed that the child protection procedures should be further reviewed by the management team. This was to ensure these were reflective of their child protection policy and best practice for when support or advice would be sought from other agencies. The management team should also ensure that the quality assurance processes help identify any potential gaps to ensuring a consistent approach to children's personal plan information and children's experiences as outlined under Key question 1: How good is our care, play and learning? and Key question 2: How good is our setting? This would help continue to support the ongoing culture of improvement and self-evaluation to enhance outcomes for children.

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 importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed to support children's experiences throughout the day was recognised. Recruitment processes were ongoing and staff absences, working patterns and vacancies were currently covered by the management team and supply staff from the local authority. Relevant information was shared with any new staff each day and this helped to ensure that they were were aware of their role which supported the continuity of experiences for children. Additional supply staff were not always available to be deployed to the service and staff in the setting worked hard to maintain quality experiences for children throughout the day.

Due to staff deployment, during the two lunch sittings, children only had access to outdoor play experiences. We acknowledged that children's restricted access to indoor play opportunities was for a short period of time. However, we discussed that to assist children to transition from the lunchtime space to the outdoor space, staff should be present in the main indoor playroom at this time. For example, children had to go through this main playroom unaccompanied to access the outdoor area. Some children needed to also access the cloakroom for their coat and use the toilet facilities at this time. Having staff within the main playroom would ensure that staff were available to help identify any support needed and ensure that children get the right support at the right time. This may also provide a choice for children who want to remain indoors to play. We discussed that further progress was needed by the provider to ensure a consistent and effective approach to staffing levels to support children's individual care and support needs.

There was a clear approach to identifying staff roles and responsibilities and this included distributive leadership roles for staff. This meant that staff took responsibility for the setting up of and working within specific areas of the nursery each week. For example, the snack area or outdoors. This helped support consistent practice and identify what was working well or any areas for improvement. Staff also demonstrated that they were flexible in their approach to support team working to support positive outcomes for children. For example, staff skills were utilised to support and benefit children including speaking dual languages and family cooking experiences in the nursery.

Complaints

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

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	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

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

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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