

Doune Terrace Nursery Day Care of Children

9c Doune Terrace
Edinburgh
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Telephone: 01312 253 805

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 August 2024

Service provided by:
Early Days Nursery Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002857

Service no:
CS2003046430

About the service

Doune Terrace Nursery is registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 79 children not yet attending primary school at any one time; whom no more than 17 are aged under two years.

The service is located in the New Town area of Edinburgh. The service is centrally located close to local parks, schools and other amenities.

The accommodation is based over two floors. Older children over two years old are cared for on the ground floor and children under two are cared for on the upper floor. There is a secure garden and a small courtyard area to the rear of the property. There are toilet and changing facilities based on both floors. The service has access to a further private shared garden located nearby.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 12 August 2024 between 10:30 and 18:05. We returned to the service on Tuesday 13 August 2024 between 9:20 and 17:45.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 with children using the service and two parents onsite
- Received feedback from 27 parents via an online questionnaire
- Spoke with staff and management
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from supportive and nurturing interactions from staff.
- Children enjoyed positive play and learning experiences that promoted their learning and development.
- The environment was clean, homely and well-maintained.
- Staff were well supported to engage in learning opportunities that enabled them to develop their skills, knowledge and practice.
- Staff deployment at busier times of the day needed reviewed and improved to ensure children experienced consistently positive outcomes.
- The provider should ensure improved oversight in relation to the service's conditions of registration.

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 received comfort, warmth and kindness from staff who knew them well. Nurturing interactions from staff enabled children to feel loved. Some older children told us they liked coming to nursery and playing with the toys. Staff treated children with respect and dignity, helping to uphold their rights. For example, when providing personal care staff spoke children through this experience. Parents commented positively on the care and support their children received. Comments included, "The staff genuinely care about the children. My child loves going to nursery, which is all I ask for" and, "They are all kind and caring towards the children offering many different activities for play. It is clear based on how warm the children are with them that they feel safe and well looked after." Parents were welcomed into the service which helped create opportunities to build trusting relationships. Positive interactions from staff supported children's overall wellbeing.

Overall, mealtimes were unhurried, relaxed experiences that promoted children's wellbeing. Children ate at their own pace, which helped them to develop positive eating habits. Staff supervised children while they ate, helping to support their safety. Older children enjoyed serving their own meals and pouring drinks. There were opportunities to further develop children's involvement in mealtimes. For example, children could have daily opportunities to prepare parts of their meals or set the tables for lunch. This could support children to build confidence and develop varied life skills through daily routines.

Personal plans held helpful information that enabled staff to plan for children's care, play and learning needs. For example, parents and staff recorded children's routines and preferences, which helped to guide staff in providing continuity of care. During transitions within the service, children's wellbeing was promoted through careful planning, documenting and sharing of essential information. Work had started to ensure all children who needed additional support strategies had this outlined within their plans. For some children staff consistently used identified support strategies. As a result, these children experienced positive outcomes, which contributed to their development and learning. To strengthen the personal planning approach, the service recognised further work was needed to embed the recording and implementation of meaningful support strategies and next steps for all children.

While staff mostly followed children's routines from home, there were opportunities to further develop the sleep experience for children. Most young children went for naps at the same time. This practice does not always support children's preferences or needs. For example, we saw some children being settled to sleep who were not ready for this. While the management team supported staff to consider this on the day, further developing sleep experiences for children could enhance overall wellbeing. The service had identified sleep and mealtimes as priorities within their own improvement plan.

Overall, children's medication and health needs were safely managed. Most staff were aware of children's dietary and medication needs. Supporting health care plans were available. These plans included information about any medication and the signs and symptoms children may present with. This information enabled staff to understand how they should respond. However, some of the medical information had not been reviewed within recommended timescales. To ensure the service holds accurate records to support

children's care, medication information including health care plans and consents should be reviewed in line with good practice.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children enjoyed a range of play and learning experiences that supported their development and learning. Older children experienced rich play opportunities that sparked their interests and motivated them to learn. Younger children had opportunities to explore sensory experiences and develop play patterns such as rolling and throwing. Children were able to lead and plan their own play for extended periods of time helping them to develop skills, consolidate learning and have fun. For example, children had made a car from bricks and loose parts and were using this imaginatively in their play. Emergent literacy and numeracy were threaded throughout the environment and experiences. For example, mark making and counting opportunities were consistent throughout the environment and staff used sign to support children's emotional literacy. One parent said, "There are lots of activities and learning opportunities for the children." Overall, children had positive play and learning experiences that supported them to achieve.

Staff responded to children's play with fun and enthusiasm. This showed children that their play experiences and ideas were valued. Some staff used effective questioning to enable children to develop their critical thinking skills and extend their ideas. This helped to develop children's understanding of their play and promoted communication and language. To build on the positive play experiences, some staff would benefit from opportunities to further develop their understanding of child development and play. For example, some staff were less confident in narrating children's play or using prompts to aid learning. The service were aware of the varying skills of staff and were working to support them to develop their practice in a variety of areas.

Children's play and learning was supported by plentiful links to their local and wider community. Some children took part in forest sessions, while others enjoyed local walks and trips. These experiences helped to build children's confidence, while supporting their skills and learning. For example, a visit to a local care home enabled children to develop their social skills and learn about other people.

Planning for children's play and learning was responsive to children's interests and needs. This supported children to be engaged and empowered in their play. To inform play and learning experiences staff observed children's play, listened to children's ideas, and gathered feedback from families. These practices helped them to provide a balance of interesting and fun experiences.

Staff made observations of children's play and learning, which were beginning to aid the tracking and monitoring of children's progress. The service was aware that the quality of observations varied. Some captured significant learning and had meaningful next steps, while others were more descriptive. Work had started to help all staff develop their skills and confidence in recording children's development and learning. This should continue to ensure all children benefit from staff using observations and other tools to plan, monitor, and support children's progression.

How good is our setting?

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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a homely and welcoming environment, which supported their comfort and safety. Cosy and inviting spaces gave children opportunities to play, rest and learn. Prior to the inspection, a parent said, "All the spaces which have recently been done up look great." Good quality equipment and comfortable furniture contributed to children's wellbeing. Children's photos and artwork was displayed throughout the environment giving children the message that they were valued and included.

Children accessed toys, materials and resources that met their developmental needs. For example, in the baby room there were mirrors, lights and other sensory materials that supported children to explore and be curious. There were opportunities to further develop children's access to real-life items that can promote role-play, curiosity and enquiry. For example, increased use of real life kitchen items in home corners could enhance ideas and play. Despite this, resources were plentiful in supporting positive experiences.

During the inspection we found that the service was operating out with the registered conditions. The service conditions state how many children can attend overall and the maximum number of children that can attend within an age group. The service was registered to provide a service to no more than 17 children under two years old at any one time. However, for the second day of the inspection, we found there were more than 17 children attending within this age group. Due to current numbers being lower than capacity, the service had the physical space to accommodate the children. Following the inspection, the service took some immediate action to address this concern. For example, an additional nappy changing unit was installed to allow more facilities for this specific age group. To ensure conditions of registration are maintained, the provider and management team should ensure they understand and adhere to the conditions of registration. Following the inspection, the provider submitted a variation to alter the current conditions and was working with us to address the issue.

Overall, staff followed safe and effective infection, prevention and control measures, helping to maintain a clean environment. For example, staff washed their hands at appropriate times and cleaned areas following mealtimes. Most children were supported to wash their hands before and after eating. To ensure consistent practice older children would benefit from further supervision during handwashing as they did not always carry out the task when adults were not present.

Well-functioning arrangements for managing maintenance and repairs resulted in children experiencing an organised and safe environment. There was a system in place for staff to raise maintenance issues and the onsite maintenance team responded promptly to address these. This contributed to children experiencing a positive environment.

While nappy changing areas were clean and organised, the facilities for children under two years old did not reflect current good practice because there was a washing machine housed in this space. The washing machine was not in use when children were attending, however, nappy changing facilities should only be used for this specific purpose to help limit the spread of infection. The senior management team were aware of this issue and acknowledged they would need to relocate the washing machine (**see area for improvement 1**).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure the nappy changing facilities for children under the age of two years old follow good practice guidance by relocating the laundry facilities out of this space.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service's vision and values were reflected in staff practice, interactions and the environment. The implementation of the service's vision and values created a warm and welcoming service for children, parents and staff.

Overall, partnerships with parents were positive and respectful. During the inspection we saw parents welcomed into the service. While some feedback from parents highlighted that they would like more communication through online learning journals, on collection they did receive helpful feedback, which enabled them to be included in their children's experiences.

Families' views were actively sought to inform the development of the service. For example, parents had requested more opportunities to spend more time in the service and see their children's play. As a result, the service arranged coffee mornings and visits to the forest play sessions. These opportunities supported a family orientated approach, which reflected the ethos of the service.

Staff development was supported through planned one to one support meetings, and in the moment guidance from the management team and room seniors. Staff were being effectively supported to develop their practice and deliver positive outcomes for children. Reflections on training were in place and used to support staff to understand how they could further develop experiences, practice, and environments. For example, a staff member had undertaken signing training, and this was being embedded across the nursery. As a result, children were being supported with tools to aid communication and help them manage emotions when needed.

There was a clear improvement plan that reflected the needs of the service. For example, it acknowledged recent staffing changes and set out how they would be supported. This contributed to the development of the service and enabled a shared understanding across the staff team about what improvements were needed.

Overall, quality assurance processes supported the management team and staff to monitor the quality of the service. For example, there were effective systems in place to manage staff training, maintenance and safety. These processes supported staff development and promoted children's wellbeing. However, quality assurance in relation to the management of children's placements needed to improve. We found that the service did not fully understand their registered numbers and there was not a system in place to monitor

how many children under two years old attended each day. To ensure children and families experience a well managed service, the provider should develop a greater understanding of registered conditions.

How good is our staff team?

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 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff were caring and supportive towards children and families. They had developed positive relationships in all rooms and knew the children well. Staff prided themselves on these relationships and clearly cared for the children and families in the setting. One parent said, "It's really a home from home, you really have the impression that the staff have such close connections with the children and the children really love the staff."

Overall, staff supervised children well. For example, staff were present with children while eating and when they moved between play spaces. This helped to maintain children's safety. Staff communicated to each other about where they were and what they were doing. This allowed staff to position themselves where needed to meet children's needs. However, there were times when the deployment and numbers of staff impacted on children's experiences. On a few occasions staff were left alone with children. For example, a staff member was caring for 12 children alone over a sleep period for approximately 30 minutes. Several children had woken up and the staff member had to manage the competing needs of the space. As a result, they could not provide nurturing care and support to all children and the staff member called for management to assist. Within the preschool garden there were times when staff were stretched as they managed the indoor and outdoor spaces. This had the potential to impact on the quality of interactions. While the provider addressed the issues with deployment on the second day, they should ensure that the deployment of staff is based on the needs of children and managed well each day. Planning for busier times of the day and the management of staff breaks should be reviewed and improved. This is to ensure consistently positive outcomes for all children (**see area for improvement 1**).

Overall, planned and unplanned absences were covered within the provider's own staff team. Staff were flexible in supporting the service to cover staff absences. For example, staff covered in other rooms where needed. This practice meant children were cared for by familiar adults who had a shared understanding of the service and the routines of the day.

There was a clear process for mentoring new staff using the skills and knowledge of the existing staff team. Effective induction supports such as monthly check-ins, observations of practice and training reflections helped to guide staff. Staff were being supported to gain skills and knowledge through this process.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to experience consistently positive outcomes, the provider should review and improve staff deployment. This would include but not be limited to:

- Reviewing and improving the deployment of staff at busier times of the days.
- Reviewing and improving the management of staff breaks to ensure sufficient cover is present to manage all children's needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

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	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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