Edinburgh College - Waterfront Nursery
Day Care of Children

Edinburgh College
Granton Campus
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 November 2023

Service provided by:
The Board of Management of
Edinburgh College, a body corporate

Service provider number:
SP2018013081

Service no:
CS2018364903

About the service

Edinburgh College - Waterfront Nursery is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 136 children not yet attending primary school at any one time.

The service is provided by Edinburgh College for staff and parents attending the college, and families in the local area. It is located on the grounds of Edinburgh College Waterfront campus.

The nursery operates from a purpose-built building and is on two floors. Children under three-years were accommodated on the ground floor, and children aged three-years and over were accommodated on the first floor. Each floor had toilets, nappy changing areas, sleep/rest areas, and kitchen areas. There were adequate office, staff and family spaces, and the main reception area was on the ground floor. Younger children had direct access to the enclosed garden area, with older children accessing outdoors via the stairs. Some children enjoyed accessing the hidden garden spending the majority of their day outdoors.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 November 2023 between 09:30 and 18:00. 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, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with several children using the service and four parents
- spoke with staff
- observed practice and daily life including staff interactions with children
- reviewed documents
- gathered feedback from families using a Microsoft Forms survey.

Key messages

- Staff had developed positive attachments with children and families.
- Families felt valued and included as cultural diversity was celebrated across the service.
- Children had fun as they were actively and meaningfully involved in leading their play and learning.
- To ensure children are safe and healthy, the service should ensure that all surfaces in toilet and nappy change areas are of a suitable material that can be easily cleaned.
- The management and staff team were committed to delivering a quality service for children and families.

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
Staff had developed positive attachments with children and families. We saw warm, kind, and compassionate interactions that supported children's emotional wellbeing. Children felt welcomed, valued, and safe as a result. A parent said, "Some very caring and competent nursery staff who form strong relationships with the children."

Cultural diversity across the service was celebrated to a good level. This supported children and families to feel valued and included. Children could see themselves and their families reflected in the visual images across the service. This included through the celebration of relevant festivals. A parent said, "The staff is lovely and diverse allowing children to hear different languages and get to know other cultures."

All children had a personal plan that was individual to them. Their care and wellbeing was supported by the plan providing information that guided staff in their practice and planning. Staff worked in partnership with families to agree the care and support for each child. This meant that routines were consistent both at home and in nursery. New recording systems had been introduced and staff were being supported to reflect on and develop the quality of personal plans. For example, the staff team were looking at quality observations to improve the personal learning journals (PLJs). Some families told us they would like more information daily about their children's experiences.

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried. Children chose when to go for lunch and confidently followed the mealtime routines. Children aged three years and over had opportunities to develop their independence encouraged by staff. They were pouring drinks and serving their own food. Children told us about baking banana bread and spreading butter on their cracker at snack time. They were building confidence and developing skills including hand eye co-ordination and fine motor skills. Younger children should be given similar opportunities to promote their independence. Staff and children sat together. This created a sociable and safe mealtime experience. In between sittings at lunchtime, the dining areas were cleaned and set for the next group of children. This showed that they were respected. During busy mealtimes, even when routine tasks need to be undertaken, staff should ensure that they always care for children in a supportive and respectful way.

Families were welcomed into the service and included in children's care, play, and learning to a good level. Children and families felt valued and respected as a result. Staff were beginning to lead on family focus groups including the PEEP learning together programme. Staff aimed to extend these opportunities so families understood the importance of children's learning opportunities in their home environment as well as nursery.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning
Most staff had a good understanding of how children learn through play. They had opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding through practice discussion and training. Staff used observations to plan children's play experiences, which promoted children's choice based on their interests and needs. Children's voices and ideas were documented in the floor books used to support the planning process. Planning systems continued to be reviewed and developed. A parent said, "My child's care, play, and learning has shown massive improvements in his speech as well as how he socially relates with everyone now."

Children were actively and meaningfully involved in leading their play. They were having fun and being imaginative as they explored the learning environment. Children pretended to cook and had dinner together. They made faces from play dough and splashed in the puddles outdoors. Children were counting and measuring as they made banana bread, and had a story in the hidden garden. Some staff supported children to extend their thinking through the use of effective questioning. Children were busy and engaged as they learned new skills.

Staff recognised, celebrated, and shared children's achievements. Children were progressing well, and were happy and confident as they developed skills. This supported them to fulfil their potential. Wall displays, electronic learning journals, and floor books were some of the ways that children's progress and development was shared with families.

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 setting that was welcoming, comfortable, and furnished to a good standard. Systems were in place to keep children safe. A welcoming reception area, and well planned storage areas for children's jackets helped them feel a sense of belonging. Playrooms offered children cosy spaces to rest and relax, and areas to have fun exploring, creating, and investigating. Natural light and sensory lighting created a sense of calmness in most areas. A parent said, "We feel that it's a very nurturing environment, very well organised, and the facilities are excellent, in particular the outdoor space is fantastic, the fact that there is a huge pirate ship and the hidden garden too."

Staff understood the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. They made sure that all children had good opportunities to spend time outdoors across the day. Children were connected with nature and the world around them. Children accessing the hidden garden spent time in woodland areas and at the beach. The outdoor spaces had been thoughtfully planned to offer children a variety of exciting play and learning experiences. Children said they liked playing outside and that they had fun playing with their friends. Children were learning the importance of an active lifestyle. A parent said, "The outside forestry the pre school do for two days a week. Honestly, my son loves it, it has taught him so much about nature. It has really created and built his love for nature and outdoors."

Children benefitted from a clean, organised setting that was, in the main, well maintained. The service should ensure that all surfaces in toilet and nappy change areas are of a suitable material that can be easily cleaned. This will ensure children are supported to be safe and healthy. The environment was well ventilated, regular cleaning took place across the day, and children washed their hands at key times.

The service was aware of Care Inspectorate's 'Keeping children safe - look, think, act campaign (SIMOA).' They planned to review and develop safety systems and processes using the campaign. The service could use SIMOA props and visual cues to support children's understanding of how they can stay safe. Daily checks and risk assessments informed staff practice in keeping children safe to a good level.

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 management team and staff were committed to delivering a high quality service for children and families. The recently reviewed vision, values, aims, and objectives were evident in the kind, compassionate, and inclusive interactions we saw during our visit. This created a happy and welcoming ethos. A parent said, "We think that the manager is taking things in the right direction and is clearly very proactive in actually getting information from parents and making changes at the nursery."

The manager was committed to delivering a quality service for children and families. There were opportunities for families to join their children taking part in focus groups. This meant they felt involved in the daily life of the service.

Quality assurance systems and processes were supporting the development of the service to a good level. A culture of continuous improvement was securing positive experiences for children and families. An improvement plan had been developed through self-evaluation including the views of children, families, and staff.

Strong and encouraging leadership supported most staff to feel confident and knowledgeable in their roles. Children were cared for by a dedicated staff team that felt well supported and valued. A positive ethos and strong leadership supported staff to have high aspirations and confidence in their abilities.

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 experience, knowledge, and skills were used to a good level to ensure positive experiences for children. Staff with an interest in outdoor learning were responsible in leading the hidden garden experience. A staff member was interested in attending training that would support the development of Book Bug sessions. A parent said, "Lovely staff. Consistent staff who seem genuinely happy at work."

Staff communicated well with each other and worked together to keep children safe. The management team recognised and valued the importance of ensuring the service was appropriately staffed. We were mindful that staff needed time to rest and be refreshed. However, staff breaks resulted in changes of staff within playrooms across the day. This had an impact on the continuity of staff to support children, and the pace and flow of the nursery day.

The manager was committed to ensuring staff were supported with their continued professional learning. A review of staff training had been undertaken to ensure it was relevant to the needs of staff and the service. Scottish Government's National Induction Resource was being introduced to support the development of newly recruited staff. Children's experiences and outcomes were improving as staff developed their own knowledge and understanding.

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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