

Sighthill Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

1 Calder Park
Edinburgh
EH11 4NF

Telephone: 01314 532 464

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 February 2023

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2003015869

About the service

Sighthill Primary School Nursery is registered to provide an early learning and childcare service to a maximum of 70 children between 3 years and primary school entry at any one time. Of those 70 children, 30 will be cared for in the school nursery building and 40 will be cared for in the temporary unit.

The service is provided by City of Edinburgh Council and offers funded early learning and childcare to eligible children.

The nursery is situated in the Sighthill area of Edinburgh. The setting comprises of two buildings, a temporary unit, and rooms within the main primary school building. A large secured shared outdoor space offers children a safe route to move independently from one building to the other.

The service is close to local transport links, community services and outdoor community spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 7 February between 09:30 and 16:30 and Thursday 9 February between 09:30 and 18:00. 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 with children using the service
- spoke to staff and management
- spoke to one parent and invited parents to send their views via email. No responses were received
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Feedback was given at the end of the second inspection visit.

Key messages

A relaxed flow to the day gave children time and space to play. They chose what to play with and moved around the space confidently accessing what they needed.

Staff planned to develop their skills to plan experiences, with more focus on supporting children's specific next steps to further enhance progression in learning.

Children and families' views about changes within the service were valued.

Management understood the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed to support the wellbeing of children.

There was a culture of respect, inclusion and support for all children and families which helped them to feel secure and valued.

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?	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.

QI 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Where children required support with personal care, staff interactions were caring and nurtured children's security and confidence, supporting positive relationships. Children were supported to understand how they and others were feeling. Signing and clear instructions helped children to understand the routine of the day and prepare for daily transitions, such as getting ready for lunch time. This helped children to feel safe and included.

Staff spoke knowledgably and confidently about children's individual care needs and what they did to help them. Weekly meetings offered the opportunity for staff to discuss how they supported children's needs. As a result, some individual children received care and support that was right for them. Moving forward staff should improve the quality and consistency of recording individual care needs and support strategies. For example, each child had a personal plan in place, however some plans were missing the key information required to support children's current and ongoing care, learning and wellbeing. Similarly, the evaluation of strategies should be documented and discussed as a whole staff team to promote continuity of care. This would mean that all children get the right support at the right time for them.

Lunchtime routines were calm, relaxed and sociable experiences for children. Children's dietary requirements were taken into account to support individual health and wellbeing needs. Where children had any allergies or medication needs, this information was documented as part of their personal plan and the medication procedures. Staff agreed that further progress was needed to ensure a consistent approach to recording this information to clearly outline the signs/symptoms and stepped approaches that may be needed to support individual children. This included reviewing children's long term medication.

Relevant key staff worked closely with specific children, their families and other professionals to identify appropriate next steps and strategies based on individual needs and prior learning. Staff were knowledgeable about the potential impact on children of adverse childhood experiences and implemented supports to build children and family resilience. As a result these children were getting the support they needed to reach their full potential.

Families were included in the life of the service and were invited into the setting for stay and play sessions, parent consultation evenings and book bug. Parents appreciated being included in the service and one parent told us, "The nursery always has parents involved in things like stay and play, the staff have not only helped my son but they also help me."

QI 1.3 Play and learning

A relaxed flow to the day gave children time and space to play. Children could move freely between the two nursery buildings, offering them independence opportunities and choice. They chose what to play with and moved around the space confidently accessing what they needed. This promoted a sense of freedom to follow their own ideas.

Children had positive opportunities to lead their own play and learning, particularly in the outdoor environment.

There was a range of spontaneous and planned experiences that supported children to be curious, investigate and communicate. Staff were seen to observe children's play and made effective interventions that supported and extended play and learning. This resulted in children being engaged and having fun with adults who showed enthusiasm through play.

A range of play opportunities supported children's developing skills in language, literacy and numeracy. Children were engaged in story telling experiences and drawing to develop their vocabulary, social and early writing skills. Plentiful opportunities supported numeracy and early mathematic skills, such as measuring how far cars had travelled, and active counting games both indoors and outside.

Planning approaches focused on the voice of the child. They were responsive to children's interests and life experiences. This valued children's input and created interesting experiences, such as a group of children who were interested to design and build castles. These children were developing a range of skills such as planning, designing and negotiating through following their interests.

Staff had a good understanding of child development, relevant theory, and practice. They used national and current best practice guidance', such as, Realising the Ambition (Education Scotland, 2020) to plan children's play and learning experiences. Moving forward, staff planned to develop their skills when recording children's individual learning. This would enable them to plan experiences, with more focus on supporting all children's specific next steps to further enhance the progression in learning at a particularly good pace. For example, some children would benefit from being challenged more in their learning to help them to try out new ideas, solve problems and persevere at tasks.

Parents recognised the progress that their children made as a result of attending the service and one parent said, "Nursery has helped to get my child into a good routine."

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good because there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

QI 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefited from two buildings, which provided plenty of natural light, warmth and comfort which enhanced their wellbeing. The high-quality facilities were clean and well maintained to keep children safe and healthy. A designated sensory room offered a calming space for children to rest and relax and learn how to self-regulate.

Children could move around the large, varied and stimulating outdoor play space, independently taking their play in their own direction. The outdoor space was designed with open ended resources to support children to be curious and engaged in play. Children could choose lengthy periods of uninterrupted outdoor play, which supported them to be active and contributed to their overall wellbeing. Staff planned to further enhance the outdoor play area by creating more space for children to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Such experiences would encourage healthy eating and teach responsibility and patience.

The indoor spaces were nicely presented and inviting to children, supporting them to engage purposefully in their play. Play areas were developed in consultation with children, following their current interests, for example a vets role play area.

Children were protected as staff took all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff and children understood the importance of effective handwashing procedures, which were carried out at key times of the day, such as before and after eating.

The setting provided security and safety without impacting on children's rights. Arrangements for the storage of and processing of children's personal information was well managed and complied with relevant best practice. Management and staff were well-informed about their responsibilities. This showed respect for children and families, whose personal information was protected.

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.

QI 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The vision of the service had recently been reviewed and refreshed in consultation with children and families. This meant that the vision remained relevant to the community within the service, demonstrating inclusion.

There was a strong ethos of commitment to improvement. Management and staff were effectively using quality framework documents to benchmark the service and identify areas for improvement. Systematic monitoring of the service was being established. Moving forward, management and staff should embed their good approach to assuring quality to ensure that monitoring of procedures and staff practice impacts positively in all areas.

The service had doubled in size in the last couple of years. This resulted in the formation of a new staff team and the addition of a second building. Management and staff embraced the expansion and focussed on what worked well to ensure best opportunities for children. Similarly, the improvement plan identified key priorities and action points. The plan reflected the needs of the service and set out how outcomes for children should improve. As a result, staff were developing approaches to evaluate children's progress and use assessment information effectively to plan appropriately to meet children's individual needs.

Children and families' views about changes within the service were sought and acted upon. Families had been consulted when nursery values were being reviewed and about the new building prior to them moving in. Similarly, a parents committee was in the process of being formed and parents had volunteered to help develop the outdoor play space and a nearby community space for children to use. Children and parents were valued partners in the life and work of the service.

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.

QI 4.3 Staff Deployment

Management understood the importance of appropriately staffing the service to enhance the wellbeing of children. For most of the day, effective use was made of differing experience, knowledge and skills of the staff group to ensure children's experience across the whole day was positive and that they were kept safe.

Busier times of the day, such as mealtimes or arrival and departure times, were recognised and planned for with appropriate staffing. Arrangements were in place to promote the continuity of care across the day and ensure positive transitions and communication with families. One parent told us, "Staff are very attentive and always meet us at door and ask if my child has had a good night."

Management could consider limiting occasions when more experienced staff were taken away from working directly with children to carry out task based duties. This would ensure that children were given the best opportunities throughout their day. Similarly, there was scope for some staff to develop their understanding that unplanned absence levels can impact on the quality of outcomes for children.

Staff appraisal meetings were outcome focussed to support staff to develop skills and practice. Management were supporting staff to take on board leadership responsibilities to lead the development of play spaces and learning experiences to enhance outcomes for children. For example, one staff member was taking the lead in developing outdoor learning.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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