

St. Margarets Nursery & Preschool Day Care of Children

10 Craigmillar Park
Edinburgh
EH16 5NE

Telephone: 01316 670 778

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 March 2021

Service provided by:
St Margarets Nursery Limited

Service provider number:
SP2011011617

Service no:
CS2011298606

About the service

St. Margaret's Nursery and Pre School (known as the service throughout this report) is registered to care for a maximum of 121 children at any one time, aged from birth to not yet attending primary school.

The service is accommodated within a spacious mansion house to the south of Edinburgh city centre. On the ground floor there is a large welcoming entrance hall, four playrooms, kitchen and dining area, main office and toilet facilities. On the first floor there are three playrooms, kitchen area and toilet facilities. The nursery has two garden areas, both of which have benefited from further development.

The service is in partnership with Edinburgh City Council to offer pre-school funded places.

The aim of the service included:

"By putting children in the heart of the community, we commit to provide the highest quality of education, create a safe and inspiring learning environment where children can learn and develop their skills by making free choices and have the opportunity to be independent on their discovery journey."

Objectives of the service included to:

- Provide the highest standards of care, education and support.
- Provide a healthy, safe and secure learning environment. The Health and wellbeing of our children and staff is at the centre of everything we do.
- Provide a child-centred and high-quality education that promotes the development of creativity, free choice, individuality, and self-confidence whilst raising their potential.
- Create a trusting and respectful environment where all the children, families and employees are treated equally, with dignity, and their diversity is respected.
- We ensure that the voices of the children, their families and staff are being heard and respected and that everyone is involved in improvements and evaluation of our service in order to become the leader within the learning community.
- Provide a highly stimulating educational environment where the children's individuality is respected and their achievements are celebrated. Become a leader in the early years' education.

An unannounced on-site visit to the service took place on Monday 8 March 2021. This was followed up on Tuesday 9 March 2021, Wednesday 10 March 2021 and Thursday 11 March 2021 using virtual methodology which includes the use of technology to inspect services.

As part of the inspection process, we undertook the following:

- on-site visit to the service to observe the service.
- we carried out four virtual observations over two days. This included visiting playrooms and observing children and staff.
- interview and discussions with the manager.
- discussions with the director.
- telephone conversations with six staff.
- correspondence with nine parents.
- reviewing of relevant documentation such as children's personal plans, COVID-19 risk assessment, COVID-19 core assurances, team meetings minutes and staff training plan for the last year.

This was a focused inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based in key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

We also followed up on one requirement and one recommendation made at the last inspection.

What people told us

During the inspection we observed children having lunch, playing inside and play outside. Children looked settled and engaged in their play.

We asked the service to distribute our contact details to parents so that they could provide us with feedback about the service. We received seven email communications from parents. All parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the service. Parents told us that the service had kept in contact with them throughout the closure period and that the staff team had provided invaluable support, for example welcome phone calls and providing home activity packs which supported home learning.

Some individual comments included:

"We are very impressed with the care our child receives at St Margaret's. She loves going to nursery and gets her own bag ready so she can go in the morning.

During the pandemic I have felt that they have done a great job.

There is a great deal of thought put in about how to ease the kids back into the routine. That's what I like best about St Margaret's, it's more than just childcare, they genuinely care about the kids and their development.

My little boy also has an understanding of the coronavirus which he has learnt from nursery and will now happily sing happy birthday whilst washing his hands as 'that's what we do in nursery'.

We have found the team and leadership to be extremely friendly and professional and always willing and open to feedback. They have been in constant touch via email and through the private Face Book group keeping us informed on the latest government guidelines.

Since returning they have put in place all the measures they set out to do including wearing the correct PPE , safe distancing measures , and encouraging staggered drop off and pick up times. All this culminates in parent and child confidence.

It's clear for me to see that nursery cares about the safety of it's team and the children as well as the parents whilst remaining incredibly human and sensitive.

I think overall the staff have been great throughout the pandemic."

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 and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 5.1:

Children's Health and Wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting.
- Effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances

The warm and nurturing relationships staff had with children encouraged children to be happy and secure. The calm and friendly atmosphere in the service was beneficial to children's well-being and their understanding of their changed experiences due to COVID-19. Staff were sensitive to children's individual needs and they gave priority to building up positive relationships with them. As far as possible management ensured staffing remained the same for returning children for familiarity and feeling secure.

Transitions between rooms and settling-in procedures were handled sensitively and safely making sure children and their family were supported and were made to feel confident. Effective communication with parents meant that relevant information was shared, and relationships were maintained throughout lockdown. Parents comments were positive of the communication they had received and felt assured that their children's needs would be supported through these changing times. The service used a range of methods including phone calls, email, and social media. Parents provided staff with updated information on their children's health, wellbeing, and developmental progress prior to them returning. This enabled responsive care and support for children and their families. Individual children's plans contained enough detailed information to support children throughout the pandemic.

From observations and discussions with staff it was evident that they knew the children well and they were able to plan for daily experiences to promote learning and wellbeing. Continued communications through e-learning journals promoted positive outcomes for children as parents were kept up to date with their child's progress, learning and wellbeing.

Children could play outdoors every day, helping to minimise the risk of the spread of infection helping to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission. An outdoor classroom had been added and outdoor areas further developed to support creativity, fun and imaginative play. Parents told us they were happy that their child got to play outside daily. Parents expressed their happiness of their children playing in the garden and going out for walks to get fresh air.

The manager spoke of children playing out COVID-19 situations in role play. Staff responded by introducing masks, sanitiser bottle, gloves at children's request. This supported children to understand the current situation and express their thoughts and feelings through play.

Quality indicator 5.2:

- Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.
- Children are protected as staff take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of infection

The nursery environment was visibly clean and in good order. Staff were familiar with and practicing good infection control and hygiene practices. This meant they were minimising the risks associated with

COVID-19. Arrival and departure times had been reviewed and adjusted in order to keep parents physically distanced and allow staff time for additional cleaning.

Staff modelled techniques for effective handwashing which promoted good practice in line with national guidance. Children were familiar with routines and why handwashing helped to keep them safe.

Management demonstrated a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and staff. Risk assessments, staff guidance, policies and procedures have been reviewed considering COVID-19. Updated information was shared with parents in order to assure/cleaning stations were in place and observed to be well stocked. Staff were physically distancing and wearing masks.

Safety measures and PPE/cleaning stations were in place and observed to be well stocked. Staff were physically distancing from each other appropriately and wearing masks when leaving their room at appropriate times. For easy access staff kept a supply of face masks on a lanyard round their neck. The manager spoke of children playing out COVID situations in role play. Staff responded by introducing masks, sanitiser bottle, gloves at children's request.

We observed hand washing, or the use of hand gel was not always being done when staff were moving between rooms. We also observed staff touching their face masks whilst wearing them, both of which increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission (area for development 1).

Should a child become unwell a suitable room was available to keep children comfortable but isolated until a parent could collect.

The manager and director responded well to our suggestions for improvement made during the inspection and implemented immediate changes, for example, reviewed the use of bins with lids within playrooms as children had to wash their hands twice after touching the lids when disposing of their used paper towel.

Lunchtime experiences for children had improved since last inspection and were managed well. Staff engaged with children, encouraged independence and promoted safe infection control practices. Children were observed to be enjoying their food, each other's company and attentive staff. Good practice was shown by covering staff breaks with consistent staffing and this meant the number of different adults' children were in contact with was minimised.

Staff described the procedures for ensuring their room was clean and safe. They told us they were constantly cleaning resources and equipment and they described the effective use of ozone water to minimise the risk of the spread of infection. The daily routines of the two housekeepers and handy man were described by staff as ensuring the environment was safe and clean for children.

Quality indicator 5.3:

Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19

Through observations and telephone conversations we had with staff we found that they were confident and committed to providing a good level of care to children accessing the service. Management and staff recognised the potential impact of COVID-19 for staff and had measures in place to support them and help them to maintain contact with colleagues through lockdown.

Staff had undertaken a two-day refresher training prior to the opening up of the service which included additional learning relating to supporting children during the pandemic and infection prevention and control. Staff were encouraged to access further learning to support them in developing their practice. Management

was proactive in supporting the staff team. Staff told us they welcomed this support and were aware of how they could access it.

The director and manager ensured that there were enough staff to meet the needs of children. They used a planning tool to ensure staff skills mix was spread within each playroom and staffing ratios were met. Staffing was consistent and sensitive to the needs of children who were settling in which meant their individual needs were being met by staff who had experience in caring for the age of the children. The service recognised the importance of providing children with consistency of staff and the importance of connections to a child's experiences.

Monitoring systems were in place however these could be further developed to include more COVID-19 specific guidance (see area for development 2). Management were open to exploring new ways to monitor and evaluate service procedures.

Staff had a good understanding of their roles and worked well together in their rooms. This created a happy learning environment for children. A positive change of COVID-19 was highlighted by staff as there were more staff and less children in each room which meant they were able to focus on children's experiences. Staff recognised there were additional tasks that they had to carry out relating to infection prevention and control but were confident and understood why they had to be done. Staff approaches to additional tasks ensured they did not interfere with children's experiences.

Areas for improvement

1. To further develop infection prevention and control practice around mask wearing and handwashing in particular, the service should ensure policies and procedures fully reflect the national COVID-19 guidance.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 5.17 which states that, "My environment is secure and safe."

2. To ensure children receive high quality care and support, the management should continue to develop their quality assurance systems to ensure these identify areas for improvement along with appropriate action. This could include:

- Incorporating more COVID-19 specific guidance into their monitoring systems.
- Monitoring and measuring this guidance to support and upskill staff in respect of changes in working practice because of VCOVID-19

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 4.19 which states that, 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.'

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

1. By 17 December 2019, the provider must ensure that children's needs are being met by enough staff who have the experience and skill to care for them.

In order to achieve this the provider must ensure that staff deployed in each of the nursery playrooms have the skill and experience to meet the needs of all children.

This is in order to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI/2011/210) Make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' 4.11

'I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity.' 4.16

'My needs are met by the right number of staff.' 3.15

This requirement was made on 7 August 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

The manager has introduced a planning/auditing tool to support the staffing mix in each playroom. There was evidence to support that this tool was effective in ensuring skill mix and knowledge.

Throughout the inspection process the adult to child ratio in each of the playrooms was appropriate and met the needs of the children.

Management told us that everyday there were three supernumerary staff. This included the manager and director. Should any staff member be absent from work ratios would be met.

The service are not using agency staff.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

1. The manager should ensure all children experience mealtimes which are calm, supportive, promote independence, encourage children to practice new skills and encourage children to self regulate.

This is to ensure that the quality of experience is consistent with health and Social Care Standard 1.35 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible.'

This area for improvement was made on 7 August 2019.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has been met.

Children were having their lunches in various settings. The younger children had lunches in their rooms with the older children being split between the large playroom and the dining room area. From observations on site visit this was being handled well. Children were being encouraged to be independent through collecting their own cutlery/drinking glass. The manager described how well lunch times were working and this would continue to be monitored.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	5 - Very Good
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	4 - Good
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	4 - Good

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