

Victoria Quay Nursery Day Care of Children

The Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Telephone: 01312 440 782

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 October 2021

Service provided by:
North Edinburgh Childcare Enterprise
Limited

Service provider number:
SP2010010995

Service no:
CS2010253738

About the service

Victoria Quay Nursery registered with the Care Inspectorate in January 2011. Conditions of their registration state that an early learning and childcare service can be provided to a maximum of 37 children at any one time, aged from three years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than 18 are under 2 years. Early learning and childcare is delivered in partnership with Edinburgh City Council.

The service is a work based nursery, located in the Scottish Government building in Leith, Edinburgh. It is close to local transport routes and amenities, with car parking available. An outdoor area can be accessed from the playrooms.

The aims of the service are to:

- support a welcoming nursery that is inclusive for all and to promote relationships between the nursery, children, parents, carers and the wider community.
- provide each child with a range of rich and varied learning opportunities and experiences which will help them to develop into successful learners, confident individuals, responsive citizens and effective contributors.
- promote ambition and high expectations for every child with in our care.
- achieve the very best for all of our children in our care.

We carried out an unannounced inspection on Tuesday 19 October 2021 between 8:00 and 12:00, returning on Wednesday 20 October 12:00-14:30. Further information was gathered by telephone calls with staff and the manager. Feedback was given virtually on Friday 22 October 2021.

As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

What people told us

Children were settled and engaged in their play throughout the three playrooms. They were curious about our presence and were keen to show us what they were doing. A child told us:

"Colm has a beard and he is nice and he is on holiday."

"I draw for my family in nursery."

We asked the service to distribute information to parents about the inspection. Parents were invited to give feedback about their child's experiences with the service. We received two responses. Comments included:

"Some of their Covid-19 measures actually seem to work really well and we hope will be maintained when things are more normal. For example, Facebook posts which tell us what our child has been doing, meals, etc. Drop off and collection procedures are far better now. They have also made better use of the outdoor space and I hope this will continue into the winter months."

"Staff are great. They are friendly, patient and experienced. The stability in terms of staffing is also, I feel, a real benefit."

"They will provide a quick update when I pick my child up but mostly it's through Facebook messenger about sleep & food, nappies etc. They also post great photos of my child and the other children on a private Facebook group so it's great to see what they've been up to. I receive email newsletters about what the group have been up to and the planned themes they have scheduled as well as general nursery info."

"(When moving to a new room) I was very impressed with the care shown, the assurance given and the knowledge the new key worker had of my child and their personality, likes and areas of development."

"Overall we've been very impressed with the care and attention my child has received. The staff show genuine care for my child which is just lovely and reassuring as a mother."

Self assessment

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

A strength of the service was the knowledge staff had about individual children. They were listened to and noticed by staff which was respectful and nurturing. Good relationships had been built through staff having a genuine interest in children's lives. All children had a personal plan which highlighted staff partnerships with parents. This meant that children were supported consistently between the service and home. We saw some information did not have sufficient detail to guide staff in supporting children. We advised the manager to ensure information about children was always clear and informative to offer guidance to staff when caring for children.

Children were kept safe and well as their health needs were planned for and understood by staff. Medications were stored according to best practice guidance. This meant that they were clearly labelled and accessible by staff when needed.

Children were engaged in their play throughout the nursery as staff responded to their interests and activities. On most occasions we observed children having space and time to explore their environment at their own pace. They were experimenting, discovering and taking risks in play. Mostly they were supported and enabled, however staff were on occasions rescuing children rather than helping them to understand and manage the situation. For example, a baby climbing on a low chair could be supported with those physical skills and assessing what they feel safe to do. Children's play experience would also be further supported by a more flexible snack-time. Having children choose when they would like to eat snack would mean less interruptions to their play by a standard routine.

Children experienced a calm and sociable lunchtime. By sitting with children, the staff were able to model social and conversational skills, supporting children with theirs. Children were safe as their food was prepared in adherence to choking prevention guidance. Children's involvement in serving their own lunch and snacks had been halted due to Covid-19 restrictions. The manager recognised the learning in such experiences and was planning a return to their normal practice. We suggested the Care Inspectorate's best practice resource Food Matters to support this.

We were confident that children and staff were at reduced risk of infection transmission. The service was using the national Covid-19 guidance to plan and implement measures of infection prevention and control. Examples of this were effective handwashing for staff and children, enhanced cleaning through the day and staff keeping their distance from each other or wearing masks where necessary.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The service had a relaxed home from home atmosphere. Children looked comfortable and confident in their environment. The low walls and gates between rooms allowed children to interact with each other. These connections also supported children during transitions into a new room.

Three playrooms catered for under 2 years, 2-3 years and 3-5 years. All rooms were bright and well ventilated, offering fresh air. Children's creative artwork and photographs of experiences were displayed, making it welcoming and personal. Each room had cosy spaces where children could rest. Children's needs and preferences were respected during sleep time as staff made the space calm.

Children in all rooms could easily access a range of resources available to them. Storage was low and photographs of items contained in baskets were displayed. This allowed children to see what was available and choose what they wanted. A recent review of the preschool room had resulted in new resources being added which brought depth to children's play experience. For example, real food in the house corner and a larger art table to accommodate more children.

The manager was planning to carry out the same review with the baby and toddler rooms. We discussed the younger age group and their need for intriguing resources to explore and learn from, such as real items, loose parts and natural materials. We were confident this would be addressed.

Toilets were shared by all children. Preschool children accessed them independently as they understood personal hygiene routines. Toddlers were taken by staff and supported with their developing toileting skills. Nappy changing had a dedicated enclosed area which was clean and comfortable for children. Children's privacy and dignity were maintained at all times.

A secure garden offered safe space with many opportunities for play. Children could ride trikes, play with water and sand, build dens, use the mud kitchen, climb and run. They had freedom to explore the resources and use them as they wished. Children were empowered to consider risks in their play and find solutions to keep themselves safe. This would support their decision-making and problem-solving skills for the future.

Babies had their own separate part of the garden. This area had been recently developed to enhance experiences for children. We did not see babies using the outdoor space during our visit, however we were assured they access the outdoors freely on a daily basis.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Staff were recruited safely and were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This meant that children could be confident in the professional standards of those looking after them. New staff were offered a full induction programme. This provided them with the knowledge and insight to offer consistent care to children in line with the service procedures.

Staff were consistent which offered stability and familiarity to children and parents. Whilst working within the recommended staff to child ratio, the service was taking steps to secure more staff. This would ensure more flexibility in meeting children's needs. Furthermore additional staff would mean that the manager would not be involved in the day to day care of children, allowing her to return to leadership tasks.

A commitment to the service was demonstrated by the length of service of each staff member. They spoke fondly of the children they cared for and demonstrated motivation to enhance their experiences. The preschool staff benefited from working recently with a local authority teacher. They were able to speak about their learning and how they had used new knowledge and understanding to enhance the provision for preschool children.

Staff had regular opportunities to reflect on their practice with the aim of improvement. With the easing of restrictions, the manager could support staff to access training opportunities externally as well as within their organisation. This would offer inspiration for implementing current best practice in early learning and childcare.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

A strength of the service was the calm and gentle ethos lead by the manager, resulting in a welcoming and friendly environment. The team worked to support and enable each other in their tasks.

Parents were kept informed about the life of the service through newsletters and a closed social media page. Feedback from parents was sought verbally and through questionnaires. The manager was keen to extend this to support further involvement. Children taking the lead in their own learning was a developing theme which the team were committed to. Hearing, noticing and responding to children's ideas and interests resulted in more experiences which engaged and challenged them.

A variety of methods were used to audit processes in the service, such as cleaning schedules, personal plan checks and room observations. The manager should now consider how to further assess quality of service, particularly around play experiences across the age groups and the content of children's personal plans. The provider also has a role to play in ensuring quality assurance processes are relevant and remain current for assessing adherence to best practice. For example, the standards which the service is being reviewed against, should reflect best and emerging practice.

The service was on a journey and continued to identify and make improvements. The manager recognised the significance of keeping up to date with changes in the early learning and childcare sector. This was demonstrated by working closely with a local authority teacher and the Care Inspectorate's Improvement Team. These opportunities supported the service to plan and develop improvements to children's experiences in the preschool room. The learning from these opportunities will be replicated for the children under three years also. We were confident that the issues highlighted during the inspection would be considered and addressed.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

To enable children to achieve their full potential and demonstrate significant learning for children, the provider should further develop children's learning journals.

This may include:

- next steps linked to developmental milestones and skills development
- using a variety of observation types to gather information about children
- child friendly approaches to promote their involvement

- family involvement in developing the learning journey
- continued recording of significant events which may give rise to an additional support need, both long and short term
- visual tools to increase communication and promote involvement.

This is to comply with the Health and Social Care Standards - My support, my life -which state "I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if that is right for me". HSCS 1.27

This recommendation was made on 19 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

All children had a personal plan which included input from parents, assessment of development, observations of learning and next steps. A child wellbeing form continued to record ongoing issues and show partnership with parents. The service is moving to online learning journals in the next month which should provide further cohesion of children's information. This recommendation was met.

Recommendation 2

To plan effectively for children's progression, approaches to planning experiences should be developed to include:

- developing child led planning approaches,
- developing responsive planning.
- making planning and learning more visible for children and families
- use of observation to extend learning and enrich children's experiences
- consideration of developing skills rather than interests
- individualised approaches to planning.

This is to comply with the Health and Social Care Standards - My support, my life -which state "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity."

This recommendation was made on 19 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service has further developed how they gather information about children and use it to plan for their care and learning experiences. The service is currently working with the LA teacher to develop their responsive planning processes and involvement of children in assessing their own learning. Observations show staff understanding of children's learning and their role in extending it. This recommendation was met.

Recommendation 3

To ensure that children are provided with opportunities to be independent, challenged and to develop their sense of creativity and curiosity the service should develop the level of resources for children in the pre-school room.

This is to comply with the Health and Social Care Standards - My support, my life - "As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling".

This recommendation was made on 19 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Resources had been audited and new ones purchased, resulting in toddlers and preschool having some rich experiences. The baby room was requiring more development around provocations and nurturing spaces. This was being addressed. This recommendation was met.

Recommendation 4

In order to improve outcomes for children, the manager should ensure that a robust quality assurance system is in place. This should include but not be limited to

- ensuring that effective supervision is carried out which supports staff in their practice,
- room observations are carried out to identify the quality of the provision,
- quality assurance processes should be implemented to ensure that the manager has a clear overview of what is happening within the service.

This is in order to comply with the Health and Social Care Standards - My support, my life - which state 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'.

This recommendation was made on 19 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We saw evidence of staff support and supervision sessions as well as room observations. The manager and provider should now consider how these processes could further impact positively on experiences for children.

Recent participation in the Care Inspectorate's Improvement Programme has enhanced the managers knowledge and use of the improvement cycle to make changes. This recommendation was met.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
25 Oct 2019	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>3 - Adequate</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>3 - Adequate</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>3 - Adequate</div>
29 Nov 2017	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
7 Apr 2015	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
9 Apr 2013	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
3 May 2011	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>4 - Good</div>

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