

Calderglen Early Learning and Childcare Day Care of Children

220 Wester Hailes Road
Edinburgh
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 May 2024

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2022000098

About the service

Calderglen Early Learning and Childcare is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 64 children between 3 years and primary school age at any one time. The service is provided by the City of Edinburgh Council.

The service is located in the South West of the city in Wester Hailes, near to shops and amenities and has good transport links. The premises is made up of two playrooms that both have direct access to a large outdoor garden. There is a parent room used for parent and child groups and for parents to have privacy to discuss matters when required. There is a small sensory room all children can access that is also used as a library with a good selection of books, if children require a quiet space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 13 May 2024 between 08:00 and 16:00 and continued on Tuesday 14 May 2024 between 08:00 and 12:30. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous assessment reports of the registration process, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service and some of their families
- considered feedback from 10 families through an online form
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to the care of children and the management of the service.

Key messages

- Staff were nurturing, caring and compassionate which promoted positive relationships, supporting children to feel safe and secure.
- Skilled interactions from staff and effective questioning extended children's thinking and enhanced their learning.
- Positive communication with other professionals and responsive intervention, supported children and families.
- High quality resources and play opportunities supported children's curiosity, enquiry and creativity.
- There was an excellent approach to quality assurance and dedication towards self-evaluation, which were embedded and effective in supporting continuous improvement.
- A dedicated and knowledgeable staff team promoted positive outcomes and consistent care for children.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1 - Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm and nurturing care as they had developed strong and trusting relationships with staff. One child told us, 'I love everything about nursery because I can play with my friends and the teachers help me'. One parent commented, 'My child absolutely adores the staff'. Another parent told us, 'My child has a fabulous relationship with their key worker, as do I'.

Personal plans supported children's individual care and support needs. Regular meetings enabled next steps for children to be identified and planned for and any strategies of support were reviewed to ensure children's needs were met. These consistent and effective procedures ensured positive outcomes for children and supported them to achieve their potential.

The service worked with external agencies and support organisations when required, such as the Speech and Language Therapy service and an early year's project family support service. This allowed a high level of support to be available for families to ensure their wellbeing. Staff worked well to develop relationships with families and offered support and assistance in respectful and dignified ways. This included financial support and guidance, emotional support, and practical help for families experiencing difficulties. One parent told us, 'Me and my husband can openly discuss any issues with staff, we trust them'. We spoke with visiting professionals who commented on the positive and responsive approach of the management team and staff. These interventions and family assistance opportunities, enhanced the quality of children's and family's relationships and supported their overall wellbeing.

Mealtimes provided a calm and relaxed experience with opportunities for children to engage in conversations with their friends and develop some independence skills. Children could choose when they ate, which allowed them to enjoy uninterrupted play. There was scope to provide further opportunities to promote independence and enrich children's experiences. The service was keen to engage children and staff in evaluating their experiences. This would enable children to develop important life skills and enjoy social experiences at mealtimes.

Staff practice supported children to understand their rights. The team had developed creative approaches to include articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) around the play spaces. Children had worked with staff to develop their own 'golden rules' of play. These included, 'we can talk to a teacher if we are sad' and 'we can walk inside and run outside'. The rules had been linked to articles of the UNCRC such as article two, to ensure children understand the convention applies to every child and it does not discriminate, and article eight, that every child has a right to have their identity protected and preserved. This approach supported children to develop an understanding of their rights and ensured they were valued and respected.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children benefitted from a variety of resources which promoted play-based learning. There were large areas to enjoy block play and staff had good knowledge of how to promote and extend children's problem-solving skills, imagination, fine and gross motor skills and hand-eye coordination. One child told us their favourite thing to do was to play in the water tray. They showed us a great variety of resources to support their play with visual aids to develop children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy. There was a good range of painting and colouring materials and children took great pride in telling us how they had learned about mixing colours. One parent told us, 'My child has so many resources available to them indoors and outdoors. I have noticed a huge difference in my child's development since attending Calderglen'. Having so many rich experiences that children could freely access, meant they were engaged throughout the whole session, learning, and having fun with their friends.

Children benefitted from a variety of planned play experiences which were responsive to their interests, including regular baking opportunities. One parent told us, 'My child's confidence has come on leaps and bounds as the nursery support him with his interests'. Children told us they had enjoyed making pancakes, bread and jam. These opportunities provided children with a real sense of achievement.

Strong partnership working provided opportunities for children and their families to learn and have fun together both in nursery and at home. There were resources children could use at home such as bedtime story books. There had been stay and play sessions for families to join their children's play and some parents had read stories for children in different languages. This showed the service recognised the importance of promoting parental engagement to support children's outcomes.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through use of the wider community. Children had visited the local community centre and library and nearby woodlands. The service was keen to enhance their use of nearby facilities and local play spaces. This would further support children to feel included in their local and wider community.

Children's play was carefully observed and planned approaches to extend their interests were visible, with accessible resources both indoors and outdoors. A number of children were interested in mini beasts and they were supported to develop this curiosity to find bugs. Effective questioning from skilled staff extended children's interests and they enjoyed learning about woodlouse antennas. Staff supported children very well and ensured the pace of learning met their needs. This enabled children to take control of their own learning and resulted in more participation and increased confidence.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Play and learning opportunities were enhanced through the nursery environment, which was well-designed, furnished to a high standard and comfortable. Children were engaged in their play and enjoyed showing us how they used the space. Children told us they enjoyed nursery and playing with their friends.

Children benefitted from regular active play in the vast outdoor space. There was a wide variety of play opportunities in the garden which provided challenge and fun. Children enjoyed using the apparatus which encouraged them to climb, jump, swing and balance. There was a large loose parts area with crates, ladders, tyres, tubing and piping, and children enjoyed making an obstacle course together. Children thoroughly enjoyed splashing, pouring and transporting water from the two large containers that staff emptied and filled every day. All of these experiences and opportunities in the garden supported children to develop their gross motor skills and develop their imagination and creativity.

The service was developing children's awareness of environmental issues. Children were involved in recycling and composting, and were taking part in a learning programme that promoted outdoor learning and hand-on experiences. The service had three chickens and children enjoyed telling us how they take care of them. Children helped to collect eggs from the coop and they understood how to follow infection prevention and control measures to keep themselves safe. This showed the service's commitment to supporting children to gain a deeper understanding of the natural world and how to take care of their environment.

Children experienced challenging and fun play experiences in a safe way. Risk assessments and daily checks promoted a safe environment for all children. Children were encouraged to risk assess their play in the moment. For example, staff used effective questioning to ensure children had considered their safety when climbing and playing outdoors. One parent commented, 'The environment is safe and secure and I like the opportunities my child has to explore in their own ways'. We discussed ways children could be further supported to be involved in the daily checks and risk assessments. This would further encourage children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe while supporting their confidence, health and wellbeing.

Infection control practices minimised the potential spread of infection. Staff sensitively reminded and supported children to wash their hands at various times throughout the day, promoting a safe environment for children.

How good is our leadership?**6 - Excellent**

We evaluated this quality indicator as excellent, where performance was sector leading which supported outstandingly high-quality outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There was a clear vision for the setting of learning and growing together, that had been developed by children, families and staff. The management team strongly valued the voice of children, families and staff. The dedicated, and knowledgeable staff team worked together to achieve high standards of care and support for children and their families.

The outstanding leadership in the setting provided opportunities for all staff to take an active role in leading areas in the service. For example, there was an emotions lead who had developed innovative ways for children to understand and discuss their feelings and emotions. One member of staff had recently taken on the family engagement lead and was looking for further ways to develop partnerships with external agencies to support families. All leads were responsible for leading professional discussions to share their work and encourage staff reflections, to enhance the positive impact on children's outcomes. The strong ethos promoted positive staff engagement which resulted in a motivated and enthusiastic team. There was a clear shared responsibility taken towards continuous improvement and to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and their families. The staff team reflected well together at all times, which further impacted positively on working towards continuous improvement.

To ensure the service could sustain continuous improvement, highly effective procedures to monitor and evaluate progress had been embedded. The service used a number of ways to measure the impact of their work. Visiting professionals told us about the positive impact they had experienced for children and their families due to the support received from the service. We were confident that excellent performance in this area would be sustained due to the commitment from the staff team and the processes and procedures in place.

Self-evaluation procedures were embedded in all areas of the service. This enabled the service to deliver high-quality care and support that met children and family's needs and choices. Critical reflection underpinned all of the staff's work and current guidance documents and frameworks supported the service to identify areas for development. The culture of reflective practice and the staff's dedication to continuous professional learning, allowed children to benefit from highly effective learning experiences based on current best practice guidance.

The manager had produced a self-evaluation toolkit for outdoor learning to identify their strengths and areas for development to improve the learning opportunities outdoors for children. This sector leading approach had been shared by the local authority as an example of best practice to support other services. The toolkit supported services to assess the opportunities available to children outdoors and highlight areas that can be improved. This highlighted the managers dedication and commitment to sharing best practice, to contribute to high-quality care and positive experiences for children across the local authority.

The manager of the service had created and chaired a community collaborative which brought together other professionals from the local area. They worked together to develop a plan of support and share resources, to provide opportunities for children and families to build relationships with one another. This helped to strengthen social networks and create a sense of connectedness and belonging, to improve the quality of life for those in and around the community.

We were confident that children and families would continue to experience excellent experiences.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

Staff communicated very well with each other and worked well together. It was clear staff had developed positive respectful relationships. This allowed staff to flexibly support each other and meet children's needs.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities within each area of the nursery, which ensured key tasks were carried out and supported consistent practice. This helped to provide the necessary supervision of children and offered a breadth of opportunities and experiences. One parent commented, 'The staff are caring and welcoming. My child can always choose where they would like to play when they start their day'.

There was a process for supporting and mentoring new staff joining the team. Staff took on lead roles for mentoring which provided peer support and allowed mentors to develop leadership skills. An induction plan was in place to support new or agency staff, to familiarise themselves with service policies and procedures. This ensured consistent approaches for children. We signposted the manager to the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) national induction resource to support with the development of their induction and mentoring programme. This would further support staff to continue developing their skills and ensure consistent high-quality outcomes and approaches for children.

The staff team were committed to children's safety as all staff had completed paediatric first aid training. The service were regularly reviewing their learning to ensure staff maintained confidence and were capable of responding quickly in an emergency.

Children were prepared in advance for their key workers absence wherever possible. Clear communication between staff and children allowed children to know who was available to help them if they required support or comfort. A display at the main entrance with staff photographs, helped parents and children to become familiar with all staff. A welcome board outside each play space kept parents informed of staffing updates and daily snacks or meal plans. This enhanced children's sense of security and showed they were respected and valued.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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