

Whitecraig Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

44a Whitecraig Crescent
Whitecraig
Musselburgh
EH21 8NG

Telephone: 01316 653 278

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 October 2021

Service provided by:
East Lothian Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002600

Service no:
CS2003015821

About the service

Whitecraig Primary School Nursery, referred to as the nursery in this report, is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children at any one time aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school.

From 8 February 2021 until 25 June 2021, of those 20 children, 8 primary school aged children may be cared for in the nursery.

The nursery is an integral part of Whitecraig Primary School in the village of Whitecraig in East Lothian. Although close to large towns the setting is surrounded by rural areas and community resources which children visit regularly.

The nursery comprises of a playroom, large hallway and toilet facilities. Children have direct access to the outdoor area from their playroom.

Aims and objectives for the nursery are shared with parents through the nursery handbook. They include:

'The early years are crucial in children's development and we want to provide every child with the very best experiences. We aim to foster children's curiosity, to share their delight in discovery and their satisfaction in achievement.

We want them to feel good about themselves as learners in their first independent steps. We are looking forward to sharing this journey with them and with you!'

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

We spoke to children informally about nursery during our visit. We observed happy and relaxed children who were having fun and were engaged in learning through their play.

We asked the nursery to issue an e-mail to parents to enable us to gather their views. One parent responded to our request. Comments included:

'In my opinion, Whitecraig nursery is one of the best around. They love their jobs and care for the kids as if they were their own. The staff are very quick to deal with any issues and inform parents when necessary. You're always met with a smile and positive attitude. Personally, I would give them 10 out of 10.'

Self assessment

We did not request an up to date self-evaluation. We looked at the self-evaluation documents used in the nursery and were satisfied that there were process for assessing quality and identifying improvements.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Procedures for getting to know parents and settle children into nursery took account of individual needs and previous experiences. As children arrived, they were warmly welcomed, given time to chat, share their news and settle at their own pace. Staff were warm, kind and caring towards children.

Children were well supported to be part of the group. Staff understood some of the challenges that Covid-19 had brought regarding children's sense of security in a new setting and making friendships. There were clear but realistic expectations of children's behaviour, these were applied consistently to support children's security and confidence.

Staff knew the children very well and had a sound understanding of their individual needs. They worked with parents and other professionals to implement specific strategies to support children's ongoing development. Recording in personal plans included chronologies, were up to date and well maintained to provide a very good overview of each child.

Learning Stories were in place for each child. These provided an overview of each child's achievements and what children were learning through their play. These were used in conjunction with the Thinking Talking Toolkit to identify next steps in learning and development for each child.

Children had lunch at nursery. This provided an enjoyable and sociable time for children. They had opportunities to sit with older children who chatted to them and supported them during the meal. Staff worked with parents to try and encourage children to try a range of foods and provided support to ensure that they had enough to eat and drink for their meal.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. For example, we observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene and handwashing and there were clear policies and procedures implemented to ensure consistent approaches across the nursery.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The nursery environment provided children with a welcoming and comfortable space to play. Throughout the day children helped staff to keep the areas for play well maintained and attractive. This helped children to develop a sense of responsibility and respect for their play environment.

Children could access all areas of the nursery independently and were well supervised by staff who provided a good balance of enabling children to develop a sense of independence whilst being on hand if support was needed.

Opportunities for play and learning were well supported by a very good range and quality of play resources. The use of open ended and real-life resources were being used to promote children's curiosity and creativity. Children enjoyed making structures at the building blocks, models and wooden creations at the woodwork bench. Staff were actively increasing literacy and numeracy in the indoor and outdoor environments as part of their development of children's learning opportunities.

The outdoor area was freely accessible all day. Staff had increased their understanding and use of the outdoor space as a valuable learning area for children. It provided children with opportunities for physical play such as balancing, climbing and group games, which children were enjoying at our visit. There were opportunities for digging, planting and growing but also quieter play such as using books and making up stories.

Staff took children out into the local community regularly. They used areas around the school for a different outdoor play environment which gave opportunities for more risky play, this helps children understand their capabilities. Although the village is very close to large towns, the area around the school is rural and children went out to see fields being sown or harvested and visit local wooded areas. They connected with the local community by walking to the Community Hub and visiting the Roots and Fruits resource and having links with the local playgroup.

There were procedures and policies in place to ensure that the environment was safe, secure and well maintained for children to use. Staff were in the process of reviewing procedures to ensure that they reflected the current service and good practice. Procedures for the operation of the nursery during the covid-19 pandemic were in place and regularly updated and shared with parents.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The staff group were committed to providing positive experiences for children. They showed kindness and compassion towards children and a very good level of nurturing care. Children were confident and secure around staff going easily to them for support.

The staff group worked very well as a team. They had developed a shared vision for what they wanted to achieve for the children and families who used the nursery. The staff work patterns had changed to accommodate the longer day now being offered to 3-5 year olds. Very good processes were in place to share information within the staff team to ensure that there was a consistent approach to children's support and learning. Across the day staffing levels ensured that there was minimum impact on children when staff took breaks or carried out additional tasks.

Minutes of team meetings evidenced that staff were reflective about their practice and their professional development. Staff had undertaken a range of training and had used the professional development review process to identify specific training which would enhance their own development but also benefit children by providing specific skills. To enable staff to work in the nursery they were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC are responsible for social services workforce development and monitoring of professional practice.

The staff team were very well supported by the head teacher and the local authority support teacher for early learning and childcare. Minutes of meetings and visit records evidenced that these visits to the nursery included observations of staff practice and collaborative discussions with staff about experiences and outcomes for children. These discussions encouraged staff to become reflective of their practice which helped them to engage in a process of continuous learning.

Staff had developed a clearer understanding of how children learn and develop. The senior early years practitioner regularly signposted staff to local authority and national guidance and information. They had used this wide range of current good practice guidance to increase their understanding and inform their practice.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The vision, values and aims for the nursery reflected the vision for the school. They had been developed with children, families and reflected the needs of the local community.

Communication with parents was a strength in the nursery. Due to covid-19, opportunities to engage with parents face to face had been more limited. With the easing of restrictions staff were ensuring that parents received good quality feedback about their children at the end of the day. They provided parents with access to information through the noticeboard at the nursery gate and the blog written by staff. During the lockdown periods staff had continued to engage with parents through calls and some visits to deliver learning and play resources to families.

The head teacher led the quality assurance process in collaboration with the staff team. Parents had been consulted with regarding the areas for improvement identified in the School Improvement Plan. The improvements identified for the nursery focussed strongly on the outcomes for children. These had been regularly evaluated to ensure that progress to make improvement was being achieved and sustained. The wider process for self-evaluation was reflected in staff meeting minutes and the self-evaluation floor book. These provided evidence that the staff team continuously looked to assess how they were doing and if they could further improve the outcomes for children.

The head teacher consulted with and supported the senior early years practitioner, who had delegated leadership in the nursery, and the practitioner staff. This resulted in the head teacher having a very good overview of the capacity of staff to deliver positive outcomes for children and families. Staff commented that they felt leaders promoted a positive work environment and that they felt empowered and motivated. Some had been enabled to take on leading roles on initiatives and had contributed to their professional growth.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very 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 effectively support, develop and track children's learning, the service should improve the way in which observations and next steps are recorded within children's learning stories. This should result in records containing meaningful observations and that are specific to the learning intention.

This is to ensure that the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.14) and 'My needs as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).

This recommendation was made on 2 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's development was effectively tracked through the learning stories and local authority trackers. Staff were also using the Thinking, Talking, Toolkit to identify individual next steps for children.

This recommendation was met.

Recommendation 2

To effectively meet children's needs, clear plans should be kept on strategies used to support children who require additional support. This will help to ensure children receive the right care to help them reach their full potential.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This recommendation was made on 2 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Personal planning was well organised and documented. A range of information had been gathered on individual children to ensure that their support needs were met.

This recommendation was met.

Recommendation 3

To drive improvements and ensure they are sustained, the headteacher should develop and implement a robust system of professional development reviews, self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.

This is to ensure that staffing is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes (HSCS 4.19) and 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This recommendation was made on 2 December 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The process for professional development was in place and used effectively by staff to identify training. Systems for self-evaluation were led by the head teacher in collaboration with the staff group. These processes were resulting in improvements to the service.

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
18 Jun 2019	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing
		3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
24 Aug 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed
17 Jun 2013	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
17 Mar 2009		Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.