

Edinburgh Steiner School Day Care of Children

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Telephone: 0131 337 3410

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

21 March 2019

Service provided by:

The Edinburgh Steiner School

Service provider number:

SP2003003565

Service no:

CS2003016178

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

The Edinburgh Steiner School offers education to children from pre-school stages to senior school. Based on the Steiner Waldorf curriculum, the school aims to "develop responsible, free-thinking young people who can contribute to society with initiative and purpose".

The Kindergarten is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 60 children aged 3.5 years to entry to primary school. Situated in the grounds of the school, the self-contained, secure building is surrounded by developed gardens which are fully accessible by children. The three separate rooms offers small group sizes.

A central aim of the Steiner education is to "develop, harmonise and unite the faculties of thought, feeling and action in the child, so that the foundations may be laid for mental adaptability, initiative and moral strength in adult life".

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included.

What people told us

We gave the service care standard questionnaires to distribute to parents prior to inspection. From the 15 issued, six were returned. We also spoke with parents during inspection. Comments from parents included:

"I am fully satisfied with the care the Edinburgh Steiner School provides to my children."

"I thought it would be better for my child to play longer (rather than start school at age 5). They have a beautiful garden and it's very calm. My child is more keen to go out in all weathers and she climbs trees. Staff have helped with my child's bedtime routine."

"Other nurseries have been very overwhelming for my child. The daily schedules here are calming for her and she now notices more about nature. Staff are very nurturing."

"Staff are so committed to doing the right thing for the child and always find ways for a child to be part of Kindergarten. We have regular meetings to share information for consistency and to make sure plans are right. When staff are off and cover comes in, the children can be unsettled."

"Staff know my child really well. It's a pleasant environment and people are consistent. Other children have a second language. My child has made friends with other age groups which brings different experiences. Staff are very approachable and willing to help."

"I am very happy with the excellent care provided. I've got a happy child eager to go each morning!"

The number of children varied over the two days of inspection. Children presented as comfortable in their environment and appeared uninhibited by our presence.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment prior to inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

The ethos of the service was one of respect, where children were supported to be a part of their community and consider their responses to others. Children received very few direct instructions and instead were guided by familiarity and routine. This approach promoted children's choice as well as their social responsibilities and trusted children to know what was best for themselves. Staff were committed to improving their Steiner practice to improve outcomes for children. A mentoring system offered staff time to reflect and challenge practice. Meetings were recorded and actions set to ensure staff progress with their development.

A calm atmosphere was created by staff through their subtle and measured interactions with children. This meant that children were able to just be. Using a range of loose part and natural materials, children could explore and reflect real life in their play. We saw children working together to discuss, negotiate, create and extend their own thinking. Opportunities to practice and extend their social responsibilities were offered through staff imitation. Examples of this were baking bread, gardening, tidying the environment and helping others. Children experienced daily rhythms and repetitions through tasks, songs and stories. We saw how these rhythms encouraged children to regulate their own emotions, consider options open to them and engage in creative play.

Children were responded to as individuals. Needs and wishes were known by staff and used to inform strategies of support and next steps in learning. Each child was the centre of their plan as the service worked in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure positive outcomes.

Children were kept safe as the staff team had a good knowledge of child protection issues and reporting procedures. Staff demonstrated their commitment to this by working to review the child protection policy. This would ensure all potential situations have guidance in line with best practice and the service meets its registration requirements. Following a requirement made at last inspection the service had introduced a tracker to monitor safer recruitment.

What the service could do better

We signposted the service to the Care Inspectorate's website The Hub for guidance on administering medication. The service agreed to review their forms in line with this guidance.

The service identified enhancing the involvement of children in their personal plans more as an area for improvement. Whilst the service involved children through observation and responsive planning, they would like to explore how the Steiner approach could further support children to assess and review their own needs. We suggested the service refer to the Health and Social Care Standards to assist with this.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

In order to ensure safe recruitment the provider must set up a system to check professional registers prior to appointing a new member of staff. A record of these checks and the outcomes must be kept on file. This is to comply with:

Public Services Reform (Social services inspection) (Scotland) Regulations 2011. No. 210,9 (2) (c) Fitness of employees.

Timescale: within a week of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 23 March 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service has created a tracker system to monitor the safer recruitment process prior to new staff starting and continual staff registration.

Met - within timescales

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

The manager should regularly monitor and evaluate staff practice with the recording of next steps undertaken to ensure the continued provision of quality childcare practice.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 14.7: Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 23 March 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

A mentoring approach has been introduced to facilitate staff reflection and development. Meetings are minuted with planned actions being set. Staff meet regularly with senior staff for support and supervision and have input from an external Steiner advisor. The service continues to reflect on staff evaluation processes with a view to continually improve.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
18 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
12 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
17 Nov 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
12 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
9 Aug 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak
30 Sep 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak 2 - Weak

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