

Inspection report

The Edinburgh Academy Nursery Day Care of Children

The Edinburgh Academy Junior School
10 Arboretum Road
Edinburgh EH3 5PL

Inspected by: Maureen Campbell
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 13 May 2009

Service Number

CS2003015842

Service name

The Edinburgh Academy Nursery

Service address

The Edinburgh Academy Junior School
10 Arboretum Road
Edinburgh EH3 5PL

Provider Number

SP2005007897

Provider Name

The Edinburgh Academy

Inspected By

Maureen Campbell
Care Commission Officer

Inspection Type

Unannounced

Inspection Completed

13 May 2009

Period since last inspection

17 months

Local Office Address

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Introduction

The Edinburgh Academy Nursery is registered to care for 90 children between the ages of two years old to primary school entry. The nursery was registered with the Care Commission on 1 April 2002. In October 2008 the nursery, previously registered on two separate sites, moved to a new purpose built building within the grounds of The Edinburgh Academy Junior School.

The nursery operates from 8.30am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday.

On the day of inspection there were fifteen staff present, including the Head of Early Years who has responsibility for the nursery. There were 82 children present from the 104 on roll. Children attend the nursery in a mix of full and part time places.

In addition to the move to the new nursery accommodation, the nursery has undergone significant change in the recruitment of two new teachers and an increase in staff members to meet the needs of increased numbers of children. The Head of the Nursery had been on long term sick leave and has now resigned her post. The Head of Early Years within the school has been acting manager for the nursery in the interim.

The Edinburgh Academy Nursery is a partner provider with the City of Edinburgh Children and Families Department. The school is a member of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:

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 - 4 - Good

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission's assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission's website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report

This report was written following an unannounced inspection. The inspection took place throughout the morning and lunchtime session of Monday 27 April 2009 and a follow up visit to the Head of the Junior School and Head of Early Years on Wednesday 13 May 2009.

Before the Inspection

The Annual Return

The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission.

The Self-Assessment Form

The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by the Care Commission.

Views of service users

Eighteen service users completed a Care Standards Questionnaire from the twenty service user questionnaires which were issued.

Regulation Support Assessment

The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer (CCO) which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations and issues as part of the RSA.

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a low RSA score and so a low intensity inspection was required as a result. The inspection was then based upon the relevant inspection focus area and follow up on any recommendations and requirements from previous inspections, complaints or other regulatory activity.

During the inspection process

Staff at inspection

The inspection was carried out by Maureen Campbell Care Commission Officer (CCO).

Evidence

During the inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including:

Discussion with the Head of School and the Head of Early Years (with responsibility for the nursery within the Early Years Department), nursery staff, six parents and some of the children.

Observation of staff with children

A review of a range of policies and procedures, records and other documentation including:
Child Protection Policy and procedures

Health Policy and procedures

Standards, Quality and Improvement Plan 2008-2009

Improvement Plan 2008-2011

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

A draft handbook for parents

Welcome Leaflets for Parents

A Questionnaire for Parents

Children's' Contact information and All About Me forms.

Photographs of activities

Minutes of Staff Meetings

Class Lists.

Examination of the indoor and outdoor environment.

All of the above information was taken into account during the inspection process and was reported on.

The CCO also checked compliance with the Scottish Statutory Instruments (SSI) 2002/114.

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09

Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at: <http://www.carecommission.com/>

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs) applicable to this service are:

Child protection - reported under Quality Theme 1 - Quality of Care and Support - Quality statement 1.3 - 'We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met'.

Notifications - reported under Quality Theme 4 - Quality of Management and Leadership - Quality statement 4.4 - "We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide."

Fire Safety Issues

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection

There were no requirements arising from the last inspection.

Comments on Self Assessment

A fully completed self assessment document was submitted by the service. This was completed to a satisfactory standard and gave relevant information for each of the Quality Themes and Statements. The service identified its strengths and some areas for future development and gave very good evidence of service user involvement and how they planned to implement changes and further improvements.

View of Service Users

Children were in four separate interlinking rooms with access to the outdoor area. Children were observed to be happy and confident in the care of the nursery staff and were taking part in a wide range of age-appropriate activities.

View of Carers

The opportunity to speak to 6 parents arose during inspection. Their views are represented in the Quality statements along with views from the Care Commission questionnaire.

18 parent/carer questionnaires were returned to the Care Commission. This sample of views are summarised as follows:

All parents agreed/strongly agreed that they were happy with the overall quality of care their children received in the nursery.

The majority of parents agreed/strongly agreed that the nursery had involved them and their children in developing the service, for example by asking for ideas and feedback. Four parents disagreed that they had been involved in this manner.

None of the parents raised any concerns in questionnaires or further discussion.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

The service had established a very good range of methods of obtaining feedback from service users, both informally and formally, to improve the quality of the service. These included questionnaires for parents, a suggestion box, a school newsletter, and weekly updates on the parents' notice board.

The hours of the nursery provision had been changed to match the school hours following requests from parents.

Parents' evenings had also been introduced since the last inspection in response to feedback from parents.

The nursery had a parent representative for each of the four playrooms. Parents confirmed that they knew who their representative was and that their views would be regularly represented both in meetings with the Head each term and on the governing body.

A parents' association was active in supporting fundraising activities as well as making suggestions for improvements.

The CCO observed staff spending time in speaking with parents about their child's day as they came to collect their children.

Parents' comments on the care and support of their children included:

"I am overwhelmed by the attention to detail at The Edinburgh Academy. I have been very pleased at the way my daughter has been accepted from the initial interview stage up until this pre-school point. The difference in her in a few months is quite incredible."

"My son has been at the nursery since September. His development since joining has been very rapid and his small speech problem was picked up speedily and dealt with very sensitively and professionally."

"The nursery teachers identified that my son was slightly more advanced in his knowledge of letters and numbers. They spoke to me several times about some ideas and their thoughts on taking this forward. I appreciated the time and energy they have spent on my son and look forward to seeing how the rest of his year develops."

Areas for Development

The service should consider adapting the questionnaire for the parents to include the Care Commission quality theme of care and support.

The service should retain evidence of any changes and improvements made to children's care and support as a direct result of parent feedback.

The service should consider ways of getting feedback on the experiences of the youngest children from their parents.

The service had identified the development of Circle time with the children to actively involve them in decision making within the nursery.

A website was under development for the school which would include information for parents on the nursery provision.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service Strengths

There was an appropriate child protection policy and procedures in place. Parents were fully aware of the child protection policy along with the framework standards for child protection and the children's charter.

Staff demonstrated a very good level of awareness of the procedure to follow in the event of child protection concerns.

All staff had undertaken updated training in child protection issues.

Staff in each of the playrooms had current qualifications in First Aid and Food Hygiene.

Children were observed taking part in outdoor play and physical exercise as part of their daily routine.

Children took part in a snack committee, making choices and helping to prepare healthy snacks.

An appropriate range of policies and procedures were in place to ensure very good practice in infection control and health and safety issues.

Parents' comments included:

"Great at accommodating dietary needs."

"Lots of outdoor play and choice in what children can do."

Areas for Development

Two parents commented on the information they received from the nursery as follows:

"More written, detailed information about my child's development (emotional, social and educational) would be welcomed."

"Very pleased with the nursery. Only comment is that I would like a little more information on what my daughter does day by day. She brings good projects home from time to time but I don't know what themes are covered and topics explored."

The service should consider ways in which parents are informed of their children's progress and activities. In discussion with the Head of Junior School and the Head of Early Years, a separate nursery newsletter was seen as an area for development.

The welcome pack for parents could include information on the policies of the nursery and how to access them.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service Strengths

The service had very good systems in place to ensure that service users were routinely involved in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Children were actively involved in a variety of ways in caring for their environment. They were drawing ideas for new garden play equipment. Parents had been raising funds for the garden area and had put forward their ideas as well as giving their time.

Parents had also suggested plants in the foyer of the nursery which they then organised.

Parents' comments on the environment included:

"The environment inside and outside is superb. The overall atmosphere is lovely. I am totally happy with all aspects of this nursery."

"This is a great nursery. My child has special needs and I could not think of a more supportive and stimulating environment for him to be in. The staff are passionate about what they do and the children always seem really happy to be there."

"An outstanding nursery."

Areas for Development

The service should consider adapting the questionnaire for the parents to include the Care Commission quality theme of the environment.

The service should retain evidence of any changes and improvements made to the indoor and outdoor environment as a direct result of parent feedback.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: The environment allows service users to have as positive a quality of life as possible.

Service Strengths

The environment throughout the nursery was extremely stimulating, bright and spacious, allowing children space to play individually and in groups.

Very good use was being made of the interlinking aspects between each of the playrooms when sharing particular activities. Direct access from each playroom to the garden area was enjoyed by both staff and children.

All parents strongly agreed, in the Care Commission parent questionnaire, that the nursery was a safe, secure, hygienic, pleasant and stimulating environment.

Parents expressed their delight in the new accommodation in discussion with the CCO.

Children were observed using opportunities for independence and choice in the manner in which they were able to access the resources within each playroom.

The pre-school children were making tiles of their individual design as part of a decorating project for the foyer.

Areas for Development

The service had identified that the use of space in the foyer as an area for future development.

The service should also consider a separate space in which parents could meet to encourage further involvement in the nursery.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

All parents agreed/strongly agreed, in the Care Commission parent questionnaire, that staff had the skills and experience to care for their children and support their learning and development.

Staff photographs together with their names roles and were displayed on the notice board for parents/carers which enabled easy identification.

The nursery had a key worker system in place. Each parent knew their child's key worker and who to approach to discuss any issues.

Parents' comments on staff included:

"The staff at the Edinburgh Academy are fantastic, they are consistently friendly, welcoming, enthusiastic and above all kind to the children."

"The staff at The Edinburgh Academy Nursery are wonderful. They are experienced, very friendly, fun and caring. They always have time to discuss any issues and are a joy to talk to - the children and parents are lucky to have a dedicated and hard working team."

"I have always found The Edinburgh Academy Nursery to provide extremely well for both my children across all aspects of their care and development. A dedicated staff working in an appropriately equipped environment appears to be the key."

"Staff are always professional, but very caring and interested. They give daily verbal feedback about my child's experiences and are always happy to answer questions. There seems to be little, if any, staff absences which is very reassuring."

Areas for Development

The service should consider adapting the questionnaire for the parents to include the Care Commission quality theme of staffing.

The service should retain evidence of any changes and improvements made to staffing arrangements as a direct result of parent feedback.

Staff had 360 degree appraisals every two years. The service should consider the involvement of parents in obtaining views for these appraisals. The CCO discussed consideration of a shorter staff review in the year following these appraisals.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

The CCO observed staff work effectively as a team.

Parents made positive comments on the approachability of staff within the nursery.

All members of staff were aware of their individual roles within the service. Staff were highly professional in their approach to their work.

New room leader posts were viewed by staff and parents as a positive change and part of continuous improvement in staffing.

All staff were qualified to the appropriate standard and had registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and General Teaching Council. Of the fourteen staff within the nursery, two were qualified teachers and twelve nursery nurses held level 3 qualifications.

Since the last inspection all staff had taken part in a comprehensive range of training courses including professional development through visiting other nurseries.

Areas for Development

The service should ensure that each member of staff has an individual CPD (Continuing Professional Development) record.

The service should develop a training and development plan for the whole staff group which would indicate priorities for professional development.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

There was parent member on the Court of Directors of the school, giving very good opportunities for the views of nursery parents to be represented.

The Head of Early Years had started the process of evaluating planning and classroom practice. Written feedback was provided with clear goals for staff.

Areas for Development

The service should consider adapting the questionnaire for the parents to include the Care Commission quality theme of management and leadership.

The service should retain evidence of any changes and improvements made to management and leadership issues as a direct result of parent feedback.

The service had identified the leadership of the nursery as a key post for continuous improvement. The post will be advertised this term.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 4: We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service Strengths

A good range of quality assurance measures had been put into place since the last inspection. These included the development of a Standards and Quality Assurance Plan, a three year Improvement Plan, use of Child at the Centre and Curriculum for Excellence.

A comprehensive complaints policy and procedures was available for parents in the parent handbook.

The Inspection focus area 2008/09 applicable to this service was Notifications. This was discussed with the Head of Early Years. There was good knowledge of the type of staff

issues which should be notified to both the SSSC and the Care Commission.

Areas for Development

The service had identified the need to further develop classroom observations and the sharing of good practice at staff meetings.

The service planned to organise parent workshops on the Curriculum for Excellence.

The service should consider how service user feedback can inform their quality assurance processes.

The service had identified that involvement of parents in children's individual planning profiles (PLPs) as a priority for the next academic year.

CCO Grading

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards

Enforcement

There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information

None at this inspection.

Requirements

There were no requirements arising from this inspection.

Recommendations

There were no recommendations arising from this inspection.

Maureen Campbell

Care Commission Officer