

Torrance Early Years Centre Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 September 2023

Service provided by:
East Dunbartonshire Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003014707

About the service

Torrance Early Years Centre is provided by East Dunbartonshire Council. The centre is situated within the grounds of Torrance Primary School in Torrance.

The service is registered to provide early learning and childcare to a maximum of 40 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. Children are accommodated within two adjoining playrooms in purpose built premises within the school grounds. There is free flow access to two large outdoor play areas and children also have the use of school facilities for play.

About the inspection

This was a full unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 13 September 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with people using the service and their families
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced very warm and nurturing care to support their wellbeing. They were cared for by kind and caring staff who knew them extremely well.
- Children were actively leading their play and learning in a stimulating, challenging and creative environment.
- Children had lots of space to freely move around indoors and outdoors. Staff had created a homely environment with space for children to relax.
- The service was very well led by a strong, approachable management team. The manager and depute head of centre delegated responsibility appropriately to staff and involved them in the development of the service.
- Staff worked well together ensuring that the routine of the day was equable and children benefitted from a calm, productive learning environment.

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?	5 - Very Good
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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Key Question: 1.1 Nurturing care and support.

Children experienced very warm and nurturing care to support their wellbeing. They were cared for by kind and caring staff who knew them extremely well. Children received a warm welcome and were quick to settle into the playrooms on arrival, which demonstrated that they felt safe and secure in the setting.

Managing transitions for children was a key strength of the centre. Transitions were carefully planned and tailored to children's individual needs. Home visits were conducted by a senior staff member and child's keyworker to help to build relationships and get to know children in advance of starting nursery. Positive transition into nursery and school meant that children experienced inclusive child centred provision across nursery and early level primary school. Parents were fully included, valued, informed and supported to manage the transition process.

Staff demonstrated a genuine interest when interacting with children. They engaged effectively with children to extend discussion and facilitate learning. We could see that staff knew children very well as individuals and they talked confidently to us about the care and learning needs of individual children in their groups. Staff told us there was a strong focus on children's emotional wellbeing and we could see they used a range of strategies and resources, including PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) to enhance this. PATHS is a social and emotional learning curriculum that empowers children to develop social and emotional learning skills which will enable them to make positive choices throughout life.

It was evident that children had formed strong attachments and bonds with their allocated key person and other staff in the playrooms. Throughout our visit, children enjoyed loving interactions from the staff team.

Parents commented:

"I like how well the staff know my child. They have built strong relationships with them and my child loves attending nursery because she feels safe and secure"

"The staff have been great at getting to know my child, providing a thoughtful and well managed settling in period. The staff are warm, welcoming and nurturing and I have every confidence that she is getting the support and care she needs to develop in every way."

Staff ensured a partnership approach with parents/carers to capture and record relevant information about children's health, safety and wellbeing needs within personal care plans.

Staff worked very closely with families to gather important key information, and care plans were reviewed regularly to ensure they reflected children's individual preferences, likes and dislikes. Staff effectively used information contained in care plans to support parents and promote consistency and continuity of care.

Staff commented:

"Torrance Early Years Centre is a supportive, loving and nurturing place to work. The staff team are fantastic and know every individual child very well, this allows us to work well as a team and offer the best care, play and learning experiences to meet the children's needs"

"In Torrance EYC we create a nurturing environment that supports, challenges and meets individual needs through our positive relationships. By having key groups, our tracking documentation allows us to do this"

"The staff know each individual child very well as we are a small establishment. We have very good relationships with families and learning is shared with parents on learning journals. Parents also share with staff outside achievements. Staff are very good at responding to children's interests."

We sampled children's learning journals and found that they were very informative and contained comprehensive records of observations and learning and development for children. Journals clearly demonstrated next steps for learning. Parents responded very well to the learning journals, sharing information about children's learning and achievements at home.

Parents commented:

"The staff are excellent at communicating with home either by conversations at pick up/drop off or by learning journal, email, phone calls"

"I like the fact I get regular updates of my child's learning and development via their online platform 'online learning journals'. They also share via the platform how I can support her learning from home. The service has a main focus around children's rights, in which they embed into my daughters learning"

"Staff consistently go above and beyond to ensure that individual child's needs are met. Kept up to date with what they are learning through the online learning journal."

The leadership team was extremely efficient in monitoring and tracking children's learning and development to ensure positive outcomes for children. The nursery teacher collaborated with all staff on a daily basis to carefully plan together for children's learning. Early interventions meant that children and families who required additional support were quickly identified and targeted support was arranged.

The Senior Early Years Worker also used the Triple P Parenting Programme to ensure that families were empowered to help their children reach their true potential. Triple P is a multi-level system of support to help parents understand their child's emotions by enhancing parents knowledge, skills and confidence. The staff member carried out home visits to fully engage with parents and support them to speak confidentially about their child's needs and development.

We found that there were effective arrangements in place to control and prevent the spread of infection within the service to protect staff and children. Nappy changing facilities complied with best practice guidance. Children and staff washed their hands regularly.

Children enjoyed mealtimes that were relaxed and unhurried. Lunch areas were homely and welcoming and staff sat alongside children to ensure that they enjoyed a calm, sociable experience. Children were developing their independence by pouring their own drinks and clearing away their plates after lunch.

Staff had a good understanding of children's health needs. Staff were trained in first aid should children require medical assistance. Medication was very well organised and documented and was safely stored.

Key Question: 1.3 Play and Learning.

Children were actively leading their play and learning in a stimulating, challenging and creative environment. This was encouraged through a balance of spontaneous and planned, high quality experiences that promoted children's choice and independence. There was a strong focus on children's rights, promoting the safety and protection of children.

Planning approaches to play and learning were child centred and responsive. 'Provocations' (resources or activities that promote thoughts, creativity, and learning) were used to capture children's interests and support high quality play and learning experiences. Children were supported to reach their full potential through carefully planned activities and targeted interventions by skilled staff. The nursery teacher and staff

worked collaboratively to ensure that children were making very good progress in literacy and numeracy. The nursery teacher recognised the importance of being an effective role model for staff and discussed how she supported staff to take learning forward.

Outdoor play and learning was fully embedded in the service. Children could easily move between the playrooms and the well resourced outdoor areas with a range of natural, open ended and loose parts play materials. The recent addition of the large physical play area provided children with opportunities to freely run around and practice a range of motor skills. The new literacy shed supported language and communication. Children also regularly accessed forest school in a woodland area where they learned about nature, risk and safety. This allowed children to develop self confidence, independence and self esteem.

Staff commented:

"Due to a staff member being on each area and planning through observation and child interest this ensures resources and facilities are kept well stocked and to the interest of the child. Therefore children are highly engaged. Children are able to free flow from indoors to out."

Parents commented:

"The playrooms and garden are a huge strength and it's apparent how hard the staff team work to ensure the homely safe feeling is apparent throughout. My child loves the garden area and can sometimes spend the majority of her day in nature"

"As a parent there isn't one thing that I would change. So I asked my little one and her answer is 'open on Saturday.'"

Activities and resources indoors and outdoors supported children to develop their curiosity, be creative, and build on their interests. We saw children having lots of fun designing and creating a rocket to launch in the garden.

Children were happy and confident, having fun and enjoying their time at the setting. The service twitter page was used to share the range of activities available to children. Children proudly showed me their garden where they grew plants, fruits and vegetables such as sunflowers, strawberries, sweet peas, pumpkins and courgettes. They made soup for snack using their vegetables. Parents supported the centre to create the garden area, working on the ground and building structures to enhance growing and planting.

Throughout our visit, staff recognised, supported and took pleasure in children's skills and achievements, consistently offering praise and encouragement to develop children's confidence and self-esteem. Staff demonstrated effective use of questioning to extend children's thinking, widen their skills and consolidate their learning. Interactions were pitched at the appropriate level for children. Overall, staff were aware of the importance of role modelling actions and behaviours.

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Key Question: 2.2 Children experience high-quality facilities.

The setting was well planned, comfortable and welcoming. Children had lots of space to freely move around indoors and outdoors. Staff had created a homely environment with space for children to relax. This meant that children felt safe and secure.

There was lots of natural light and ventilation with playroom doors open to outdoor areas. Play spaces reflected children's interests and provided a range of opportunities for active play and learning. Resources were of good quality and were very accessible to children. We saw staff helping children to use resources in their own way to develop their play and match their own interests and intentions. Children were shaping and designing their own play outdoors supporting imaginative play and problem-solving. There were playroom quality assurance checklists and risk assessments in place to monitor areas and ensure safety and security for children.

Children enjoyed forest school opportunities in a nearby wooded area. Staff had created safe and secure natural spaces with lots of challenges for children and fun experiences. Children enjoyed learning about the natural world, risk and safe play and were carrying out risk assessments with help from staff.

Infection control procedures were carefully implemented by staff. Very good hand hygiene was observed with children washing hands before eating.

A separate changing room for children supported good infection prevention and control measures. There was ample space, and all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was stored appropriately. This supported children to be cared for with dignity and respect.

Children's personal information was safe and protected.

Maintenance arrangements were in place and repairs were carried out promptly when reported.

One parent commented:

"The playrooms and garden are a huge strength and it's apparent how hard the staff team work to ensure the homely safe feeling is apparent throughout. My child loves the garden area and can sometimes spend the majority of her day in nature."

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

Key question: 3.1 Quality Assurance and improvement are led well.

The service had a clear vision, aims and objectives and a range of quality assurance processes in place involving children and families. These included peer observations and assessment, moderation of planning, children's voice and parent and staff questionnaires to obtain feedback. Parents enjoyed 'stay and play' sessions and the annual curriculum evening. 'Tea, toast and a talk' was planned to give parents additional opportunities to learn about the centre and provide feedback. The early years centre had achieved 'Rights Respecting School Bronze Award' and was working towards silver award status.

Self evaluation and improvement plans facilitated continuous improvement and supported improved outcomes for children and families. Staff regularly engaged with children and parents to encourage them to contribute to learning journeys, share in their child's learning and inform planning and development of the service.

Staff spoke confidently and passionately to us about their leadership roles in the service. They were further developing their skills in self-reflection and evaluation to improve outcomes for children.

Staff focused on increased attainment for children; they encouraged children to articulate their views, provided opportunities for children to lead their learning and helped them to improve their self-confidence and independence in decision making, they reviewed quality of learning experiences.

Quality improvement visits by senior managers were very positive and well received by the service manager and staff.

The service was very well led by a strong, approachable management team. The manager and depute head of centre delegated responsibility appropriately to staff and involved them in the development of the service. Very good direction was provided to the team who were committed to providing children and families with positive experiences. High staff morale impacted strongly on children's experiences.

Staff commented:

"The team encourages and motivates each other to ensure we all give the highest level of care and to provide experiences following the children's interests. And as a new member of staff I feel that I can speak to the staff team to ask for support at any time"

"Management team in Torrance EYC ensure I feel supported, valued and have plenty of opportunities to express views through general professional conversations, meetings and in service days. All staff are involved in self evaluation and decisions. Parents & children's views and opinions are so important and valued . Through feedback forms general conversations learning journals etc."

Parents commented:

"We are invited to many events throughout the year getting a chance to see what happens in our little ones day, the curriculum meetings gave us a chance to see how staff deliver the curriculum through play"

"Great service no improvement required"

"The management team have taken the time to get to know my little one and the family surrounding her which gives me confidence that they are knowledgeable to meet her needs. As said before they are approachable and respectful meaning that if any issues were to arise I know that I could openly speak to the management team and they would confidently be able to support me and my little one."

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 people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Key Question: 4.3 Staff Deployment.

Staffing levels supported delivery of very good care. A full complement of staff meant that children regularly received one-to-one care. The small size and layout of the centre also helped staff and children to get to know each other. Staff worked well together ensuring that the routine of the day was equable and children benefitted from a calm, productive learning environment. Staff were very positive, happy to be at work and highly motivated.

Staff commented:

"The staff team work very well together and are very supportive of each other"

"We are a close, supportive team. We share ideas, offer solutions, we share learning and communicate well."

Staff were skilled, competent and able to reflect on their practice. They were well deployed to ensure that their differing experience, knowledge and skills were appropriately used to support experiences for children.

Staff held keyworker and leadership roles in the service. This also helped to promote continuity of care for children with staff sharing information and observations of children with other staff.

Parents commented:

"Torrance Early Years is a wonderful centre, I feel lucky to be able to put my child into such a setting where they feel safe to learn, grow and develop. The staff go above and beyond and are highly invested in each child which reflects in the children's enjoyment of being at nursery"

"Staff are extremely welcoming, friendly and kind. They make great relationships with the children."

We saw that management supported staff to have time to regularly update and review children's learning journals. This meant that journals were well completed and up to date with information that assisted staff to meet children's needs.

Effective staff deployment also ensured very good supervision of children, for example, staff communicated when a task took them away from their responsibilities, ensuring children were safe. Children's experiences were not interrupted as a result of task specific duties.

Staff were flexible and managed changes to their routine well. Staff told us how well they were supported and mentored. They participated in training and reflected on and evaluated against best practice guidance to improve outcomes for children. Staff met weekly for the purpose of planning and self evaluation. They engaged in wider professional discussions that informed practice, for example, linking with colleagues in early level in the primary school.

The deputy head of centre supported staff on a daily basis and the headteacher of the primary school, designated early years centre manager, was in the centre each day and visible too and available to parents.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The manager and staff should review the service policy and procedure on administration of medication in accordance with Care Inspectorate guidance, 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'.

Health and Social Care Standards 4.11 - 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'.

This area for improvement was made on 8 November 2018.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has been met.

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	6 - Excellent
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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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