

Dalbeattie Playgroup Day Care of Children

Dalbeattie Primary School
Southwick Road
Dalbeattie
DG5 4HR

Telephone: 01556 611597

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 21 June 2017

Service provided by:
Dalbeattie Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003002549

Care service number:
CS2003010852

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

This service has been registered since 2002.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives. The Care Inspectorate has an important role to play in supporting this approach in inspecting care services for children.

The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. It is a consistent way for people to work with all children and young people. The approach helps practitioners focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people – and how they can act to deliver these improvements. Getting it right for every child is being threaded through all existing policy, practice, strategy and legislation affecting children, young people and their families.

In Scotland, the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach puts wellbeing at the very heart of its approach. The eight 'indicators' of wellbeing that form the basis of GIRFEC are – Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included – often referred to as 'SHANARRI'.

Dalbeattie Playgroup is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 16 children not yet attending primary school, of whom there will be a maximum of 4 children aged 2 to under 3 years. The service may operate a lunch club between the hours of 11.30am and 12.30pm on Monday to Friday, during term time only, to no more than 10 children aged from 3 years to those not yet attending primary school. Children will attend the service for a maximum of 3 and a half hours in any one day.

Dalbeattie Playgroup is based at Dalbeattie Primary School, where they have the use of a playroom. The playgroup is provided by a voluntary management committee and is in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Council to deliver early learning and childcare.

What people told us

Parents told us:

Our children have enjoyed and benefitted from the great playgroup environment and the great staff who have been there and are there now. The kids have felt a real bond to the staff and the staff have been great at keeping us up-to-date with what the kids have been doing. The staff have time if ever we need to talk.

My child loves going to playgroup. My child loves the wide range of activities that takes place from baking to arts and crafts. They do lots of great adventures and my child always has lots to talk about after playgroup. Great snacks too.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at the service's own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. We have made some comments about these in this report.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for by a friendly and supportive staff team. There had recently been a complete change of staff, and we saw that the staff were working together to build relationships with children, their families and one another. Staff were getting to know about the children's abilities, likes and interests and had made a good start in using their knowledge to support children's development and their interests.

Children were getting to know the playgroup routines and we saw that staff were including them by encouraging them to make choices and involving them in different play opportunities. Children were having fun and we heard them laughing as they played. Staff talked to the children and we observed them all as they pretended to go on a journey to the beach. Staff encouraged children to think about how to keep safe by talking about wearing seat belts in the car and sun cream at the beach.

Children had some opportunities to develop independence and were encouraged to share and take turns. We thought that staff could encourage children to be more independent and to take more responsibility for tasks around the setting. Children had very little involvement in tasks like setting the table for lunch and snack. We suggested that they could introduce a helping hands rota for children so that they could be more helpful.

Children were involved in creating the weekly snack menu and we heard about their trips to local shops to buy snack. However, we observed that the snack menu was not effectively balanced and did not follow best practice guidance. We also found that the snack provided during our visit was not enough for some children and that the same snack was provided twice during the day, which could impact on the nutritional balance for some children. (See recommendation 1).

Personal care plans were in place for all children, however, staff were not aware that these were legally required. Staff were undertaking a review of the format of plans so that they were easier for staff and parents to use. We made some suggestions about the format of plans during our visit and gave further advice about the legal aspects of the plans. Children also had personal learning plans which were intended to be a record of children's learning and achievements. Staff were aware that they could improve these so that they told the children's story more effectively. (See recommendation 2).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Children should have a well-balanced and healthy diet. Staff should review the snack menu using the good practice guidance contained in 'Setting the Table' to ensure that children are offered a well-balanced, nutritious snack menu, which satisfies them.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.

2. Children should be supported in a way which is flexible and responsive to their needs. Staff should continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the legal framework underpinning children's care. They should work together to continue to develop the format of personal care plans so that they comply with the legal requirements and are reviewed with parents.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 6: Support and development and Standard 14: Well-managed service.

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for in a calm and secure environment. The risk assessment process had been reviewed in response to events earlier in the year, which had resulted in significant changes being made in the service. Whilst the management and staff of the service showed a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for keeping children safe, we thought that they could involve children more so that they were learning even more about keeping safe.

Children moved freely around their space and made choices about what they wanted to play with. We observed that many of the toys and resources were manufactured and we have suggested that the service develop the variety of natural resources and loose parts which will support children to be more creative and curious about the world around them. We appreciated that staff were not yet familiar with what play resources were available in the service and that they planned to sort resources before the start of the new academic year.

Children had limited opportunity to play outdoors because of the physical constraints of the building. We observed that some children would have benefited from a greater opportunity to be outside and we have asked staff to look at the structure of the play sessions to ensure that all children have daily opportunities to play outdoors and energetically.
(See recommendation 1).

We had some concerns about how infection control was being managed in the service.

Staff had themselves identified areas for improvement within the service, including the repair of some items and storage in the toilets. We observed that although children were encouraged to wash their hands at various times during the day, they were not following proper procedures and that the focus was on when to wash, rather than how.

(See recommendation 2).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Children should have regular daily access to fresh air and energetic physical play. Staff should review the structure of the play sessions to ensure that all children have daily opportunities to play outdoors and be energetic.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.

2. Children should be cared for in a safe and hygienic environment. Staff should improve their procedures for controlling the spread of infection by reviewing handwashing procedures, nappy changing, storage of items in the children's toilets and ensuring that the necessary repairs are undertaken in the toilets.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 2: A safe environment.

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

There had been a significant number of new staff recruited to the service, which meant that all staff were at the early stages of forming their team and getting to know each other's strengths. We observed that staff were caring and kind to the children and were working to provide a calm and safe environment for all.

We looked at how staff had been recruited and found that whilst some background checks had been completed for staff, these had not complied with best practice guidance for safe recruitment. We found that staff were being asked to provide references rather than the service management seeking them, and in one file we found that a reference from ten years ago had been accepted.

(See recommendation 1).

There was no staff room, which meant that staff were taking their breaks in the playroom and consequently were not having a proper rest from their work. This means that the service is not complying with relevant employment legislation and that staff may not be working as effectively as they could especially later in the day.

Management and staff were aware that they could improve the way they planned for children's learning and achievements.

They did not display a confident knowledge of either how young children learn or of best practice guidance, like Building the Ambition. Improving their confidence and knowledge would support staff to provide a greater variety of learning opportunities which would enable children to develop their skills, knowledge and interests in a way which is appropriate to their ages and stages of development. We were advised that the service manager had registered to attend relevant child protection training for her new role and we agreed that it would also be a good idea for the supervisor to attend.
(See recommendation 2).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Children should be cared for by a staff team who have gone through a careful selection procedure. The management of the service should review their written recruitment procedures to ensure that they follow safe recruitment practices. Guidance for this is available on the Care Inspectorate Hub. They should pay particular attention to the procedures for seeking references to ensure that references are sought from relevant individuals with an up-to-date knowledge of applicants.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 12: Confidence in staff.

2. Children should be cared for by a confident and competent staff team. Management of the service should develop an effective system for identifying and monitoring staff development needs, which leads to carefully planned training opportunities. These should include Building the Ambition, food hygiene and child protection.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 12: Confidence in staff.

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

There was a completely new management and staff team working in the service. We found that they had been working together to build relationships, get to know one another and how the service worked. We observed that they were developing a more professional and business-like approach to how the service was provided.

Quality assurance procedures for the service were at an early stage. All staff had had a supervision session with the manager, and these had identified some training needs. Monitoring of staff practice had not yet happened and we made some suggestions for future focus areas, like communication. The manager was aware that it would be good practice to develop a calendar for quality assurance to enable her to do this systematically.
(See recommendation 1).

Staff had regular opportunities to meet and to plan for children's learning.

Staff were continuing to develop their knowledge and understanding of self evaluation and had yet to formally include these discussions in their meetings.

We agreed that management and staff would benefit from opportunities to visit other centres and observe practice elsewhere.

Whilst an improvement plan had recently been completed, we observed that because management and staff were new in post they did not yet have a confident knowledge of how the service operated nor of the relevant quality indicators, this provided an optimistic assessment of the service. An improvement plan was on display in the parent area, however, was not easily accessible or updated so that parents could see how the service planned to improve.

Dalbeattie Playgroup was provided by a voluntary management committee, who were taking an active role in supporting the future of the service. We found that there was little information about the committee in the parent area and we suggested that this could be improved by displaying copies of minutes and information about how parents could contact the committee.

There had been some consultations with parents by using questionnaires and staff were aware that they could improve opportunities for parents to be more involved in the service, for example by introducing stay and play sessions.

The management team welcomed the support they were receiving from other agencies like the local education department and Early Years Scotland, who had been advising them on procedures like risk assessment. We found that both the management and staff were keen to improve and were open to suggestions and feedback.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Management of the service should develop a systematic and rigorous calendar for monitoring all aspects of the service. It should take into consideration recognised performance indicators, which will support the service with planned and continuous improvement of outcomes for children and their families.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 13: Improving the service and Standard 14: Well-managed service.

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

Children should be supported by staff who respond to their individual needs. To achieve this staff should develop the care plan format for children to ensure that all children have care and learning plans which clearly show how to support the child and record their progress and achievements. These should be developed and reviewed with parents and the other agencies involved and show how and when parents have been involved.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 4: Engaging with children and Standard 6: Support and development.

This recommendation was made on 16 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

A similar recommendation has been made in this report.

Recommendation 2

Children should be cared for in a way which extends their learning and develops their confidence. To do this, staff should develop their planning process so that children are included in risk assessment and have the opportunity to discuss how to keep themselves safe when participating in activities.

National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 4: Engaging with children and Standard 5: Quality of experience.

This recommendation was made on 16 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Risk assessment procedures had been improved. Staff should continue to ensure that children are included and have the opportunity to discuss keeping safe.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
16 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
4 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
3 Jun 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
27 Sep 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
20 Nov 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
8 Dec 2008	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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