

Sandcastle Playgroup Day Care of Children

Port Seton Community Centre
South Seton Park
Port Seton
Prestonpans
EH32 0BQ

Telephone: 01875 818186

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 8 February 2018

Service provided by:
Sandcastle Committee

Service provider number:
SP2003002810

Care service number:
CS2003011831

About the service

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting It Right For Every Child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting It Right For Every Child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

Sandcastle Playgroup has been registered with the Care inspectorate since 2012 and with the Care Commission prior to that. It is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 15 children aged two and five years. Ratios as stated in the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 years must be maintained, with a minimum of two adults being present at all times. Operating hours are Monday to Thursday 10.00-12.00 and 12.45-14.45.

Sandcastle Playgroup will be referred to as the playgroup throughout this report.

Situated within Port Seton Community Centre, the playgroup had its own playroom and children's toilet. A door led outside from the playroom however the outside space was not a secure area for this age group.

What people told us

Seven children were present during inspection. Observing the children, it was clear they were comfortable and confident within their surroundings. Children experienced warm and nurturing interactions from the staff. They were supported to share, think about their friends feelings and help out where they could. This helped to promote empathy, independence and responsibility.

We asked the playgroup to distribute 10 care standard questionnaires to parents and nine were returned. The questionnaires told us that all parents were happy with the overall care provided by the playgroup.

Some comments were as follows:

"My little boy can be very shy. Since starting playgroup the staff have really encouraged him. I have seen a massive improvement in his confidence and really can't thank them enough."

"My child looks forward to going into playgroup. This shows me that he is comfortable. I like the fact that they have regular newsletters with relevant information."

"My child loves playgroup and is always happy to go. Very pleased with the range of activities on offer and all the arts and crafts projects he brings home."

"Staff are wonderful, patient, resourceful and kind. My child benefits from their level of care and hard work."

Self assessment

The playgroup was not asked to submit a self assessment.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Quality of care and support | 4 – Good |
| Quality of environment | 4 – Good |
| Quality of staffing | not assessed |
| Quality of management and leadership | not assessed |

What the service does well

The children were welcomed into a bright, warm space by friendly, calm adults who knew them well. For some children the playgroup was the first time away from parents and so staff focused on reassurance, routine and fun. Phased settling in times allowed children to move at their own pace whilst staff gathered information about the child over a number of days. Drop off and collection times allowed parents to pass on any relevant information which may affect the child's day. Staff shared information with each other and used it to meet the child's needs.

Children engaged in free play within the playgroup. They could choose from a range of resources including a small climbing frame; book area; house corner; and table top toys. They were able to move around the room with staff responding to them or joining play as required. Structured activities were also offered which children could choose to participate in or not. This included drawing and painting activities. These gave a little more challenge to the children, encouraging discussion and new skills.

Children were able to use a small range of natural materials in their play. We have asked the playgroup to continue to build up their loose parts materials. These resources help support children's imagination and creativity. We were confident the manager would continue this development as she understood its importance to the quality of children's play.

Some learning opportunities were observed during snack time. How this could be further developed was discussed with the manager.

As recommended at the last inspection, medication forms had been developed and provided a clear picture of children's medical needs. Parents had also given instructions and permissions to manage those needs. We suggested the manager add in a statement to ensure first doses of medications would not be given by the playgroup, to avoid the possibility of allergic reactions.

What the service could do better

The staff must use their knowledge of the children to plan for meeting individual needs. We advised the manager to adapt existing forms to include next steps in learning and development. Children who require additional support should have a plan in place. This would enable the staff to put appropriate strategies in place to support children. The service should review and update these as and when circumstances change or every six months.

The manager was in the process of changing the registration form. We advised that all parents should complete a new registration form as part of their six month review in line with legislation. This would ensure all information for each child is up to date and the playgroup can use the information to adapt the children's plans. This would be followed up at next inspection.

Whilst the children had access to a lot of resources, the variety was limited. More open ended natural materials which could be moved around the room as play develops, would offer flexibility and depth to the play experience.

At the last inspection it was recommended that the playgroup streamline their planning for the provision of play with this age group. Whilst the staff were observing the children and being responsive, no written activity plans were in place. Staff should continue to use observations, suggestions and ideas from the children. This would allow the playgroup to ensure all interests are responded to and introduce new learning opportunities. Written plans could also be shared with parents and used to gain feedback.

The children were able to use the soft play area within the community centre however had no outdoor space of their own. This meant they had limited access to daily fresh air and physical movement whilst at playgroup. Plans were in place to create new doors leading from the playroom to a secure area outside. Staff should now be planning the development of this space in partnership with children and parents. Following the inspection the manager told us how she planned to ensure the children would have daily access to the outdoors until the building work was completed. We were confident that these plans would be taken forward.

The snack experience could be enhanced to help children to be more independent and practice new skills. Pouring, cutting and spreading are physical skills the children could learn to prepare them for nursery tasks. We have asked the playgroup to provide a more varied and healthy snack for the children. We reminded the playgroup to use best practice guidance Setting the Table. This would be followed up at next inspection.

We recognised staffs commitment to provide a good service to the children. Being familiar with a range of best practice documents however, would offer guidance, ideas and inspiration. Staff should continue to refer to best practice to ensure good experiences for the children.

We advised the manager to create a development plan for the playgroup which would:

- consider the areas for improvement within this report
- respond to feedback from parents and children
- use best practice guidance around play experiences.

A plan would offer a focus for reflecting on what works well within the playgroup and what could be changed to improve outcomes for children.

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.

Inspection and grading history

| Date | Type | Gradings |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| 24 Nov 2015 | Unannounced | Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good |
| 16 May 2013 | Unannounced | Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good |
| 30 May 2011 | Unannounced | Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed |
| 17 Nov 2010 | Unannounced | Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed |
| 23 Nov 2009 | Unannounced | Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed |
| 29 Oct 2008 | Unannounced | Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good |

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