

The Little Howff Stay and Play Day Care of Children

Kincardine Senior Citizens Hall
Station Road
Kincardine
Alloa
FK10 4LU

Telephone: 07754 539059

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

23 July 2019

Service provided by:

Michelle Whyte trading as The Little
Howff Stay and Play

Service provider number:

SP2015986876

Service no:

CS2015336923

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 2 July 2015.

The Little Howff Stay and Play is registered to provide a day care of children's service to a maximum of thirty-two children age from 4 to 12 years at any one time. It is in Kincardine, Alloa. The service currently operates before and after school and during school holidays and in-service days. It was registered as an extension to a childminding service in July 2015. The provider recognised the demand for childcare in the area resulting in the out of school care service being registered separately. We found that children had made the transition from the childminding service to the 'stay and play' service when they were due to start school. The service was registered in the senior citizens hall situated close to the address of the childminding service. The children have access to one large hall with a stage, toilet facilities and there is a kitchen where snack are prepared. The service makes very good use of the local community so that children benefit from being active through access to local parks and the woods. Aims of the service included; 'to provide a safe and caring environment for the children left in our care, engaging with them to ensure they learn and grow through fun and challenging activities.'

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 Getting it right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

It was relatively quiet when we visited as it was during the summer holidays. Over the two days we spoke with some of the children and observed them all as they played, interacted with their friends and enjoyed time outside in the large field. The children told us lot's about their experiences and we found them to be happy, safe and well-cared for. When we asked two children what they liked to do they said, "I like the Lego best" and "My favourite bit is the woods."

We spoke with three parents who shared their experiences of using the service with us. They were all complementary about the service, staff and the leadership. We sent out ten care standards questionnaires to the service to give to parents. We received four completed questionnaires following our visit. All parents strongly agreed that they were happy with the care and support their child received in this service. Comments included:

"The staff are great and we're really happy our child's care could continue with staff they know. The activities and use of space around them is great. I love that they collect and drop off to the school. My child always comes home happy."

"My child has come here since he was a baby. He knows the staff well. They are all so friendly. I feel I can speak with any of them."

"I've got nothing but praise for the team. They chat with me lot's a pick up and have helped with the transition to school and my child's confidence. They get out in all weather's which they need. My child really enjoys coming here."

Self assessment

We did not request a self-assessment as part of this inspection. We discussed the need for internal self-evaluation processes to be developed along with an improvement plan.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

What the service does well

Experiences for children in this service were varied and responsive to their needs and interests. Children were able to express their views and suggestions in many ways, including planning the snack menu together each week. Parents were informed of what their children had experienced through Facebook posts with photographs. Examples included, food tasting, kite making, origami and highland dancing. The children we spoke with agreed that they were happy in the service, had made good friends and could speak to the staff about anything or ask for help when needed. A result of this was children who were confident, achieving and respected.

Children had enough water to drink and plenty of fruit to choose from. They enjoyed the spacious hall and spent time outdoors in the nearby field. We saw the children had made kites and were keen to run outside and try to fly them. This supported children's health and promoted an active lifestyle.

Children were welcomed warmly by the small team who knew them well. The staff picked up on subtle changes in the children and recognised when one child did not seem themselves. They offered the child some water and to rest and to just let them know if they were not better soon. This attentive and nurturing care would help the child to feel safe and secure.

The service was in the early stages of developing individual children's folders and noting significant observations and next steps. Children now had a keyworker which would help with progression and achievements. The staff we spoke with had a firm grasp of the GIRFEC strategy and how they would respond to any child protection concerns. Knowing the children well through observation would alert the team to any changes that may concern them, this would help to keep children safe and protected.

The staff were attentive to the children and responded promptly to their requests or signals for help. Two children were engrossed in building a Lego model and staff showed an interest in this and sat to watch them build. They invited her into their play, and she used some open questions to find out more about their thinking behind their creativity. This type of support helps children to feel accepted, respected and important.

The staff member we spoke with was motivated in their work and agreed they had opportunities to try new ways of working and extend their knowledge in early, learning and childcare. The children enjoyed creative and drama play. This member of staff was encouraged to use their skills and helped the children explore a musical arts week. Another member of staff had put forward a suggested way to write observations and this had been implemented by the team. They told us they were part of meetings and decisions that were made. This would help staff to feel supported, motivated and valued in their work.

We were told of some examples of how parental feedback had impacted on the service. One instance was when a child was not confident enough to select their snack from the middle of a table in a group. They changed the process to a line where everyone selected the foods then sat down. This worked better for the child and would help them to feel more confident.

What the service could do better

Most children had a personal plan which held information on their care and support needs. We advised the provider that all children should have a personal plan; the plan must be updated regularly, and the forms could be enhanced to ask specifically about children's additional support needs. **(See recommendation one.)**

The team had started to use a new format to guide them in writing observations. The reason for writing the observations that we saw were relevant and we gave some suggestions about ways to write more evaluatively and how to link their observations to relevant outcomes. This would allow relevant next steps to be identified and planned for. Linking the observations to the group floor book would provide a picture of children's progression over time.

The play and learning environment would benefit from further development and planning. We suggested the team think about how they can offer a variety of experiences which incorporate literacy, numeracy, loose parts play and technology. We also advised that the children should have access to places of rest and relaxation, especially in the school holidays. This could be achieved by developing a nurturing, cosy, reading corner. **(See recommendation two.)**

The team had attended a variety of training courses over the years. They were encouraged and supported to develop their skills. We advised that a training calendar be devised to enable quality assurance of this aspect. This would ensure that staff regularly update key aspects of their skills, knowledge and practice to help keep children safe and well-cared for.

We identified that most of the systems in place for ensuring the quality of the service were informal. We discussed this with the manager during feedback and advised her that the service needed to develop a formal quality assurance model. This will assist them in identifying their strengths and highlight areas for improvement. We gave advice on how to quality assure all aspects of the service and staff practice. **(See recommendation three.)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1.

The provider should ensure the children's personal plans are developed and reviewed at least once in every six months or when there is a significant change in children's circumstances. Consideration could be given to sharing children's progress as well as linking the plan to the wellbeing indicators. This will ensure that children's

holistic wellbeing needs are met effectively. In addition, it will ensure each family's needs, wishes and choices are gathered systematically and communicated clearly and concisely.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

2.

The provider should continue to develop the play environment for children to provide challenge as well as opportunities for creativity and curiosity. They should consider how the core provision (sand, water, play dough, building bricks) promotes children's development and how they can enhance the environment to help children achieve their potential. Consideration should be given to providing opportunities to explore literacy, numeracy, technology and loose parts.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that, "As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity" (HSCS 2.27).

3.

The provider should develop and implement systems to monitor and evaluate all aspect of the service. This may include:-

- formal monitoring of staff work practise and feedback given to staff
- evaluation of the provision using benchmark publications
- identifying staff training needs, creating a training cycle
- effectiveness of any training undertaken (how will it be implemented?)
- Establishing regular meetings, which are minuted. They should clearly identify any action they intend to take and follow this up at subsequent meetings. These should have an agenda which focuses on business and development.
- All staff having an annual appraisal and regular opportunities to discuss their practice and share concerns. This should be recorded
- evidence of how parents and children's views and suggestions have influenced the direction of the service and the improvements that have been made as a result of this
- Use all of the above to create a service improvement plan which aims to meet and exceed best practice and legislation.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that, "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

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

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
6 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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