

ACE Playgroup & Busy Bees Day Care of Children

Annan Community Centre
St. John's Road
Annan
DG12 6AP

Telephone: 01461 205953

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

21 January 2020

Service provided by:

Annan Community Education Project
Management Committee

Service provider number:

SP2003002739

Service no:

CS2003011682

About the service

ACE Playgroup and Busy Bees service provides early education and childcare. The service is provided by a committee, Annan Community Education Project Management Committee, and is staffed by a manager and early years practitioners and support workers.

The current conditions of registration are as follows:

To provide a care service to a maximum of 24 children aged 2 years to primary school age of whom no more than five may be under 3 years or a maximum of 15 children 2 to 3 years. The service makes use of the main hall, adjoining kitchen and the committee room for lunch or quiet activities. There is a secure outdoor area accessible via the kitchen area. Children use toilets within the foyer where there are also nappy changing facilities. Staff make use of the centre office.

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

We are 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.' Information relating to this can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

What people told us

We spoke to staff, management, parents and children during our visit. We sent out questionnaires to staff and parents before the inspection and received seven questionnaires from parents and five from members of staff.

We observed how staff interacted with children, parents and other staff during our visit and these observations form an integral part of this report. We saw that staff were kind and gentle with children. They had formed friendly relationships with parents who talked to them openly when bringing and collecting their children.

Parents told us:

"My child loves ACE and wouldn't consider sending my child anywhere else. Brilliant playgroup."

"The staff at ACE Playgroup always go above and beyond with all children. They are very patient and understanding with all children in the setting."

"All of the team are wonderful and have such a great effort to know my child. We have noticed so many improvements since the new manager has started as well. Although to hear that plastic toys are being

discouraged and changed to wooden is disappointing. So many toys that my child has enjoyed previously have been removed and not to mention it is such a waste of resources and will end up just adding to a landfill. This should be reconsidered as a roll out."

"ACE had come on leaps and bounds since the new manager has taken over. Can see a massive change within the playgroup and staff."

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	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for by a warm, friendly staff team who responded to them kindly. Children were having fun and were learning to share and take turns. They were developing friendships with their peers. They played together well and had opportunities to use their imaginations and be creative. Staff praised children constantly and this helped children to experience a sense of achievement in a safe and nurturing environment.

All children attending the setting had a personal plan and a learning story. Staff were developing their keyworker system to enable an identified member of staff to plan for children's individual needs with their parents. Staff were continuing to work on the format of these plans to ensure that these provide them with the information they need to care for children and plan for their health, wellbeing and safety needs. We made some suggestions about this and asked the service to include information like a timeline of pastoral notes and individual risk assessments where appropriate.

The service had recently started providing hot meals for children. These were provided by an external catering service. Whilst the meals were nutritious, we observed that staff could improve the dining experience. We discussed this with staff during our visit and agreed that they would review how meals were being provided to ensure that all children had a pleasant, sociable dining experience. We also asked the service to review the snack menu in line with the lunch menu and with parents to ensure a balance of food is provided across the child's day.

We observed how staff interacted with children and saw that staff talked to children about their experiences throughout the day, providing them with a good variety of words and language. However, staff tended to direct the conversation and tell children what to do, rather than encourage them to lead and to think for themselves.

Staff were still developing their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and children's development and this meant times when learning opportunities were being missed. We have asked the service management to monitor this and support staff to further develop their talking and listening skills. (See recommendation 1).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Management and staff should continue to work together to improve their understanding of how to provide high quality learning and implement this learning through careful planning, following children's interests.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30).

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for in a secure environment. Access to the building was controlled and monitored. The accommodation was spacious. The service shared the accommodation with other groups, and this meant that furnishings and toys had to be tidied away every day. Whilst this was challenging it also meant that staff were able to adjust the layout of the environment to meet children's changing needs and interests.

Children were able to make choices about where they played and what they played with. There was space for them to be with their friends or by themselves and they were able to decide for themselves when they went outside. The setting had a small outdoor area to the side of the property, which provided children with some opportunities to play energetically and in the fresh air. We observed times when it was challenging for the member of staff outside to contact staff inside and we suggested that they consider different ways of doing this.

The service had been reviewing their resources and were introducing more open-ended and natural materials for children to play with and explore and were aware that they should continue with this improvement. Staff had improved the way they managed risk by introducing a risk/benefit approach to their assessments and we saw that they had started to involve the children in this process. We have asked the service to further improve this by encouraging staff to be more focussed on outcomes for children in their assessments. We observed that there were times when staff appeared to be mess-averse and risked stopping children from trying activities for themselves because they might make a mess.

We observed that the environment was clean and that good infection control procedures were in place. Children were encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after coughing. We have asked the service to update their nappy changing procedure in line with current good practice guidance.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for by a well-established team of staff. We found that staff were very willing to learn and had made a good start to developing reflective practice. They were supportive of one another and worked together well to improve the service and provide a good experience for the children.

All staff were registered appropriately with the Scottish Social Services Council and we advised management to introduce a system for checking that staff are maintaining their registration. We looked at the service's recruitment procedures by sampling staff files and have suggested that they develop a way of recording that all checks are complete, for example when references are given verbally there should be a record on the staff file. We also advised management about the National Induction Resource which they should now use to develop a formal induction for all new staff.

Staff were keen to learn and improve their practice. All staff had attended a wide variety of training opportunities in the last year and were starting to put their learning into practice. We have advised the service management that they should now put in place a way of monitoring the impact of staff training to ensure that staff have understood and are applying their knowledge appropriately.

All staff have attended Child Protection training and have had some opportunities to discuss their learning. A Child Protection Co-ordinator is in place and has had some training. We suggested that child protection and the opportunity to discuss safeguarding issues should be a standing item on the agenda of staff team meetings. It would also be beneficial to include annual refresher training on the staff training plan.

The management committee were preparing to start staff appraisals during our inspection visit. We have suggested that management use the information from these and their improvement plan to create a training calendar based on organisational and individual needs.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The management team of the parent- led committee and the newly appointed manager had worked together well to improve the service since the last inspection. They valued the support they had received from local authority development officers. They were proud of what they had achieved in the last year and were well supported by parents and the local community.

We found that priority had been given to developing the staff team so that they were more confident and able practitioners. We made some suggestions about how to continue with this improvement, which included continuing to develop leadership within the team. Staff met regularly to discuss the needs of the service and the children in their care and were at the early stages of their improvement journey. They were now starting to look outward and learn about how other services work by planning visits over the coming months. We have asked the service management to consider how all staff can be involved in meetings, information sharing, self evaluation and improvement work. As discussed in the Quality of Staffing Theme, management should now implement the recommendation to develop a training plan for all staff. (See recommendation 1).

The management team had started to develop and implement their monitoring calendar to include activities like practice observation. Appraisals for all staff had been planned for the week of the inspection. We have also suggested that the calendar include monitoring of accidents and incidents so that audit information can inform improvements in the environment and for individual children. We found a number of policies and procedures which needed to be updated as a consequence of changes, for example name changes as well as legislation, like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

At the time of the inspection, we discussed ways of making sure that the committee are supported and enabled to continue managing the service into the future. We found that the current management committee were aware that future planning was needed to ensure a future for the service.

We have acknowledged that management and staff have worked hard to improve the service they are providing and are still at the early stages of this improvement journey. They are developing their knowledge and understanding of how improvement is made and should continue to plan, reflect and make changes to what they are doing to ensure that improvement is continuous and sustained.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Management and staff should develop a clear plan of training, consistent with the service self evaluation and improvement plan findings.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

In order to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively, the provider must by 10 June 2019 ensure that:

- All staff are appropriately trained in child protection arrangements.
- Records are maintained in a professional and competent manner.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

This is to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 4.

This requirement was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

All staff have attended Child Protection training and have had opportunities to discuss their learning. No further incidents have occurred since the last inspection but staff are aware of the procedures including keeping chronologies.

A Child Protection Co-ordinator is in place and has had some training.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 2

In order to ensure that children's needs are met, the provider must, by the 10 June 2019, ensure that personal plans provide a holistic and current view of each child's needs and demonstrate how they are being assessed and monitored. The personal plan should be reviewed and updated at least once in every six month period or sooner if required or requested in line with current legislation.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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).

This is to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 5.

This requirement was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

Personal plans are now in place for all children however more work still needs to be done to improve how these are being used. We discussed this during the inspection and found that the service manager is aware that this is still a work in progress and has a plan in place to ensure improvement.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 3

By 10 June 2019 you must demonstrate to the Care Inspectorate that the individual employed to manage the care service has the skills, knowledge and expertise necessary for managing the care service.

This is in order to ensure that the service organisation is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard which states: 'I use a service that is well led and well managed' (HSCS 4.23).

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 7(1)(c) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This requirement was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

A new manager has been appointed and has been in place for several months. A number of improvements have been made which provide evidence of the skills and knowledge needed to take the service forward.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 4

By June 10 2019 ,to ensure that children and parents experience a service which is effectively managed and led, you must put into place robust and effective governance arrangement by way of a competent committee.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:'use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This is to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland(Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a).

This requirement was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

A new committee was formed almost immediately following the last inspection. They are supportive of one another and the staff team and have taken a close interest in the progress of the service. We discussed the sustainability of the committee and suggested that they would benefit from specific training about roles and responsibilities.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 5

In order to ensure that children and parents experience a service which has a culture of continuous improvement, you must, by 10 June 2019 ensure that there are robust and effective quality assurance procedures in place.

This should include, but not restricted to, the manager:

- monitoring and quality assuring children's personal plans
- ensuring staff supervision and appraisals take place regularly
- having an overview of staff skills, knowledge and ability to provide a quality service for children
- developing systematic and rigorous procedures for self evaluation, auditing and monitoring all areas of the service using local and national guidance which lead to clear plans for improving the service.

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

This is to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland(Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210 Regulation 3 and 4(1)(a).

This requirement was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

A monitoring calendar has been developed and is taking shape. The format of personal plans has been improved and continues to be developed. Staff appraisals were about to start, immediately after the inspection. The new manager was getting to know her team and their strengths. Self-evaluation had started and staff were at the early stages of using quality performance indicators.

Met - outwith timescales

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Management and staff should work together to improve their understanding of how to provide high quality learning and implement this learning through careful planning, following children's interests.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30).

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11)

This recommendation was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Management and staff had made a start to improving their knowledge and understanding of how children learn and their role in supporting this through planning. They had been well supported by the local authority early years team and were continuing to implement improved planning formats and systems. They should continue to develop this so that this practice becomes routine and consistent.

An amended recommendation will remain in this report.

Recommendation 2

The service provider, in partnership with staff, should work together to ensure children have access to high quality snack and meal arrangements.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'If I need help with eating and drinking, this is carried out in a dignified way and my personal preferences are respected' (HSCS 1.34)

'If appropriate, I can choose to make my own meals, snacks and drinks, with support if I need it, and can choose to grow, cook and eat my own food where possible' (HSCS 1.38).

This recommendation was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The management team and staff were working together to improve children's mealtime experience. Children played a greater part in preparing snack by taking turns to help with food preparation. Staff were continuing to develop what happened at lunchtime and were reflecting and making changes as they needed.

This is addressed within the body of the report and whilst work still is ongoing this recommendation is met.

Recommendation 3

Management and staff should develop a robust policy which clearly sets out how outdoor play will be offered, using current best practice guidance. The policy should be fully implemented.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30).

'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (HSCS 1.32).

This recommendation was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's opportunities for outdoor play had improved. A member of staff is deployed outside throughout the session so that children can choose when to go out and for how long. Staff will continue to develop this area.

The recommendation is met.

Recommendation 4

Management and staff should develop a written method of sharing information about the service with families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve' (HSCS 4.8).

This recommendation was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

A parent handbook had been provided. We have asked that management ensures that all information, including the complaints procedure, accurately reflects what happens in the service. Staff were also making better use of the parent noticeboard and had introduced a "you said, we did" display.

This recommendation is met.

Recommendation 5

Management and staff should develop a clear plan of training, consistent with the service self evaluation and improvement plan findings.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This recommendation was made on 7 May 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Whilst staff had attended a variety of training and learning opportunities, a training plan was not yet in place. We discussed this with the management team and further information is contained in the body of the report.

This recommendation is not met and remains in this report.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
3 Apr 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 3 - Adequate Management and leadership 1 - Unsatisfactory
23 Mar 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
12 Feb 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
13 Feb 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
26 Jun 2013	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 1 - Unsatisfactory

Date	Type	Gradings	
16 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 2 - Weak 1 - Unsatisfactory
24 May 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
9 May 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 2 - Weak 3 - Adequate
3 Sep 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 2 - Weak 3 - Adequate
5 May 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 2 - Weak 2 - Weak

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