

'Me2' Service Day Care of Children

c/o Ashgrove Nursery
Gillespie Place
Aberdeen
AB25 3BE

Telephone: 01224 482293

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 February 2020

Service provided by:
Aberdeen City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000349

Service no:
CS2014330627

About the service

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate in February 2015. Me2 service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 46 children at any one time age from 2 years to an age to attend primary school as follows: Ashgrove Children's Centre, Gillespie Place Aberdeen, AB25 3BE - maximum of 12 children. Deeside Family Resource Centre, Girdleness Road, Aberdeen, AB11 8TD - a maximum of 12 children. Williamson Family Resource Centre, Mastrick Close, Aberdeen AB16 6XZ - maximum of 10 children.

During the times of operation, the service will have exclusive use of the areas of each premises as designated by the centre manager.

The service is delivered from three sites across Aberdeen and is managed by a manager who has responsibility for one other service and is based at Ashgrove Children's Centre.

The aim of the service is to; "support the early learning and care of very young children and to ensure that each individual child is offered the opportunities and encouragement they deserve at the earliest stages of their childhood".

What people told us

We sent 47 care standard questionnaires to the service to distribute to parents and carers prior to the inspection. Ten completed questionnaires were returned to us. Over the three locations we spoke to a total of six parents when they arrived to collect their children. Parents indicated that overall they were happy with the quality of care provided. Comments from parents included;

'Absolutely fabulous with everything they do. My child adores their teacher and would go every day if they could.'

I' got a good feeling from the staff in the sense that they genuinely care for the children's welfare and development. They always give a verbal report on pick up to say whether my child has had a good day. I like the ILD (interactive learning diary) as it allows me to view what my child has been up to at nursery.'

'They have been a life saver towards my child's development and enjoyment.'

'The staff are very good at gaining the trust of the children when starting. They also learn about the child's family life for when a child is telling their story.'

'The staff is very friendly and seems to interact a lot with all the children. My child seems very happy and enjoys their time there. I also love the interactive learning diary where I can see what my child has been doing. Thank you for the service.'

'Me2 staff have been fantastic, easy to approach and very helpful. I feel if it wasn't for their help I would be stuck. They are very understanding.'

'My child has settled well and their confidence has increased. They have made lots of friends. The service has been really helpful to me. My child loves it and their speech has progressed a lot since starting.'

'The staff have really supported me and my child, they have worked with other people to support us. I am able to support other parents.'

'Excellent service with friendly staff. Lots of activities and outdoor play. Really good communication and opportunities to discuss any concerns.'

'My child has come on in leaps and bounds. Brilliant, intimate service where my child knows all the staff.'

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to submit a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their improvement plan which detailed areas where they planned further development.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
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

Very strong relationships had been built with parents and good lines of communication had been established. This enabled information to be shared which supported staff to identify and meet children's needs while supporting a continuity of care. Strong, nurturing attachments had been formed between staff and children, supporting children to feel valued and safe within the service.

Staff knew the individual children very well and spoke confidently about their needs and the strategies that were being used to support children to develop and progress. This ensured a consistent approach to meeting children's needs.

Personal plans and care plans were in place for children. These contained the information from parents and other agencies that staff need to support children's health and wellbeing. However, the format and quality of the information was not consistent across the service. We suggested that the plans should contain more detail of the strategies used by staff to support children and encourage their learning and development. This would support accurate information sharing and the evaluation of support given to children.

Observations had been carried out for the children to identify their achievements and plan next steps to support children's progression and learning. Again, the quality of these varied across the service. We suggested that the observations should consistently be focused on individual children and their achievements. Identified next steps need to extend or consolidate children's learning with some detail on how staff will support this.

The service provided opportunities for parents to meet and participate in groups such as cooking, PEEP and Stay and Play. This promoted parents confidence and supported them to form their own support networks.

Staff showed a high level of understanding of the factors which can impact on a child's wellbeing, making them more vulnerable. They were able to discuss where support had been given to families to help children at these times. Good links had been built with other agencies such as the health visitors, community nursery nurse and speech and language therapy to support positive outcomes for children.

Children's health was supported by the processes in place to ensure the safe administration of medication and support children with allergies or intolerances. The provision of healthy snacks and opportunities to learn good personal hygiene routines further supported children's health.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The environment in all the locations of the service was welcoming and inviting to parents and children. The playrooms were well arranged to promote children's choice of activity and allow them to play alone or with peers. The use of individual spaces for displaying children's artwork encouraged children to feel valued and built their confidence and self-esteem.

The wide variety of resources reflected the children's interests and stage of development. There were opportunities to participate in role play, quiet areas, cosy areas, some sensory play and the opportunity to mark make using a variety of methods. We suggested that staff should ensure the layout of the rooms allowed space for children to be able to extend their play. For example ensuring there is sufficient floor space for tracks or construction to be built.

Children had daily access to the outdoor areas where there were opportunities for active play. There were some opportunities for children to build their awareness of their own safety through riskier play such as climbing. Children were able to become engaged in sensory play with water, mud and sand as well as some loose parts play. This provided the opportunity for children to explore, investigate and problem solve. All locations had direct access to the outdoor areas from the playrooms. We suggested that the service make the most of this access and further develop the free flow between indoors and outdoors as much as possible.

In most locations snack was served at a table in the playroom and was a pleasant relaxed time for the children. We suggested that the manager look at ways of ensuring this provision is consistent across the locations of the service. The practicalities of the different locations meant that the space for parents to congregate and engage with each other varied. We discussed with the manager ways of ensuring that the opportunity for parents was equal across the service.

Children's health was supported by the staff training in first aid and adherence to infection control processes.

The use of local amenities such as libraries and shops encourage children to feel confident in their local community. The opportunities for this type of activity varied across the service depending on the location. We suggested that the manager consider ways to provide every child with the opportunity to feel part of their community.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The well-established staff team were all qualified and registered appropriately with the Scottish Social Services Council. They were enthusiastic and committed to providing positive experiences and outcomes for children. The staff were very experienced in supporting children and their families. They treated parents and children with respect and showed an understanding of their needs. Staff were skilled in identifying when support would be welcomed to build the confidence of parents and children.

Members of the three individual teams worked well together, showing a respect for each other's strengths and effective communication skills which supported a continuity of care for children. We suggested that the manager and staff should continue to develop opportunities for information sharing between the three teams. This will support the sharing of good practice and promote a consistent level of care and experience throughout the service.

Nurturing attachments had been formed with children, supporting them to feel valued and cared for. On the whole staff interactions encouraged children to think and problem solve. However, this could be further developed to consistently enrich children's experiences and extend their learning.

Staff had increased their awareness of current guidance to promote best practice. They were beginning to use various documents such as My World Outdoors, Building the Ambition and Pre-Birth to Three, to support them to reflect on their practice and identify where further development was needed.

Some training had been undertaken to maintain core skills such as child protection and first aid. Further training in areas such as language and communication, outdoor play, PEEP and Starcatchers had been undertaken to extend individual staff skills. However, not all the training was having an impact on experiences for children. We suggested that the manager and staff should ensure that there were sufficient opportunities for training to positively impact on staff practice and therefore experiences for children.

We suggested that the manager should further develop opportunities for staff to take on leadership responsibilities. This will support staff to build on their strengths and share learning, therefore having a positive impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The service is provided by the local authority, the manager has responsibility for one other service in the area. The manager is working closely with a mentor and has attended further management and leadership training in order to develop her role and the service.

Staff were supportive of the manager and told us they found her to be friendly and approachable. The support and supervision meetings between individual staff members and the manager were now embedded in practice and provided an opportunity to share information and identify areas for further support or development.

The manager ensured that there was protected time available to enable staff to meet in individual teams and as a larger whole service team. This enabled staff to share information and experience. We suggested that the manager and staff should also use these meetings as an opportunity to promote a consistency of practice across the service. This would support them in ensuring the best aspects of the service are available to all the children.

We found that although staff were supporting children's safety and wellbeing the manager was not always aware of their concerns or actions taken. We discussed this with the manager and recommended that processes be out in place to ensure that she is informed of any concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. See recommendation 1. This will allow the manager to monitor practice and ensure that children and families receive the appropriate support to promote positive outcomes for children. Immediately following the inspection, the manager submitted an action plan showing the process for informing her of a concern and the planned staff meeting to review procedures and use of the significant event forms, as well as procedures for recording and monitoring child protection issues.

The manager had identified some areas of the service for further development using the Health and Social Care Standards and best practice guidance. This information was then used to inform an improvement plan which was shared with staff. However, there were no robust, consistent methods of self-evaluation in place, such as audits or observations of staff practice. These processes will support the development of the service and a consistent level of care for all service users. See recommendation 2.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The provider and manager should review child protection systems and procedures to ensure the manager has an accurate overview of any concerns and actions taken to safeguard children. This allows the manager to monitor the provision of care and ensure that children receive the correct support to promote positive outcomes. This is to ensure that care and support are consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities". (HSCS 3.20)

2. The provider and manager should ensure that robust self-evaluation processes are in place to monitor and evaluate staff practice and record keeping. The information should then be used to develop the service and promote consistently positive outcomes and experiences for the children. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes". (HSCS 4.19)

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

To enhance and improve outcomes for children all staff should access relevant training and undertake professional reading to develop their knowledge, skills and expertise. Staff should begin to implement, reflect and monitor the impact of any professional development and use this to improve outcomes for all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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 organisation' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I experience high quality care and support based in relevant guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This recommendation was made on 13 June 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Staff had undertaken further training and reading since the last inspection. They were confident in discussing where this had had an impact on their practice. Some development is needed to monitor the impact of this professional learning on the outcomes for children.

Recommendation 2

We recommend the provider ensures a robust staff practice monitoring system is introduced and embedded into practice.

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).

This recommendation was made on 13 June 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation has not been met and is carried into the current 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	
19 Mar 2019	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
29 Nov 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
28 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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