

Park ELC Day Care of Children

Scott Crescent
Alloa
FK10 1BD

Telephone: 01259 452226

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 May 2022

Service provided by:
Clackmannanshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002713

Service no:
CS2003043738

About the service

Park ELC is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 114 children at any one time. Children are aged 2 years to those not yet attending primary school, of whom there will be a maximum of 30 children aged 2 to under 3 years. The nursery is situated in Alloa, Clackmannanshire and is in close proximity to Park Primary School. The service is close to shops, parks and other amenities.

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 27 April 2022 between 09:00 and 16:30. Two inspectors carried out this inspection and carried out telephone discussions and email exchanges. We provided feedback using Teams technology on Tuesday 3 May 2022.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children in the service
- spoke with five parents and carers during the inspection visit
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

What people told us

We spoke with children during our visit and observed their play and learning both indoors and outdoors. Most children were settled in the nursery and confidently approached the inspectors to chat about nursery and what they liked to do there. They told us:

"I like to play in the garden"

"I can write my name, can I do it on your iPad?"

"The ladies help me if I need it - they cut the tape for me as it's sticky"

"Snack is good, look it's cereal".

We spoke with five parents when they collected their children and received one email. Parents' comments were mostly positive, and they felt that children's needs were being met and that staff knew them well. They also commented that some aspects of communication could be improved. Below are some comments which represent parents' views:

"My child is very well cared for in my opinion and the staff are fantastic"

"I have never yet had a "parents evening" style call, meeting or report which is a little disappointing"

"I am a key worker, my child's place remained available to them, which was a huge help, staff did all they could to accommodate what I needed if their space ever had to be reduced. They were amazing!"

"It would be good if the learning journals could be updated more regularly to see how my child is progressing"

"I really like to see, that they have the opportunity to be out and about exploring their local community".

Self assessment

A self-assessment was not requested for this inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	2 - Weak
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of weak for this quality theme. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

Most children were happy and settled within the service. We saw some nurturing interactions, and this supported those children to feel valued and respected.

Some children had fun being involved in their play and learning. Most staff were responsive to the interests of the children however, more play materials and resources were needed to ensure all children benefit from having greater choices available to them. This will extend children's learning and development and support natural curiosity and creativity, (see recommendation one).

Children could rest when needed, we saw a child asleep on a staff members lap, we asked the service to consider providing a suitable sleeping space and resources, for example sleep mats and bedding, to support safer sleeping practices. This will support children's health and wellbeing, (see recommendation two).

Children were kept safe from harm as staff had a good understanding of child protection procedures. Staff were able to recognise concerns and could confidently report these when needed. However, we raised significant concerns with the manager in relation to risks to children's safety within the service. The service was still working with children in small groups and were starting to support some movement across the nursery areas and garden. Some staff lost sight of children in their group and were not observant or responsive towards other children that had moved into their area. This resulted in children not being appropriately cared for or kept safe as staff did not always know where they were or what they were doing, (see requirement one).

Personal plans were in place and were detailed with relevant information which supported staff to meet children's individual needs. Where children required additional support, staff had developed a range of strategies to ensure children received the right care and support. However, for other children whose interactions with staff were brief, there were missed opportunities to build nurturing relationships.

This meant that some children's wellbeing needs were not being met. All staff should have a good understanding of the needs of all children within the service, to enable them to engage and develop strong relationships with all children.

To discourage children moving freely, furniture had been used to create physical barriers to keep children in particular areas. This resulted in some children not being able to choose where they played. Staff were not following best practice to create an inclusive environment for all children. We asked the manager to work with staff to plan for all children to have free flow play. This should be encouraged by staff who are clear about their roles and responsibilities for closely supporting children. This will support children to benefit more fully from their nursery experience and feel safe, secure, and valued.

Some children enjoyed social experiences during mealtimes. The manager had identified the need for all staff to be focused and responsive to children's needs during mealtimes. This will support all children to enjoy mealtimes, to feel included and responsible and to develop their independence.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. By 31 August 2022, the provider and manager must ensure that all staff understand their individual roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe by accounting for their whereabouts at all times within the service and supporting all children to reach their full potential.

To do this, the provider must, as a minimum ensure:

- a) that all staff have a clear understanding of their individual and collective responsibilities for ensuring a safe environment for children.
- b) that the whereabouts of all children is accounted for at all times.

This is in order to comply with Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210 - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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) and 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.17)

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To ensure children experience learning that is relevant, personalised, and sufficiently challenging for their stage of development. The manager and staff should review the environment and resources both indoors and outdoors. Resources and experiences should be stimulating, challenging and meet children's interests and development needs. Consideration should also be given to the pace of the day and support children to make choices and be independent.

This is to ensure 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) and 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials.' (HSCS 1.31).

2. To support children's health and wellbeing, the provider, manager, and staff should review current safe sleep procedures, in order to provide a suitable safe, cosy and comfortable area for children to rest or sleep. Consideration should be given to the resources to support this, for example sleep mats and individual bedding.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of adequate for this quality theme. Whilst we identified some strengths, these just outweighed weaknesses.

The service had been developed to create additional playrooms, these were bright and spacious and enabled children to benefit from a range of play materials. Children said they enjoyed playing in the sand and water. They used some loose parts when playing imaginatively and when developing their balancing skills. We spoke with the manager about enriching the environment and resources on offer. A sensory space was being developed with open ended materials and experiences to promote exploration and deeper learning opportunities. This will ensure children have access to experiences which will stimulate their curiosity, creativity and motivate them to develop new skills, (see recommendation one).

The outdoor area was available to children throughout the day, enabling some of them to choose their own learning environment. This resulted in children using four different doors to enter or exit the garden. We encouraged the manager and staff to consider reducing the number of access points to the gardens to support staff with their role in knowing the whereabouts of all children at all times.

Children enjoyed opportunities to explore the local community. These experiences should be further developed with staff appropriately trained to lead on outdoor learning experiences maximising the use of green spaces in the local community. This will further support children to explore and learn beyond the nursery setting, to develop a connection with their local community and develop important life skills.

The environment was clean and hygienic. For example, nappy changing areas were cleaned by staff after each change, there was a supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) available, and children's nappies, wipes and creams were stored in individual labelled boxes. This supported children to be safe and healthy.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. To promote children's learning, development and play, the manager and staff should review the resources on offer. This should result in activities and experiences consistently engaging children's interests, offering depth and challenge as they play.

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

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of weak for this quality theme. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

Staff had engaged in some training including child protection, first aid and supporting emotional regulation, and this was beginning to support staff to have greater confidence in their practice. The manager was supporting staff to reflect and identify their individual learning needs to support improvement and positive outcomes for children.

Most staff were observed to be nurturing and compassionate towards children, who felt valued, loved, and cared for. However, staff did not always demonstrate an understanding, recognise, or respond appropriately to children's individual needs. During a mealtime staff failed to respond appropriately to a child who was hungry. The child's wellbeing needs were not supported by staff and potential hazards, such as choking, were not assessed (see requirement 1).

Staff did not demonstrate the knowledge, understanding or skills needed to safeguard and protect children in their care at all times. There was a lack of communication between staff to support them to take responsibility in their individual and collective roles of keeping children safe. The service was aware of the SIMOA campaign available on the Care Inspectorate website, however staff were not following this guidance. This resulted in a serious incident within the service, where children were put at significant risk of harm when they left the service unattended. Staff acted promptly to improve the security of the environment following this incident to ensure children's safety.

All staff had registered as practitioners with the regulatory body, the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC), within the correct timescales. In addition, some staff were working towards a relevant childcare qualification as part of their (SSSC) registration requirements. They provide public protection by promoting high standards of conduct and practice and support the development of those registered with them.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. By 31 August 2022, the provider and manager must ensure that they have developed and implemented an effective system of quality assurance to monitor and improve all areas of staff knowledge, understanding and daily practice and improve outcomes for children.

To do this, the provider must, as a minimum ensure:

- a) staff engage in training and learning which supports them to develop their understanding of child development and how to respond appropriately to meet children's needs. This must include greater awareness of potential choking hazards within the environment.
- b) staff are involved in the self-evaluation and quality assurance processes and implement changes into their daily practice to ensure that children are safe from harm at all times. This must include regularly communicating with each other regarding the whereabouts of children and regularly checking the safety of the garden environment.
- c) an effective system for monitoring staff practice has been developed and implemented. This will support the development of staff knowledge, skills, practice, and children's experiences.

This is in order to comply with Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210 - Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing.

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 organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14), 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19) and 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.17)

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Staff, children, and families were being consulted on the development of a shared vision, values and aims of the service. This inclusive approach will support a shared understanding of the ethos of the service.

The manager, who took up post in October 2021, had spent time getting to know the staff and developing relationships. Staff told us they felt supported by the manager. The manager and senior staff had already

begun to identify staff strengths and interests. The manager was developing opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles for example chairing and minuting of staff meetings. This will develop confidence and ability across the staff team, and support the team through their journey to improve outcomes for children.

Quality assurance systems had been developed and were now being used alongside the improvement plan to identify the changes that needed to be made. The manager was keen to develop a culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation. This will help the service to identify what they do well, how they know, and what they plan to do next. The manager planned to speak to staff regularly about their practice and how to improve, to promote consistently positive experiences and outcomes for children. This was consistent with our inspection findings, (see recommendation one).

The manager had developed a training plan to support staff, to reflect on and improve their practice. There were systems in place including regular staff supervision to enable staff and the manager to review performance, with a focus on improving outcomes for children. For example, the manager had identified the need for all staff to be focused and responsive to children's needs during mealtimes.

Some staff had identified their individual strengths, this included areas of interest and what they felt they were good at. However, this was still in the initial stages and the impact on improving outcomes for children could not yet be effectively measured.

The manager and staff fully engaged in the inspection process and appreciated the guidance and the signposting to various websites and best practice offered by the inspectors. The provider and manager demonstrated their commitment to continuous improvement in the service and were motivated to make changes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1.
The service should ensure there are effective and robust audits in place including the safety of the environment and safety of the garden. This will ensure children are safe and will contribute towards improved outcomes for children.

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) and 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.17)

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

There are no outstanding recommendations.

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
31 Jan 2020	Unannounced	Care and support
		Environment
		Staffing
		Management and leadership
		4 - Good
		4 - Good
		4 - Good
		3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
31 May 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
8 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
18 Jun 2010	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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