

Bourtree Pre-school Day Care of Children

Bourtree Hall
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 December 2022

Service provided by:
Bourtree Pre-school

Service provider number:
SP2003000375

Service no:
CS2003002494

About the service

Bourtree Pre-school provides a daycare of children service in Portlethen, Aberdeenshire. The service is registered to provide a service for a maximum of 30 children at any one time, age from 2 years to an age to attend primary school, of whom no more than 15 may be age 2-3 years.

The service is located within a community centre and is provided by a committee of volunteers. The service is close to the local school and other local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 December 2022 between 09:15 and 15:15. Feedback was shared with the service on 8 December 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with staff and management
- reviewed documents
- spoke with children using the service and their family members.

Key messages

- Children had free-flow access to outdoor play in a well-equipped garden.
- Interactions between staff and children were warm and caring and staff knew the children well and were responsive to their needs.
- Staff should develop the experiences on offer to children indoors to take account of children's interests, development, challenge, and learning.
- Staff should review the indoor environment to provide nurturing and homely spaces for children to play, learn, rest and relax.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff knew the children well and were responsive to their needs. Interactions between staff and children were warm and caring. Children told us that they loved getting cuddles from staff. Parents commented that their children had formed positive relationships with staff and loved coming to the setting. This provided a nurturing ethos and supported children to form positive attachments. Effective communications between staff and families had been developed to ensure children's needs were met. Parents shared that staff supported them with their child's development, such as when potty training. This promoted a sense of partnership working, where families were respected and valued.

Children's independence and life skills were promoted and encouraged during snack time experiences in the 3-5 room. For example, children served themselves and poured themselves a drink and cleared their plates away when they had finished. Staff sat with children and promoted conversations. Children in the 2's room were encouraged to be responsible and helped set the chairs out at the table for snack. Children could be further supported to develop their independence skills during this experience. For example, learning to use tongs to select their own fruit. This would also support children as they transition to the 3-5 room. Staff should be aware of managing their time effectively at snack to ensure there are no missed opportunities for children to play and learn. For example, children were becoming restless as they waited for snack to be served. Lunchtime was a valuable social experience for children. Staff ate lunch with the children which promoted opportunities to model positive eating habits and there were nice interactions between children and staff. This experience could be further developed to replicate the snack time experience, and provide more opportunities for children to become independent and develop their life skills. For example, children could be provided with plates for their lunch to create a more nurturing family experience.

Personal plans were in place for each child. These were detailed and contained relevant information which supported staff to meet children's needs effectively. Plans were updated every six months in line with best practice. Parents were invited into the service regularly to update children's information. Parents commented positively about these meetings and felt they were beneficial. The setting had developed care plans to support children with additional support needs. As a result staff were knowledgeable about children's individual needs and used the information to support children to develop and feel settled. This ensured that children's health and wellbeing needs were current and supported parents as partners in their learning.

Consent forms were in place for medication that was to be administered to children. Audits of medication were carried out three monthly which ensured children's health needs were supported. Management should ensure that parents sign these updates, as well as a member of staff.

Children's nappies were changed in a separate room and maintained children's dignity and privacy throughout. Children's rights were upheld as staff requested their permission before a nappy change. Staff shared that children who require a sleep would rest in the 2's room, however, there was no identified, cosy space for this to take place. Staff should develop areas for children to rest and relax in both the 2's and 3-5 room. This would promote children's emotional wellbeing and resilience.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children had the freedom to choose where they wanted to play, and at times they engaged in play for extended periods of time. At times, play in both rooms felt very adult led. For example, when making Christmas cards, children were restricted to the colours they could use and how to create them. This was reflected on the wall displays across both rooms which lacked children's ownership within these experiences. Staff should consider ways to develop children's imaginations, creativity, and critical thinking skills across experiences. This would value children as experts in their own play and learning experiences.

The outdoor environment provided children with opportunities to develop their gross motor skills and have fun. Staff should ensure interactions promote fun and provide children with the freedom to explore their environment free from restrictions.

Language and literacy skills were promoted across both rooms as staff regularly sang with children. For example, when washing their hands and brushing their teeth. Staff shared regular story and puppet times with the children, which supported the development of their literacy skills. However, staff should consider when to include story time in the day to minimise interrupting children's play.

Both rooms provided little challenge and engagement for children across experiences. For example, staff interrupted children's creativity to complete activities for them when gluing at the craft table. Staff should review the experiences on offer to ensure children are motivated to learn, engage, and have fun in developmentally appropriate experiences. Staff should consider the availability of open-ended and natural resources across children's experiences. This would provide children with opportunities to develop their creative minds and become engrossed in their play and learning. **(See area for improvement 1.)**

Management shared that children's learning journals were in the early stages of development. Some journals evidenced children's learning and skills, however, most only stated activities participated in. Staff should continue to develop children's journals to ensure learning is specific, skills are evidenced and next steps support children's ongoing development. This would ensure children's learning and progression is planned at a stage that is right for them.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's learning and development, the manager and staff should plan experiences that promote opportunities for challenge, engagement, and fun.

This should include, but is not limited to;

- ensuring experiences are focussed on children's interests
- give consideration to the role of the adult in experiences to extend and progress learning
- review children's access to open-ended resources across experiences.

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

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The children benefitted from an environment that was safe and secure. The setting was well ventilated and children had ample space to move around. Staff should be mindful of the temperature in the 3-5 room, as children commented that they felt cold.

The environment lacked in homeliness and cosy spaces. Staff should consider how to soften the environment, which would promote a homely and nurturing environment, where children have access to comfortable areas to rest and relax. For example, the story corner should be developed to engage children's love of storytelling across both rooms, consider how books are displayed to invite children, and reflect a multicultural experience. The provision of a home corner in both rooms would provide children to re-enact their home lives, develop life skills and their understanding of the world around them.

The outdoor environment offered choice, challenge, and opportunities to develop creativity. Children had access to a mud kitchen, sand, and several loose parts. This provided children with opportunities to engage in meaningful play experiences and develop their imagination and creativity. Children's gross motor skills were developed as they had opportunities to explore a mixed terrain using natural materials to climb and move. Staff should consider how to reflect the outdoor experience in the indoor environment. For example, including more open-ended, natural resources and loose parts would provide opportunities for challenge, stimulation and ensure children's experiences were developmentally appropriate. **(See area for improvement 1.)**

Effective risk assessments were in place which ensured children's safety was always maintained. There were robust audits in place to ensure these were relevant and took account of changes to the environment. Children's information was securely stored within the setting, which respected and maintained their privacy.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to experience a comfortable, homely, and developmentally appropriate environment, management and staff should review the spaces available within the setting.

This should include, but is not limited to;

- creating cosy spaces
- offering children a range of rich, stimulating play spaces and resources to support and develop learning
- furniture is developmentally appropriate for the children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My environment is relaxed, welcoming, peaceful and free from avoidable and intrusive noise and smells' (HSCS 5.20); and

'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices' (HSCS 5.23).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There was a shared vision, values and aims within the service which had been created with the parents and committee. Management had plans to share this with staff which would continue to maintain their involvement within the setting.

The setting had a detailed quality assurance calendar in place which separated tasks into months. Tasks were dated and checked as completed. This ensured that systems in place were robust. The improvement plan was in the early stages of development and was yet to be shared with staff. Management had identified the need to improve the environment and had recently developed the snack provision within the 3-5 room. Improvements were linked to best practice documentation which ensured practice was kept up-to-date. Management should continue to develop the improvement plan and ensure this is shared with staff, children, and families. This would ensure they felt consulted and valued in any developments.

Staff monitoring and peer monitoring were planned and took place termly. This provided opportunities to highlight staff areas of strength and identify areas for improvement. This ensured that staff were continually encouraged to reflect, learn, and develop their practice. Robust inductions were in place to support staff to feel confident and secure within their roles. Staff commented positively on the support they received from management during monitoring and inductions. This supported ongoing improvements and reflections within the service.

The service had policies and procedures in place to support safe practice. These provided detailed information to support staff put policies into practice. Policies in place referred to best practice guidance, which ensured staff were well-informed.

Management shared that they regularly consult with parents on improvements within the service, however, receive little feedback. It would be beneficial to vary the methods used to gather parent feedback. Management could also consider how children's views are gathered to support the ongoing development of the environment and play spaces.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

The service was appropriately staffed throughout our visit, and this was maintained over the busier periods of the day, which included the lunchtime period. Staff ratios were maintained both indoors and outdoors to provide safe environments for the children. There was a mix of skills and strengths which staff were keen to

share together to support their knowledge, skills, and practice. This supported ongoing professional development to improve experiences for children. Staff were knowledgeable of children's needs and the strategies in place to support them. One member of staff used Makaton with one child. It would be beneficial for Makaton to be consistently used with all staff and children. This would further promote opportunities for inclusion.

There was continuity of care for children throughout the day to support consistency for them. Staff did not take a break within the day. It would be beneficial for management to consider the approach to staff breaks. This would ensure staff remain enthusiastic, responsive to children's needs and the development of the environment throughout the day.

Parents were welcomed at the nursery door at both drop off and collection by a member of staff. Parents shared that they had effective communication with staff and felt they could approach them if required. Staff were aware of the needs of individual children and had plans in place to support children settle into the service. Parents commented positively on their child's transition experience. This promoted staff knowledge and awareness of children as individuals.

Staff communicated well as a team and had regular opportunities to meet and discuss planning and children's needs. Areas of leadership had been developed. For example, staff were responsible for developing the outdoor environment and Facebook. This promoted staff confidence and valued their contribution to the service. Management could consider introducing further leadership roles to support improvements. For example, focussing on the indoor environment and high quality experiences. This would ensure an ongoing dialogue to improve outcomes for children and families.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate

How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate

How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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