

## Charleston Pre School Playgroup Day Care of Children

Charleston Village Hall  
Charleston  
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Forfar  
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Telephone: 01307 840 429

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
18 April 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Committee of Charleston Pre School  
Playgroup

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000555

**Service no:**  
CS2003002835

## About the service

School is daycare of children service, registered to provide care to a maximum of 22 children at one time. The age range of the children will be from two and a half years to those not yet attending primary school.

The playgroup operates from a rural village, Charleston, Angus. The children are accommodated within one playroom designed around the children's needs and interests. The children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor area that is accessible from the rear of the hall. The nursery has a secure door entry system in place.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 and 18 April 2023 between 09:45 and 15:00. One inspector carried out the inspection. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children and eight parents using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences.
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were very happy and fully immersed in a wide range of play and learning experiences. Staff were very good at supporting them to explore their curiosities and challenge their thinking to help them reach their full potential.
- Staff were very attuned to children's care play and learning needs and naturally changed the environment or defined outings to ensure they were meaningful and purposeful for children.
- Children, families and staff benefitted from a dedicated committee, who's contributions and influences ensured children experienced high quality care, play and learning.
- There was a very good mix of skills and knowledge throughout the whole day. Staff promoted an enabling attitude that resulted in continually raising standards for children.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

## How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were very nurtured through daily experiences. Staff were supportive and caring in their interactions, enabling children to feel safe and secure. As a result, children spoke to each other with kindness and respect, finding opportunities to help each other throughout the day.

Effective personal planning enhanced children's wellbeing. All parents strongly agreed that staff knew their children well, including what they like and what is important for their care. Meetings took place regularly to review children's progress and highlight their strengths and next steps. This resulted in clear, targeted support strategies that were consistently used in practice.

Staff took pride in supporting children to reach their full potential. They recognised and validated children's efforts and supported them to build self-efficacy. For example, after pouring milk independently, one member of staff said, "I remember when you could not do that, look at you now! That's great". This enabled children to feel valued and loved.

Snack and mealtimes were a very positive experience for children. Children took pride in having the responsibility to lay the table with cutlery, glasses and flowers. They were fully empowered to make their own sandwiches, which also provided a lot of meaningful discussions about the foods they ate. Parents told us that they particularly liked that all fruit and vegetables were locally sourced, especially during the summer. Staff sat with children to support them as needed and promote positive conversations. As a result, a social, nurturing experience was created for all.

### 1.3 Play and Learning

Children were given the space, freedom and respect to explore their natural curiosities. Staff were very skilful in their interactions, ensuring that they supported children when needed. Effective questioning that provoked thought and further exploration were used to enhance children's experiences and challenge their thinking. As a result, children received high quality play and learning experiences.

Children had fun through a good mixture of spontaneous and planned play and learning opportunities. All children were fully engaged and busy exploring a good range of opportunities within their environment, especially in the role play area. It had often been adapted depending on children's interests to provide rich learning opportunities. For example, it had been a hair salon, classroom, café and drive-thru. This enabled children to fully immerse themselves in a stimulating and inspiring learning environment. Staff carried out planning once a week to ensure children's experiences were broad and balanced, and supported their learning.

Staff empowered children to drive their own play and learning. Parents told us that "every day my child goes in to learn something new whether that is a physical skill or factual knowledge. I love hearing about their day and when they speak about nursery, it is always very animated with excitement". Staff always sought children's opinions, using methods such as mind mapping to gather children's ideas and interests

and plan the day ahead. Children had recently become fascinated with tadpoles, so staff incorporated various language, literacy and numeracy opportunities surrounding this throughout the setting. This enabled children to explore interests in ways that suited their own learning style.

The experiences and outcomes of children were captured very well within a busy and exciting floorbook. Children's voices were recorded to evaluate play and learning and support them reflect on their own achievements and their future possibilities of development. The manager had made improvements to allow the thread of progression in children's learning to be more visible. This enhanced children's ability to reach their full potential. Parents commented that they valued the use of the online learning platform as it gives them ideas of how they can continue their child's learning at home.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### 2.2 children experience high quality facilities

The setting was well furnished, comfortable and homely for the children. Staff, committee members and parents worked well together to create a welcoming space that supported children to feel safe and valued. Parents commented that it was "a beautiful setting with the children always having a variety of things to do and learn". Displays within the playroom promoted children's ownership of the space. These included photographs from home and previous play and learning experiences. This contributed to a warm and inclusive environment.

Children benefitted from developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor environments. Staff, with the occasional help from parents and children, would set up the playroom every day as the space was also used by the community at other times. Whilst this came with challenges, staff were experts in maintaining a good level of familiarity for the children and ensuring the environment provided challenge and diversity.

Parents felt that "the outdoor garden area, as well as local woodland and playpark, are great assets for outdoor play and learning". Staff were very attuned to children's care play and learning needs and naturally changed the environment or defined outings to ensure they were meaningful and purposeful for children. For example, children role playing that they were in a café led to them taking a bus to a real café to explore what happens there. This learning experience extended to inviting parents to the children's own café to include families in their setting. As a result, children experiences were enriched by a range of resources and materials that reflected their current interests and curiosities.

Setting and equipment were safe, secure and well-maintained. Children were fully involved in risk assessing regularly. For example, when removing the sand cover outside, they confidently discussed possible risks, and how to minimise them. The climbing wall outside provided great opportunities for children to explore risky play. Staff facilitated this very well and as a result, children were safe and secure in their own abilities. Once at the top, one child cried "wow, I can see all the way to Tayport!" As a result, children were very well supported to enjoy challenging, fun play experiences.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

## 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children, families and staff benefitted from a dedicated committee, who's contributions and influences ensured children experienced high quality care, play and learning. Regularly meetings were held to ensure children had the right facilities and resources for their care, play and learning needs. This promoted a very strong ethos of continuous improvement which kept children at the heart of the service.

The positive ethos of the setting empowered and respected children. There were strong links within the community and outdoors were used regularly to nurture children's natural curiosities and sense of belonging. As part of the service self-evaluation, the manager had identified significant strengths and some areas for development. As a result, an improvement plan was created to provide a targeted approach. This included, updating the vision, values, aims and objectives to include the United Nations Convention of the rights of the Child to promote and uphold children's rights.

Quality assurance was in place and led to continuous improvement. The manager used a systematic approach to monitor and evaluate the service. This included a very good understanding of pace of change to ensure any changes made were manageable and effective. Parents were very happy with the leadership of the service, sharing that they found the manager "approachable, chatty and just genuinely lovely". This enabled parents to feel included within the service and able to share the hopes they had for their children's care, play and learning.

Children and families were meaningfully involved and influenced change within the setting. They told us that together, "the staff and parents work hard to make it successful". Events and activities were regularly carried out to engage with parents and the wider community. For example, parents told us they loved coming into the cafe/open afternoon". Children were also taking part in baking activities to test ideas for a recipe book they were creating and planning to sell as a fundraiser. This promoted children as active contributors and provided them with further ownership of their service.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

## 4.3 Staff deployment

There was a small staff team, who worked flexible and very well together. Parents told us that, "the new manager is fantastic as are our other two staff members. They are all friendly and approachable and have great ideas for the children." Staff continually shared ideas and opinions that supported children's needs and interests. This resulted in them feeling motivated and inspired to achieve high quality experiences for children.

There was a very good mix of skills and knowledge throughout the whole day. Staff promoted an enabling attitude that resulted in them continually raising standards. The manager had worked closely with staff to listen to areas of their practice they wished to improve. Together, they designed goals that complimented their learning styles to enhance children's experiences and outcomes.

Staff were proactive and communicated well with each other, for example, when moving throughout the setting or supporting individual children. As a result, levels of staff are effective. Children moved freely

across the room, taking their learning and curiosities with them. Staff empowered this independence and only intervened when invited or if necessary. This supported children to feel valued and respected.

A policy was in place to maximise staff attendance. Staff told us they felt well supported by the manager and committee. As a result, there was a positive ethos of attendance within the service.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good



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