Inspection report

Playstart Mobile Creche
Day Care of Children
Perth & Kinross Council
Community Wing
Perth Grammar School
Gowans Terrace
Perth    PH1 5AZ

Inspected by:                  Catriona Davie
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection:           Unannounced

Inspection completed on:      7 December 2006
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<td>Care Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compass House</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 Riverside Drive</td>
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<td>Dundee</td>
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**Introduction**
Playstart has been providing a mobile creche in a number of rural and outlying areas since 2002. This service provides childcare, to enable parents to have respite, attend training, courses, conferences or local events. The service states that it aims to provide a first rate experience that is stimulating, safe and above all, fun.

The service is also available to provide child care for seminars and conferences on a commercial basis.

The service is funded through Perth and Kinross Education and Children's Services. Playstart's office base is located in the Perth Grammar school, whilst staff work from a unit located within a local industrial estate which is also used to store most of the resources and materials.

**Basis of Report**
This report was written following three unannounced inspections. The Christmas Shopper's Creche was inspected on 7 December 2006, Moncrieffe Creche was inspected on 21 February 2007 and Tulloch Creche was inspected on 22 February 2007.

Information was gathered in support of this report from the following:
Electronic Annual Return completed by the service.
Self evaluation completed by the service.
Questionnaires completed by parents and carers using the service.

During the visit the Care Commission Officer spoke to eight Playstart staff members and children attending the creches.

The Care Commission Officer also looked at a range of policies, procedures and records including the following:
Policy folders including the Child Protection Policy and complaints procedure
Registers
Public Liability Insurance certificates
Aims
Plans of activities

This service was inspected after receiving a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) to determine what level of support was necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer which considers: complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service and action taken upon requirements.

This service was required to have a low level of support that resulted in an inspection based on the inspection themes and any recommendations and requirements from previous inspections, complaint or other regulatory activity.

The inspection themes were:
* Child Protection.
* Nutrition and Toothbrushing
* Birth to Three
* Safe Recruitment and the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.
The Care Commission Officer took all of the above into account and reported on the inspection themes in the following National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16:

- Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing
- Standard 4: Engaging with Children
- Standard 12: Confidence in Staff

Safer recruitment practices for all Perth & Kinross Council services were inspected in a separate exercise in June 2006 and the findings are reported in Standard 12 of this report.

The inspection also takes into account the Regulation of Care Act (Scotland) 2001 and the Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002/114.

**Action taken on requirements in last Inspection Report**
There were four requirements made at the last inspection.

1. The service had reviewed the facilities for nappy changing. One requirement has been made in relation to this area and has been referred to within standard 3 of this report.

2. During the inspections all Playstart workers confirmed their awareness of the Fire Evacuation plan and where the first aid supplies were located. This requirement had been met.

3. All inspected creches were suitably stocked with antibacterial spray, first-aid supplies and paper towels. This requirement had been met.

4. All parents/carers using the service had been supplied with a written copy of the complaints procedure. This requirement has been met.

**Comments on Self-Evaluation**
A detailed self evaluation document was received by the Care Commission prior to this inspection. This highlighted many strengths in relation to the key areas and identified that updating the policies was an area for development.

**View of Service Users**
Within each inspected creche children were happy and engaged with the experiences on offer. Some children confirmed their enjoyment at attending the creches, of the snack provided and the toys available to them. One child stated that riding on the bikes was his favourite activity.

**View of Carers**
There were sixty questionnaires made available to the service and eighteen were completed by parents and carers and received by the Care Commission. All questionnaires were very positive and indicated that overall parents/carers were very happy with the quality of care provided. Additional comments included;
"I find the staff work very well together in making sure (my child's) needs are met."
"It is only for 2 hours a week but my children are always doing some sort of activity-arts, crafts, singing. The supervisor is always talking with parents to get our thoughts and opinions
for activities to incorporate into the creche or at home."
"We can sit in anytime and participate in outside learning eg story sacks, toy library."
"Staff at Braco creche are excellent. My child has overcome her initial reluctance to be
separated from me with the help and support of staff. I have used Braco Community Creche
since January 2006 and have been incredibly impressed by the care and commitment of all
the staff."
"Unfortunately the creche does not have an outdoor area to play in, but in good weather they
take the children out to the local park."
"Currently the other children are a lot younger than my child, so there are a lack of similar
age playmates. However (my child) doesn't seem to be bothered."

Discussion took place with five parents during the course of the inspection. Two parents
within the Christmas Shopper's creche confirmed that they were delighted with the service.
One parent from both Moncrieffe and Tulloch creche confirmed that their children enjoyed
attending the creche and that the staff team were consistent.

The service had carried out an internal audit. The statistical results were sent to the Care
Commission Officer. The results of this were very positive. All parents/carers indicated that
they were confident in the level of care their child received whilst at the creche.
Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards

National Care Standard Number 3: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Health and Wellbeing

Strengths

All elements of this standard were not inspected on this occasion. Instead the inspection focussed on the key themes within this standard of Child Protection, Nutrition and Toothbrushing.

Child Protection
Staff took part in an internal child protection course on 4 January 2007. A child protection policy was available and contained some relevant detail. All staff spoken to confirmed their understanding of the procedures to follow in relation to child protection concerns and confirmed who the designated child protection officer was within the service. Child protection was included in the induction process for all new staff, which involved raising awareness and discussing the child protection policies and procedures.

The child protection officer had attended child protection training including a certificated foundation child protection course, which had been accredited. The child protection officer attended meetings, was part of the council child protection group, and had developed and delivered child protection training to other childcare staff groups.

Nutrition
Both Moncrieffe and Tulloch creches provided children with a nutritious and healthy snack. Some staff had undertaken food and hygiene training. Children were observed enjoying snack time and confirmed their enjoyment of the snack foods on offer.

Staff used snack times well to enhance children's communication and social skills. Staff were aware of individual children's dietary needs and responded well to these.

Toothbrushing
The service was not participating in a programme of toothbrushing with attending children. However some topic work had taken place in some elements of the service to raise awareness of good oral hygiene with children.

Areas for Development

The child protection policy did not contain the telephone numbers for the local social work and police, or arrangements for regular review of the policy. Within both Moncrieffe and Tulloch creches, where children attend on a regular basis there was no written procedure specifying the action taken by staff should a child have an unexplained absence from the service (see recommendation 1).

The premise of Moncrieffe creche had damp. This was visibly noticeable within the area used by children and this resulted in the premise having a strong malodour (see requirement 1).

Whilst play equipment generally was in a good condition, within Moncrieffe creche, two toys for younger children did not work as they either had no batteries or were broken. Within
Tulloch creche some books on display were torn (see recommendation 2).

Within Moncrieffe creche younger children used a dry hand wash for hand washing. It was apparent within both Moncrieffe and Tulloch creche that step stools were needed in order to enable all children to wash their hands appropriately under running water (see requirement 2).

In Tulloch creche staff changed children's nappies on the floor. In Moncrieffe creche this occurred with older children. Staff were aware in Moncrieffe creche to place the changing mat on a larger mat, however this was not readily accessible and staff in Tulloch creche were not aware of the need for this (see requirement 2).

There was no guidance document “Nutritional Guidance for early years, food choices for children aged 1-5 in early education and childcare settings” in any of the inspected creches. Some staff were not aware of this document. There was also no policy on healthy eating within any of the creches (see recommendation 3).

**National Care Standard Number 4: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Engaging with children**

**Strengths**

All elements of this standard were not inspected. On this occasion the focus was on Birth to Three.

**Birth to Three**

All creches were providing a service to children under the age of three years. Staff were aware of the guidance "Birth to Three, supporting our youngest children" and this document, alongside parents information leaflets on Birth to Three were available within both Moncrieffe and Tulloch creches.

Within all creches staff to child interactions were very good. Staff offered lots of support, encouragement and responsive care to attending children. Staff within Moncrieffe and Tulloch creches were consistent and offered continuity of care for attending children.

Very good communication was noted between staff and parents to assist children settle into the creche. Within all creches children had a variety of play experiences to promote learning and development in all key areas. Children were happy and at ease within the care of the staff team and were engaged and motivated by the experiences provided.

The Christmas Shopper's Creche had been very attractively set up to offer children an exciting and seasonal play environment.

**Areas for Development**

Whilst a daily plan of activities was available in Tulloch creche, the staff had not completed a forward plan of activities (see recommendation 4).

Staff were due to attend training on Birth to Three, which would include the training materials from the Birth to Three guidance.
National Care Standard Number 12: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Confidence in Staff

Strengths

Not all elements of this standard were inspected. On this occasion the focus was Safe Recruitment and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice.

The service had copies of the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice and was reviewing its policies and procedures in line with the employer's code of practice. Staff were aware of their responsibilities under the codes and the future registration timescales with the SSSC.

An audit of the service's safer recruitment policies and procedures has been carried out by the Care Commission. In summary, the Council was able to evidence, as legal requirements and good practice, a start date of employment, together with details of the position held, a record of skills, experience, qualifications and details of an appointment. Where appropriate, checks were in place relating to a professional registration. The Council was aware of the future need for social care staff to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and was actively preparing for such registration. An internal staff census had taken place in 2003 and 2004, to update staffing details

Areas for Development

In relation to safer recruitment there were areas for development identified which resulted in requirements and recommendations highlighted at the end of this report (See Requirements 3, 4 & 5 and Recommendations 5 & 6). An action plan to address the recommendations and requirements has been received from Perth and Kinross Council in relation to safer recruitment. As the service's safer recruitment is carried out centrally, the Care Commission will follow up the action plan for all Perth and Kinross Council's services in April 2007.

National Care Standard Number 99: Other Issues Related to National Care Standards and Regulations

Strengths

Two recommendations were made at the last inspection and were as follows;

1. Staff within one specific creche needed to display posters, pictures and samples of children's work on the walls to further enhance the childcentred environment.

This particular creche was not inspected this year. The Christmas shopper's creche had many attractive displays to stimulate children's interest. Staff had displayed children's art work within the Moncrieffe creche.

2. The management should review the policies and public liability certificates on display within each venue to ensure they are complete and current.

All public liability insurance certificates were on display within each creche. The self evaluation document identified that the policies of the service were under review. Staff confirmed that a consultation process was occurring in relation to the new developed
Areas for Development

The walls within Tulloch creche were bare and lacked posters and children's art work (see recommendation 7).

On the day of the inspection there was no policy folder within the Christmas shopper’s creche for staff and parents to refer to. A policy folder, alongside an accident and incident recording book were brought in later when it was identified that they were missing. The complaints procedure within the folder was an old procedure (see recommendation 8).
Enforcement
No formal enforcement action had been taken by the Care Commission in respect of this service during the inspection year of 2005-2006.

Other Information
None.

Requirements
1. The service must assess and review the damp within Moncrieffe creche premises and ensure that the premises do not pose a health risk to attending children. This is in order to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 114, Regulation 10 (1) A provider shall not use premises for the provision of a care service unless they are fit to be so used and Regulation 4 (1) (a) Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3, Health and Wellbeing. Timescale for implementation- within receipt of this report.

2. Staff need to ensure that children wash their hands with liquid soap, under running water. Step stools should be in place for children in order to enable them to wash their hands appropriately. Changing mats should be placed on larger mats on the floor to prevent cross infection. This is in order to comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument 114, Regulation 4 (1) (d). Providers shall have appropriate procedures for the control of infection. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3, Health and Wellbeing. Timescale for implementation- within receipt of this report.

3. A written process for evidencing physical / mental fitness of staff must be included in recruitment procedures. Evidence of physical and mental fitness for work must be contained in each staff file for all future appointments.
This is in order to comply with:
SSI 2002/114 Regulation 9(2)(a) - a requirement for fitness of employees.
In making this requirement the SSSC Codes of Practice for employers, section 1.1 "making sure people are suitable to enter the workplace", has been taken into account.
Timescale for implementation
- amendment of procedures - by 30 November 2006
- evidence of fitness in files - upon receipt of this report

4. Two references are required for each appointee, in line with the Council"s recruitment and selection policy.
This is in order to comply with:
SSI 2002/114 Regulation 9 (1) - a requirement for fitness of employees.
In making this requirement the SSSC Codes of Practice for employers, section 1.3 "seeking and providing reliable references" has been taken into account.
Timescale for implementation - Upon receipt of this report

5. A written procedure must be developed to provide a consistent approach to evaluation and decision making processes when assessing Enhanced Disclosure Scotland checks.
This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114 Regulation 9 (1) - a requirement for fitness of employees and Regulation 8 - a requirement for notification of unfitness.
In making this requirement the SSSC Codes of Practice for employers, section 1.2 "checking criminal records" have been taken into account. Timescale for implementation - 30 November 2006

Recommendations

10/11
1. The child protection policy should contain the telephone numbers for the local social work and police and arrangements for regular review of the policy. The service should formalise a written procedure specifying the action to be taken should a child who regularly attends a creche have an unexplained absence from the service. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3, Health and Wellbeing.

2. Staff need to continually ensure that all resources used within the creches are working and that they are in a good condition. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3, Health and Wellbeing.

3. The service should develop a policy on healthy eating and ensure that the guidance document “Nutritional Guidance for Early Years” is within each creche, that staff are aware of this guidance and that it is considered in relation to snack menu planning. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 3, Health and Wellbeing.

4. Staff should ensure that a forward plan of activities is in place within each creche. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 4, Engaging with Children.

5. Disclosure Scotland guidance on the retention and destruction of checks should be implemented and incorporated into the Council’s recruitment and selection policy.

6. The Council should consider extending the current good practice relating to management of files operating in Community Care Services to Education and Children’s Services and Housing Services.

7. Staff within Tulloch Creche, should display posters, pictures and samples of children's work on the walls to further enhance the children's play environment. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 4, Engaging with children.

8. The Management and staff should ensure that there are accident and incident books and an updated policy folder within each creche and that the policies within these folders are the most recent and up to date. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 12, Confidence in Staff.

Catriona Davie
Care Commission Officer