

Newcastle Playgroup Day Care of Children

Newcastle Primary School
Muirfield Drive
Newcastle
Glenrothes
KY6 2PX

Telephone: 07852 460914

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 April 2017

Service provided by:
Newcastle Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003001632

Care service number:
CS2003007209

About the service

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2012.

The service may be provided to a maximum of 24 children at any one time, aged from 2 years 10 months to an age to attend primary school. Other conditions unique to the service are that during the operating times the service will have the exclusive use of the community room, children's toilets, kitchen and gym hall.

The service operates five mornings per week. The group is based within Newcastle Primary School in the area of Newcastle, Glenrothes.

The inspection took place over three mornings starting on 24 April 2017. We completed the inspection and gave feedback to the whole team and Early Years Scotland support officer on 26 April 2017.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it Right for Every Child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting It Right For Every Child. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

What people told us

Twenty-four children were present during most mornings of the inspection. We spoke to several children and observed their play where we found them to be busy and engaged. Many were demonstrating an emerging interest in dinosaurs and volcanoes and were actively exploring this in play. Children had formed friendships and enjoyed warm relationships with staff. Some children provided direct comments about their play and their healthy snacks.

We received three completed Care Standards Questionnaires, some of which had added comments. These demonstrated a mixed level of satisfaction with the service. All parents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that 'overall, they were happy with the quality of care their child received in this service'. We spoke directly to parents on the day of inspection and there were some comments within the collated responses from parents which we discussed directly with the manager and committee. A sample of the additional comments are noted below.

"The committee are not childcare professionals and so at times I feel they should allow the worker to develop this (daily running) in line with other nurseries."

"The nursery has improved greatly over the last few years and there now seem to be a good balance with staff."

"We had meetings in January. They've been fund raising and bought loads of stuff for the garden. Maybe more forest kindergarten outings as they are going this week but haven't been this year yet."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan which demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children's good health and physical development were promoted as they learned about healthy eating through nutritious snacks and opportunities to enjoy fresh air and be active. Very good systems for the management of medication and accidents were in place to promote children's continued wellbeing.

Children confidently approached staff to share their efforts and seek praise and further discussion on their work. Recognition and interest shown by staff bolstered children's self esteem and valued their achievements.

Staff responded to the needs of new children by offering reassurance and distraction as well as encouraging the use of transitional objects for comfort and a link to home. They should now build on this by reviewing the transition policy and exploring additional communication methods to support children with English as an additional language, to promote emotional security and wellbeing.

The rhythm of the day supported children to make choices on how and where they spent their time. Free flow access to the outdoor area, café style snack and a recent review of story time meant children followed their own preferences in play, remaining engaged and busy.

Interactions with children were improving and staff were beginning to use effective questioning with children. Staff observed play and offered additional resources to enhance play. However, a number of children still required further challenge and depth of learning was not being supported in play experiences to support all children to achieve. The recommendation made at the last inspection has been made again. See recommendation one.

There has continued to be slight improvement in planning for children's experiences and learning through continued supported from the visiting teacher. However, all staff should access the relevant training and become more familiar and confident with the new format to consistently capture relevant experiences and identify meaningful next steps. Planning should also be regularly evaluated. The recommendation made at the last inspection has been made again. See recommendation two.

Children's PLPs (personal learning plans) were not yet reliably capturing the learning or next steps. Personal information using the 'All About Me' sheets was missing for some children. Feedback to parents on children's progress was only recently re-started and should now be re-established as a routine process. This would support the service to ensure children are making progress. The recommendation made at the last inspection has been made again. See recommendation three.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. The provider should ensure that all staff interact with children in a way that extends learning and provides appropriate challenge. Staff should be vigilant to children's experiences and intervene where required to support quality of experience for all children. This would ensure all children are appropriately engaged and motivated through high quality interactions.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 4 - Engaging with children.

2. The provider should continue to review and develop children's planning. This is to ensure it is responsive and meeting children's needs and supports them to lead and assess their own learning.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 4 - Engaging with children.

3. The provider should continue to develop children's PLPs. The information on children should consistently identify clear next steps for all children. 'All About Me' information should be gathered within an appropriate period and kept under review. Settling in sheets should be completed consistently. This would support improved outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - a well-managed service and standard 5 - Quality of experience.

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

New flooring has greatly enhanced the playroom, providing an inviting and hygienic environment for children's safe and comfortable play. Display boards were kept neutral and picture frames used which enhanced and valued the children's own work contributing to their sense of belonging.

Children's safety was enhanced by review of relevant health and safety policies and procedures in relation to the security of the building. We found these to now be robust. Staff continued to remain vigilant to children accessing the toilets and to the current door alarm system in place. This should be kept under review as it is not the most reliable system.

Quality of resources was good and staff were responsive to dealing with items which were not fit for purpose. These measures along with up to date risk assessments enhanced children's safety.

Staff continued to keep resources under review and were planning to replace the tables and chairs which were currently not appropriate. The service actively fund raised to purchase additional resources and children now enjoyed using a new playhouse in the garden. Involving children in the fund raising through enterprising opportunities would increase children's awareness of the concept of money and provide a sense of achievement.

The very good range of resources offered across the nursery engaged children in interesting and varied play. Investment in specific materials to support emotional wellbeing was benefitting individuals. We advised on developing this further to ensure that all children benefitted from activities to build their emotional resilience. Loose part play materials were available indoors and well established within a cosy and inviting nurture area. The outdoor area also benefitted from some loose part play materials along with spaces to dig and explore nature. These open ended play materials enhanced children's creativity and self expression.

Children's learning experiences across the environment were enhanced by the use of digital technology as a range of items had been purchased including two new iPads. Staff should now find a way to allow children to explore photography as part of this which would support extra challenge and learning.

Forest school experiences had not occurred for some months and should be re-established to provide children with variety in their environment and opportunities to experience risky play and develop their skills in making sensible choices and keeping themselves safe.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Systems for recruitment and induction had been updated and we were reassured that safe recruitment processes were being used to recruit to a current vacancy. This included wider advertising, a job evaluation and robust interview procedure. Recruitment and induction checklists were in place and the committee were working closely with another professional body (Early Years Scotland) and referring to their guidance. The recruitment policy should now be updated to reflect the current systems in place. The committee should also make use of the best practice guidance document 'safer recruitment through better recruitment' available on the hub section of our website www.caresinspectorate.com.

Staff development opportunities have contributed to a positive learning environment for children. Staff were confident in sharing their learning from training and 'best practice' visits to other settings. The team were keen to develop opportunities to reflect on learning together to enhance opportunities for children. They should continue to build their skills collectively as reflective practitioners, ensuring that their shared inquiry contributes to enhanced practice. All staff should familiarise themselves with key best practice documents and use these to continue to improve outcomes for children. Best practice visits to other settings should be more focused to ensure a positive impact on improving the service.

Staff demonstrated affection for the children providing security and comfort including giving physical comfort through cuddles when needed. Children were seen to be respected and nurtured. The children were being encouraged to express their opinions and to make choices because staff members listened to the children, asked their views and valued their opinions. Staff should now develop their approaches to provide challenge to children through effective questioning and interaction to allow children to lead their learning and problem solve whilst offering the right amount of support and direction to extend and deepen learning. Refer to recommendation one under quality of care and support.

Staff were not using the improvement plan as a working document and did not hold specific responsibilities within this. Although staff still held 'champion' roles for specific aspects of the playroom, the opportunities for leadership had not developed further. Staff had not yet familiarised themselves with SSSC 'steps into leadership'. Opportunities for leadership and responsibility should be further developed to allow staff to further develop their interpersonal skills and qualities as leaders. See recommendation one.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should promote with staff, the SSSC pathway resource known as 'steps into leadership' and further support opportunities for additional responsibility. This would allow staff to develop skills of leadership which would improve their own professional practice and outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 12 - Confidence in staff.

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

A key strength was staff's commitment to developing and accessing support from within the local authority and outside agencies to support the development and improvement of the service. External quality assurance has led to improvements identified during this inspection and increased staff confidence and commitment in developing the service.

The committee are visible within the setting and provide direct feedback on their observations contributing to ongoing evaluation. A new position of liaison officer within the committee has strengthened communication between staff and committee members, ensuring that issues are raised and dealt with appropriately. Clearer roles have now been defined for committee members and the manager, however, these require further review to define specific responsibilities across areas such as notification reporting, recruitment and management support.

The service had recently begun using the professional expertise of a parent to support review of child protection procedures for the service, thereby enhancing quality assurance from another perspective. They should continue to build on this by inviting parents to quality assure other aspects, drawing on their expertise.

Due to changes in management, systems which were started after the previous inspection to develop internal quality assurance have not been taken forward. The staff need to develop a clear vision for the future which is supported by targeted plans, continuous evaluation and direct monitoring, leading to improved measurable outcomes for children. This has been a recommendation at the last three inspections and has been made again. See recommendation one.

Parent views have been sought on the service through an open ended questionnaire which provided valuable feedback for improvement. Staff had begun to address one aspect of this by producing a parent friendly leaflet about child led play with support from the local authority development officer. However, a number of issues raised still needed to be addressed along with feedback provided to parents on progress. This would allow parents to see that their views were valued and made a difference.

We found that the aims and objectives of the setting were dated and should be reviewed in line with more current approaches including the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. This would support a shared approach and drive forward important change.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should support further development of a rigorous system of quality assurance. This should include a detailed action plan, direct monitoring of all aspects of provision and staff involvement in ongoing self evaluation.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - a well-managed service.

Grade: 3 - adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must develop and put into place robust systems for the recruitment and induction of staff, which are detailed and followed carefully by the provider and management. This is in order to confirm the fitness and suitability of employees prior to employment and appropriate support to new staff during induction.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Service) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210), Regulation 9 (1) Fitness of employees.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - A well-managed service and standard 12 - Confidence in staff.

Timescale for meeting this requirement: within two months of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service had worked extensively with external support from 'Early Years Scotland' to develop a robust safe recruitment process. Positive steps had been taken to secure the recruitment of a new manager to service and induction processes were being reviewed to ensure these were robust and supportive to ensuring a positive start in the role.

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 2

The provider must develop systems for internal investigations of incidents and continue to review procedures put in place. This is in order to confirm that they are effective in reducing the risk of similar incidents occurring again.

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirement for Care Service) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210), Regulation 4 (1) (a) Welfare of users.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - A well-managed service.

Timescale for meeting this requirement: within four weeks of receipt of this report.

This requirement was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service had put in place a general procedure and flow chart which outlined the steps they would take to complete internal investigations in the event of any future incidents. Along with supporting paperwork to gather all relevant information to support internal investigations.

Met - outwith timescales

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

The provider should continue to review and develop children's planning. This is to ensure it is responsive and meeting children's needs and supports them to lead and assess their own learning.
National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 4 - Engaging with children.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Again, we found there had been some progress, staff continue to work with learning walls to share children's current learning. New planning formats have been recently introduced and two of the team have attended relevant training. However, it was felt that planning was not always capturing the children's experiences and appropriate possible progressions. Evaluation of planning was not being completed. We advised on how to make planning more of a working tool to support ongoing evaluation and advised that all staff attend training to promote shared confidence in capturing appropriate learning experiences and identifying and recording meaningful progressions for learning. This recommendation is not fully met and has been made again.

Recommendation 2

The provider should continue to develop children's PLPs. The information on children should consistently identify clear next steps for all children. 'All About Me' information should be gathered within an appropriate period and kept under review. Settling in sheets should be completed consistently. This would support improved outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - a well-managed service and standard 5 - Quality of experience.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

There were still inconsistencies in recording children's progress and development with lengthy gaps between observations in some children's folders and almost two years between written steps shared with parents and children. Written observations still need to improve to appropriately record children's learning and next steps. We also found that 'All About Me' information was not still not being gathered within an appropriate time to support effective transition and settling in. This recommendation is not yet met and has been made again.

Recommendation 3

The provider should ensure that all staff interact with children in a way that extends learning and provides appropriate challenge. Staff should be vigilant to children's experiences and intervene where required to support quality of experience for all children. This would ensure all children were appropriately engaged and motivated through high quality interactions.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 4 - Engaging with children.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Although staff were giving children opportunities to be independent, they now need to look at how they can provide challenge and depth in their play and learning. This should include further opportunities to take responsibility and develop skills in assessing their own learning. Further development of effective questioning during interactions across all areas of play would contribute to further challenge in their learning and should be an area for development. This recommendation is still outstanding and has been made again.

Recommendation 4

The provider should ensure that all staff have the opportunity to access best practice visits and are working with current guidance. They should be proactive in working with online resource materials for 'Building the Ambition'. Staff should begin to make use of the new 'My World Outdoors' guidance document to further extend outdoor play and learning. The 'Setting the Table' document should be used to further improve children's experiences around food. This would increase staff knowledge and provision of experiences and opportunities to meet children's needs.

National Care Standards Early Education and Child Care up to the age of 16. Standard 12 - Confidence in staff.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had made links with two other settings and a number of best practice visits to other settings had been completed. We reminded staff to have a clear focus for each visit and to plan for these to gain the best from this experience to support sharing and development of practice. In-house training on the guidance document; 'Building the Ambition' was delivered by a local authority development officer and staff confirmed they felt that this consolidated their practice. Some staff confirmed they were now familiar with the document known as 'Setting the Table' and had referred to this when reviewing the snack experience. Some other best practice documents had not yet been fully used and staff were encouraged to use these to support a community of enquiry and reflection within the team and use this information to enhance outcomes for children. This recommendation is met with some areas for further improvement.

Recommendation 5

The provider should promote with staff, the SSSC pathway resource known as 'steps into leadership'. This would allow staff to develop skills of leadership which would improve their own professional practice and outcomes for children.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 12 - Confidence in staff.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Some staff had briefly looked at this resource but felt unsure about it and had not yet used this resource to support their development of leadership skills. This recommendation was not met and will be followed up at the next inspection.

Recommendation 6

The provider should ensure that roles and responsibilities for the manager and committee members are clearly defined to improve direct monitoring, reduce confusion and support effective communication and compliance with legislation.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - A well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

A committee induction checklist was now in place which supported understanding of general aspects of each post. However, the service was using a generic template for roles of the committee which was still not quite addressing the specific duties required for each key committee member to ensure clear effective communication, support and appropriate notifications. A clearly defined description for the role of the playleader/admin position was now in place which supported this role. We reminded the current manager and chairperson of making some further amendments to the role of committee members to ensure that they are fully aware of their individual responsibilities in relation to this service to avoid any future confusion. This recommendation has been met with some further areas of improvement discussed.

Recommendation 7

The provider should support further development of a rigorous system of quality assurance. This should include direct monitoring of all aspects of provision. A quality assurance calendar should be developed to support management of quality assurance processes.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 14 - a well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 28 June 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Some progress had been made as informal reflective discussions by staff on a daily basis were taking place and the service had been proactive in seeking the support of others ensuring regular external quality assurance. The chairperson had also continued to have a presence in the playroom and provide verbal feedback on her observations. We found that some systems which had been in place to support staff self evaluation had not been continued. Since the previous follow up inspection a new manager had taken over and subsequently left, therefore quality assurance systems had not been developed. Therefore internal quality assurance systems were still not in place which contributed to the recommendations from the previous inspection not being addressed and limited improvements in practice. This recommendation is therefore not met and has been made again.

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	
4 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
10 May 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
26 Nov 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
27 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
24 Apr 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
18 Dec 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
24 Jan 2012	Announced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
9 May 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	2 - Weak

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
22 Apr 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
4 Mar 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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