

Peterculter Playgroup Day Care of Children

Peterculter Village Hall
North Deeside Road
Peterculter
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Telephone: 01224 733 289

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 January 2024

Service provided by:
Peterculter Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003000313

Service no:
CS2003001732

About the service

Peterculter Playgroup is operated from Culter Village Hall, within the Aberdeen suburb of Peterculter. The setting consists of a playroom, toilets and large enclosed outdoor area. Children also have access to gym facilities within the village hall.

Peterculter Playgroup is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 20 children at any one time, between the ages of two years to those not yet attending primary school.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 January 2024 between 08:30 and 12:30 and 24 January 2024 between the times of 08:00 and 13:00. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- Spent time with children using the service and spoke to six of their parents/carers
- Received nine responses to our request for feedback from parents via MS Forms
- Spoke with staff and management
- Received three responses to our request for feedback from staff via MS Forms
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled, happy and had fun.
- Staff were kind and caring towards children, which created a welcoming and nurturing environment.
- Children experienced an environment which was comfortable and promoted independence.
- Communication with families was good, supporting them to feel involved in their child's care.
- Management and staff should continue to develop and embed self-evaluation and quality assurance systems, to inform the service improvement plan.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
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?

4 - Good

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children and their families were warmly welcomed by peers and staff. They experienced caring and nurturing interactions. Care was responsive to children's needs. Cuddles, eye contact and smiles made children feel safe. This helped to build positive and trusting relationships. One parent told us, "The ladies have made amazing relationships with my son, they know him so well." Another parent told us, "They are always so friendly, welcoming and happy to help."

Parents were kept well informed through discussion at drop off and pick up times, emails and the Interactive Learning Diary (ILD). Most parents strongly agreed they were given good quality information about their child's day. This supported working together and a continuity of care.

Detailed personal plans were in place for every child. The plans considered the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included) which supported a holistic approach to meeting children's needs. Information had been regularly reviewed with parents and updated as children's needs changed. Strategies had been identified and recorded for children who required additional support. However, staff did not always use the information gathered to provide children with the support needed. This meant a few children were not supported with their communication by consistent strategies. This was discussed with the manager who agreed to make the necessary improvements.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported through nutritious food options and access to fresh water throughout the day. There were opportunities for children to develop their independence and life skills through involvement in the preparation and serving of their food. Staff promoted a nurturing social experience by sitting with children and promoting conversation. This enabled opportunities for language development and ensured children were supported well and kept safe when eating.

Appropriate storage and systems were in place for medication being administered safely to meet children's health needs. Information was collated and displayed which ensured staff were knowledgeable about children's health needs and knew the signs, symptoms and actions to take where a child may require medication.

Children's safety and wellbeing was supported by staff's understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns. Staff and management had undertaken relevant child protection training and a policy linking to current guidance was in place. Chronologies were used effectively to record significant events in a child's life that may impact on their health and wellbeing. Positive relationships had been formed with other agencies such as health visitors. As a result, children and families were provided with the help and support they needed.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were happy and engaged both indoors and out, having fun whilst leading their own play. Staff were responsive to children's ideas and choices and extended these well. Children enjoyed being hairdressers in

the role play area and exploring the sensory play on offer. All parents strongly agreed their child had opportunities to be involved in meaningful and interesting play experiences. One parent commented, "They have very engaging and child led activities available at every session."

Children experienced a range of high quality planned and spontaneous play experiences. Opportunities for emerging language, literacy and numeracy were naturally woven into daily experiences. For example, children chopped fruits in half, counted the pieces and voted on their favourite during snack time. Puppets were used to encourage language and generated excitement and laughter. Children enjoyed books and singing songs with staff in an engaging way when children showed an interest in doing so. Challenge was encouraged whilst taking part in a memory game as one child asked, "Make it really tricky." This supported children to reach their full potential.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's interests. Children's comments, photos and ideas were captured within floorbooks along with possible lines of development. Children's observations and progression of learning were shared regularly with families through the online platform and learning wall. This meant families felt valued and included in their child's learning and development.

Children's experiences were enhanced through good links with the community and regular visits to places of interest. Following children's interests the group had travelled by public bus to the park. On another occasion, children had written shopping lists and bought ingredients to make pancakes. Staff told us about plans to visit the local care home more regularly to support intergenerational learning. These types of visits helped children to build connections in their community and a sense of belonging.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Children benefitted from an environment that was warm and welcoming, with plenty of natural light and ventilation to support children's wellbeing. The room layout ensured children could move freely and access resources for their play independently. Spaces were interesting and well resourced, promoting curiosity and creativity. Children mixed their own paint colours at the self-service art area. There was a cosy space to relax or read a book, as well as space to extend large play experiences, such as construction or role play.

Daily access to the natural, wooded garden area supported the development of physical skills and exploration. Children enjoyed climbing up the rope ladder and running around the large space. Opportunities to develop imagination, curiosity and creativity were observed as children played in the mud kitchen and whilst digging in the bark area. The service had identified the outdoor environment as an area for improvement. We signposted the manager to guidance documents 'My World Outdoors' and 'Space to Grow' on the Care Inspectorate Hub to support future development.

Children experienced an environment that smelt fresh and was clean. Staff undertook regular cleaning throughout the session which helped support children's wellbeing. Handwashing was well supported at appropriate times such as before snack or after toileting. Items stored loosely in the toilet area and open nappy bags posed a potential infection prevention and control risk. We discussed these issues with the manager who took immediate action.

Children's safety was supported by risk assessments which were in place and had been reviewed following recent stormy weather. Maintenance issues had been reported and progressed. The outdoor area was

awaiting replacement fencing and the associated risks had been discussed with children. Staff positioned themselves well and had a good awareness of where children were. This ensured children were effectively supervised during their play.

Children's personal information was stored securely in a lockable filing cabinet and any digital information was password sensitive. This ensured families privacy and confidentiality.

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.

The service had been through a period of significant change and had a new staff team and manager. The service values and aims had been reviewed with families and staff and reflected their aspirations. These were being embedded in practice as staff supported children to recognise values and aims in daily play.

Staff told us they felt very well supported by management who were knowledgeable and motivated to continually improving the service provided. Regular staff meetings provided opportunities to reflect and discuss practice. This included what was working well and children's current interests to inform planning. Management valued staff's contributions and were keen to distribute leadership roles. Staff were taking on further responsibilities such as first aid and risk assessment. This contributed to staff feeling valued and empowered to contribute to improvements.

Positive experiences for children were beginning to be supported by a realistic and achievable improvement plan. This detailed improvements such as interactive learning diaries and building and sustaining a professional staff team. Management and staff understood the importance of parental involvement and the impact this had on children's outcomes. Parents strongly agreed the service was well led. One parent commented, "The setting is extremely well managed." Families were asked their views through 'question of the month' and questionnaires were used to gain constructive feedback. The manager told us these were being collated and would form the starting point for future improvements. This would further promote partnership working and ensure representation of children and families views.

Self-evaluation was in the early stages for the current staff team. Staff had started reflecting on their practice to bring positive changes to meet children's needs. Opportunities for staff to reflect and evaluate to support continuous improvement should be developed.

Quality assurance processes were in place and included audits of medication which helped keep children safe and well. Observations of practice, questionnaires and tests of knowledge helped identify where staff may benefit from further training. This helped deliver good outcomes for children and families.

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.

Staff interacted with children and each other in a respectful and considerate manner. They told us "We get on so well." This provided a happy and relaxed environment for children to enjoy. One parent told us they felt happy to share any concerns as "The team make us feel so welcome and valued." Another parent said, "Staff enthusiasm is great, always welcoming and happy to see the children."

Management recognised the importance of ensuring that the service was appropriately staffed to support the wellbeing of children. Arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care across the day and ensure positive transitions and communication with families. Busier times of the day, such as mealtimes or arrival and departure times, were recognised and planned for.

Children benefitted from a motivated and enthusiastic staff team. A supportive induction process for new members of staff helped them feel confident in their role. We signposted the manager to the National Induction Resource to further promote this process. Leadership and modelling of practice from management helped ensure children's experiences across the day were positive.

Staff were committed to professional development and had completed core training including first aid and child protection. This contributed to keeping children safe and well.

Staff were recruited safely with relevant checks in place before they started their role. However, this had not always been clearly recorded. We discussed this with the manager who took immediate action.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The manager and staff should ensure that all the support needs of the children are provided for:

- a) They should further develop individual personal plans to ensure they detail all identified needs of each child and how these will be supported by the service.
- b) Involve parents and other professionals, if appropriate, in the development and review of the personal plans.

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

This area for improvement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place for all children, where needed medical care plans and strategies to support individual needs were recorded. Plans were completed with parents and were regularly updated and reviewed. **This area for improvement has been met.**

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that children are safeguarded effectively the manager and staff need to develop communication with key professionals so that they are kept well-informed of any relevant information.

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

This area for improvement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken since then

Staff had an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. The manager had submitted notifications to the Care Inspectorate and appropriate action had been taken. The manager communicated with other professionals to inform them of relevant information. **This area for improvement has been met.**

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
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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