

Stableroom Playgroup (SCIO) Day Care of Children

Colinton Parish Church
Dell Road
EDINBURGH
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Telephone: 07812039906

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 February 2024

Service provided by:
Stableroom Playgroup (SCIO)

Service provider number:
SP2021000109

Service no:
CS2021000181

About the service

Stableroom Playgroup (SCIO) is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children aged 2 years to not yet attending primary school at any one time. The service will operate up to four weekday mornings between 9:00am and midday. Suitable outdoor space must be available on the days the service operate.

Stableroom Playgroup is based on the lower ground floor of Colinton Parish Church's community hall which is situated within the City of Edinburgh. It is located close to local amenities including parks, shops and schools. Children attending the playgroup have access to two playrooms and toilets with nappy changing facilities. The playgroup also has access to the Manse garden for outdoor play and the small community kitchen is used by staff.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 20 February 2024 between 9:30 and 14:00. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out this 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 since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with and observed children using the service
- received written feedback from 12 parents
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice, documents and daily routine

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing care from responsive staff, which helped them feel secure, safe and loved.
- Children were leading their play due to the play spaces and resources, and supportive staff interactions.
- Staff had a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, children and families. This contributed to everyone feeling included within the setting.
- The service should continue to review and simplify the paperwork including quality assurance systems to ensure it reflects the development of the service provided.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - 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 evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were cared for with nurturing and caring approaches which supported their health and wellbeing. We observed children receiving cuddles when they were upset and others being supported to follow routines and keep safe. This led to happy children who felt safe, valued and that they matter. Children were supported in their personal care with kindness, dignity, and respect. Staff used positive interactions, helping children feel comfortable and at ease. A parent commented "staff have been so attentive to our child who can be sensitive around other children. As soon as we arrive they seem to know exactly what to say to settle her and gain her interest. She's grown so much in confidence around other children already we are forever grateful for their expertise and kindness".

All children had a personal plan in place which included their likes, dislikes and preferences. Personal plans included some valuable information regarding children's individual needs. However, children's personal plans were not regularly reviewed or updated to include how children were supported whilst in the service or to show progress made. The manager should now ensure that personal plans are regularly reviewed and updated with the most current targets, support strategies and next steps. Parents all commented positively about the care and support shown by the service. Comments included "Absolutely fantastic level of care for my daughter. The staff all know her extremely well and I couldn't be happier with the care provided". Another parent told us "I'm delighted with the level of care, play, and learning that my child receives from the playgroup. The caregivers are attentive and nurturing, creating a warm and safe environment for all the children".

Children were well-supported in the indoor and outdoor environments by staff who knew about nurturing principles and delivered them calmly and with warmth. Staff engagement with children was child-centred and they communicated with children in a respectful manner. We saw this reciprocated in child to staff and child to child interactions. This meant that children were respected, included and confident. Parents commented "I like the fact that it's a fairly small group and the staff are able to give more genuine care and attention to my child" and "I feel comforted knowing that my child is in good, safe and caring hands, especially when he can sometimes be a bit unsettled when first going in".

Children enjoyed snack time. Staff were beginning to build up children's confidence around independence and self-help skills. Children were supported to sit at the table and staff were modelling good eating habits and social skills. Due to the service being unable to prepare food, children brought in their own snacks, the service was working with parents to ensure the food is healthy and nutritious. Staff continued to reflect and evaluate the experience to ensure children continued to have the opportunities to develop independence and life skills. For example, staff introduced a rolling snack programme and allowed children to have their snack at a time that suited them.

Children were kept safe and well by knowledgeable staff in the safe administration of medication and in safeguarding children. Staff were confident in who to go to if concerned about a child's wellbeing. Accidents and incidents were recorded, further development of paperwork was required detailing the location of the injury and the first aid given.

1.3 Play and learning

Most children were engaged, having fun and explored the playroom freely. Many natural and loose part resources were available, which supported individual children's age and stage of development and helped to develop their curiosity and imagination. Staff supported this through quality interactions at the child's level, use of effective questioning and showed a genuine interest in children's play. A parent commented "I like the fact that there are a range of activities set up for my child to play with. The activities change on a daily basis which is brilliant as it stimulates my child's learning and development".

The indoor environment offered children well-resourced core play provision. Staff had been creative in their approach that offered children well-structured and inviting spaces to play, explore, and investigate. Children experienced opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy skills. Print was displayed around play spaces, good quality books, inviting areas and a very good number of loose parts materials which allowed children to create their ideas. Children enjoyed books and spontaneous stories and singing which promoted language development. This supported communication across the setting, helping all children to be included. A parent commented "The play activities are not only enjoyable but also thoughtfully designed to promote creativity, problem-solving, and social skills. I've noticed good social skills that my child has gained since joining the playgroup. It's clear that the staff are dedicated to fostering each child's individual strengths and interests while also encouraging cooperation and teamwork".

Planning was under review and staff were developing a system to ensure children's individual observations and next steps were captured. This would support children's developmental stages and deepen their learning. A mixture of planned and spontaneous activities would ensure planning followed the child's lead while capturing children's voice within their play and learning. A parent commented "Play and learning are fantastic, with lots of different activities prepared for the children each day. Would be nice to have more formal information about progress but I value the above far more".

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

Children experienced a safe, comfortable and welcoming environment where they could play and learn. The environment supported children to feel nurtured with a large home area and quiet areas that offered children space to rest, relax and self-regulate during the day. These areas were particularly important to support younger children's age and stage of development. The layout of the playroom meant there were interesting spaces that supported children to lead their own learning. Children's choice was promoted, and we could see that they were beginning to be as independent as possible. Children followed their own interests and were fully supported by staff. A parent commented "staff plan engaging activities that cater to diverse interests and learning styles, fostering each child's growth and development".

The service shared their space with other people. There were respectful relationships with other tenants in the building. Staff were aware of the infection prevention and control measures needed, when using a shared space. They understood their responsibilities for cleaning within the setting and this practice supported the health and safety of everyone. Staff were very confident in their practice in promoting

effective infection, prevention and control practice to ensure children's health and wellbeing. Hand hygiene routines were embedded and cleaning of areas before children ate were robust.

The church was the landlord and responsible for the maintenance of the building and we could see that repairs were completed in a timely fashion. Children's personal information was stored securely to ensure families' privacy. Information was accessible to relevant staff whilst remaining confidential. It highlighted the service commitment to understanding and following guidelines on data protection.

The setting and equipment were safe and well-maintained. Children's safety was promoted by vigilant staff and they supervised children at all times. This helped to promote a safe and secure environment for children. Risk assessments were in place, however these were complex and time consuming to update. The manager was reviewing and updating them when necessary.

To promote children's health and physical wellbeing, opportunities for outdoor play were offered daily. Due to the layout of the building children were unable to have free flow access to the garden area. However, staff were continuing to review this routine because they understood the benefits of extended periods of time outdoors where children could sustain their play and learning activities.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families benefitted from the committed staff team who had a range of knowledge, skills and experience. They implemented values that promoted a positive ethos and respected children's rights. Staff took time to get to know children with a focus on building positive relationships. Children were supported to make choices as staff were attuned to their routines and what was important to them. A parent commented "I am very happy with the care provided, the activities offered my child loves the playgroup".

Parents were welcomed into the setting and we saw that staff were friendly and welcoming to the families using the service. The service was run by a parent led board and all parents were welcome to attend the annual general meeting so that they could participate in the decision making process. A parent commented "Leadership is strong and board are invested and involved".

Information was shared with families through an information booklet and social media platforms. Parents had also been asked to share their views through a questionnaire, however, the effectiveness of this needs to be reviewed. The service including the committee should review methods of gaining meaningful feedback from the parents/carers to evaluate the service. This would help to promote positive outcomes for children and their families.

Staff worked hard to settle children into the playroom and they were beginning to understand the routine of the setting. Children were generally happy, settled and provided with resources that supported choice and independence. A parent commented "This was our first experience of childcare and the manager was so kind and helpful in guiding us through the settling in process. I can't fault her advice". Another parent told us "the manager is absolutely terrific and extremely knowledgeable. The playgroup is absolutely lucky to have such a knowledgeable and skilled manager".

Overall, the service had systems in place to evaluate how they were sustaining good outcomes for children and families. The manager was currently reviewing the improvement and development plan to condense the workload and ensure improvements were achievable and realistic. The manager could find more information on planning for improvement on the Care Inspectorate Hub, under the improvement programme. A parent commented "Love this playgroup and so happy we found it! Another parent told us "Lovely playgroup. My child enjoys it. Everyone is friendly and welcoming".

Comments received from parents were all positive and one commented "the leaders demonstrate strong communication skills, keeping parents informed about upcoming events, changes in schedules, and any important updates regarding the playgroup. They are approachable, responsive, and always willing to address any concerns or questions that parents may have. I appreciate their dedication to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for both children and families. Moreover, their passion for early childhood education is evident in the thoughtful planning of activities and the implementation of age-appropriate learning experiences. I have complete confidence in the leadership team and feel reassured knowing that my child is in capable hands".

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

4.3: Staff deployment

Staff had a positive team ethos and were respectful in their interactions with each other, children and families. They were knowledgeable and skilled to effectively ensure children's experiences were positive. Staff communicated very well with each other and worked together to keep children safe and engaged in quality play and learning opportunities. They were proactive when anticipating where and when support might be needed. This created a respectful atmosphere which ensured children were appropriately supported throughout the day. A parent commented "Staff are highly qualified and have good contingency for staffing cover". Another told us " Our child bonded quickly with the whole team and they all seemed to know her likes and dislikes. I was impressed with how they handled difficult drop-offs and were able to whisk her away and settle her almost instantly".

Debriefings each day kept staff up to date with operational information, as well as time to discuss children's specific interests and needs. Staff were always vigilant of children and used a register to record when children entered and left the setting. Staff meetings were used to communicate with staff and allowed time for reflecting on the service they provided. This meant staff felt included and were empowered to have a voice in the development of the service.

Staff wellbeing was a priority for the manager and staff told us that as a result they felt valued and listened to. This meant children experienced continuity of care from a committed and passionate staff team. The manager had an appraisal system for staff that was continually reviewed throughout the year. We have asked that paperwork surrounding staff performance is simplified. This would ensure staff have objectives that were manageable and relevant to their role within the service. The manager should continue to monitor staff practice in relation to training to ensure this positively impacts experiences and outcomes for children and families.

A parent commented "The staff at the playgroup are incredibly dedicated and caring, creating a nurturing environment where children feel valued and supported. Their professionalism and teamwork contribute to a positive atmosphere, and I'm grateful for the excellent care they provide to my child".

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?	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?	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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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