

Triangle Under 5s Group Day Care of Children

Cupar YMCA/YWCA
Marathon House
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Cupar
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Telephone: 07704 378 143

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 February 2024

Service provided by:
Triangle Under 5s Group Management
Committee

Service provider number:
SP2003001574

Service no:
CS2003006944

About the service

Triangle Under 5s Group is situated in the centre of Cupar within the YMCA building. It is close to local amenities including shops, parks and local primary school and nursery. The service provides care for a maximum of 24 children aged from 2 years to below an age to attend primary school.

The accommodation is provided consists of exclusive use of the studio, toilets and the large enclosed outdoor play area. They also have access to main hall.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 February 2024 between 09:30 and 13:30 hours and 23 February 2024 between 08:30 and 12:30 hours. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with 10 children using the service
- spoke with/gathered feedback from 13 parents/carers
- spoke with the manager and staff members
- observed practice
- reviewed relevant documents.

Key messages

- Children enjoyed warm, respectful and nurturing interactions from responsive staff.
- Supportive interactions and varied experiences indoors and out challenged and engaged children.
- The whole team were reflective practitioners, supporting ongoing improvements.
- Monitoring systems should now be improved to further enhance quality assurance.
- Records of staff recruitment should be improved.

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?	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?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 1.1; Nurturing care and support.

Children were nurtured and supported by staff who provided comfort and cuddles when required. Staff were sensitive to children's personal care needs and nappy changing. Toileting accidents were handled sensitively, maintaining children's dignity. Warm, enabling relationships were evident as children willingly approached staff for support or reassurance. Staff were confident and consistent in supporting children to communicate in different ways. 'Emotion spoons' enabled children to express their feelings. Staff took individualised approaches to support children displaying distressed behaviours. This encouraged children to feel secure in their play and learning.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted as they enjoyed the healthy snacks and lunches provided. In addition, specific dietary needs were fully addressed and managed discreetly. Water was available at all times both indoors and outdoors supporting hydration and concentration. This contributed to children remaining healthy and developing positive eating habits.

Children enjoyed a calm, relaxed and sociable lunch time experience. All staff sat and ate with children, remaining with them until they were all finished. We asked the manager to consider building further opportunities for children to be more independent during the lunch experience, as they were during snack time.

Staff had built positive relationships with parents, enabling effective information sharing which contributed to continuity of care. A closed social media page, 'stay and play' sessions and sharing of PLJs (personal learning journals) supported parental involvement. The service should now continue with their own plans to further enhance children's learning opportunities through home links.

Children were safeguarded as staff were trained, confident and able to fully describe the approaches they took to keep children safe and protected.

The review and signing of medication forms should now be enhanced. This is to ensure that consent is updated every term and that medication is still required, in date and dosage remains unchanged. This will support children's continued wellbeing.

Quality indicator 1.3; Play and learning.

Children were confident and busy learners. They demonstrated curiosity, creativity, cooperation and connection with each other and the materials available to them. Staff interactions appropriately supported and extended children's learning and problem solving; for example, when using tools at the woodwork bench. The positive interactions with staff throughout the day were supporting children to develop skills in literacy and numeracy.

Planning for children's play and learning was responsive to their interests. The service was working well with the local authority teacher to develop intentional planning and re-establish learning walls.

Ongoing consultation with children on their learning and environment was evident through displays and floor books capturing children's thoughts and experiences. Observations of children's learning were recorded within PLJs and children enjoyed adding to these with staff and sharing them. Links across planning and PLJs was evident and next steps were clear, demonstrating children's learning. Staff should continue to develop observations to ensure the learning outcome is consistently captured.

Children who required additional support were enabled through detailed plans, specific strategies and regular meetings. Personalised care plans supported inclusion and consistent approaches from the key worker and whole team who were fully aware of these. This contributed to children's success, enjoyment and participation.

Children were achieving as staff were developing written strategies for all children to ensure their success. Staff were committed to providing appropriate levels of support and took steps such as learning and speaking key words in Polish. This supported children to achieve and feel included.

Children were building their own identity within the local community by using the park for some forest play and developing some good links; for example, a link had developed with the college horticultural society. Opportunities included visits to and from the college, delivering bookbug sessions in the library and linking with the local nursery. This provided meaningful experiences relevant to children's lives and extended learning.

Children enjoyed daily fresh air and exercise in the large outdoor area. A range of physical play equipment and ample space to run around developed children's overall sense of wellbeing, physical coordination and strength. This contributed to children remaining healthy and active.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2; Children experience high quality facilities.

Spaces indoors supported a breadth of play and learning activities. Staff understood and supported children's need to move resources to support and extend their learning. Hidey hole spaces allowed children to play alone or in pairs. Children had fun as they used this space to explore light and dark, using torches and star projectors. Children had their own boxes for personal belongings which they could access when needed, contributing to their level of comfort and security.

The outdoor environment was enabling with a range of appropriate play resources and natural challenge. This included a variety of loose parts play materials and an outdoor theatre which nurtured children's creativity. The sheltered space known by children as the 'the wee hoosie' provided shelter along with a home corner, story area and puzzles. A numeracy and literacy shed added additional resources to support learning outdoors. This enabled a variety of outdoor play in all weathers. The service should continue with their own plans for further improvement of this space.

The playroom provided a clean, comfortable, safe and inviting environment for children, with appropriate spaces to play rest and relax. Hand hygiene was promoted well, and nappy changing arrangements were positive. These practices reduced children's risk of cross infection and supported children's wellbeing.

We reminded the manager to also encourage children to wash their hands after eating to further reduce risk of cross infection.

Robust written risk assessments helped to reduce potential harm to children when inside and out, supporting them to remain safe. Staff were aware of the SIMOA campaign (Safe, Inspect, Monitor, Observe, Act) to promote safety with children and were confident in their own approaches and children's knowledge. One child told us; "the ladies keep us safe, see those barriers they're where you stop and no running and they watch us on the climbing frame". This meant children were aware of how to keep themselves safe. To develop their understanding of safety, children could now be more meaningfully involved in risk assessments.

Children regularly discarded resources after playing with them and were then supported to tidy up at key points such as before lunch. They should now be encouraged to tidy up resources after playing with them. This would encourage children's respect for their environment and build their capacity as responsible citizens.

There was potential for children to access other spaces of the garden where discarded items were awaiting removal. These posed a potential risk due to the barriers to this space being temporary and low. We asked the service to ensure these items were removed and to consider ways to make temporary barriers more robust (see area for improvement 1 under quality indicator 4.3).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1; Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Quality assurance tools including 'A Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Childcare' and best practice documents were consistently used by the team to support ongoing evaluation. This provided the service with a measure of their progress and supported them in identifying relevant areas for improvement.

The annual improvement plan clearly identified areas for improvement. This was regularly reviewed by the whole team and was having a positive impact. Staff confidently discussed improvement priorities and their progress. This was supporting a whole team commitment to provision of quality care and support for children. This provided a clear direction and supported improvement.

Monthly staff supervision meetings provided opportunity for staff and the manager to reflect on practice, progress and identify areas of support or training required. This contributed to ongoing quality assurance of the service.

The manager had a clear direction for the service and communicated this well to the team. They actively supported reflective discussions, both in the moment and afterwards to support staff to grow as reflective practitioners. The manager valued the team and they confirmed feeling supported and appropriately challenged.

Ongoing consultation with families enabled improved experiences for children and parents. Improvement priorities were displayed clearly for parents and questionnaires were issued which included a section of the child's voice. There was scope to further improve the sharing of results with all families, along with the actions taken. This would develop a positive feedback loop, contributing to continuous improvement for children.

Some auditing of systems was being carried out such as monitoring of children's PLJs and daily health and safety checks. The manager should now develop formal approaches to audit staff practice and a wider range of procedures such as accidents and medication. This should be developed using the quality framework and other quality improvement documents. This would further enhance quality assurance and support staff appraisals (see area for improvement 1).

Most staff were registered with the SSSC (Scottish Social Services Council). However, we found that one had only recently registered. We were unable to confirm a start date for staff members as this information was not recorded and the provider had not issued contracts. We were therefore unable to assess whether staff registered within the recommended period. Checks on the registered status of all staff each year should be built into quality assurance systems to ensure staff are and continue to be registered. A record of start dates, roles and responsibilities should be in place for all staff (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should now develop formal auditing systems to support regular monitoring of staffing and other aspects of provision. This is to support staff appraisals and enhance quality assurance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

2. The provider should ensure that staff are registered with the appropriate registering body within the recommended period. To support this records should be held which clearly identify the start date of employment, role and responsibilities for each staff member.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" (HSCS 4.24).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3; Staff deployment.

Staff were flexible, meaning they were all present at all times including lunch times. This minimised the impact on children and increased quality interactions during this period.

The manager used the Scottish Government's 'Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) National Induction Resource'. This supported consistency and a robust induction for new staff. Staff regularly had opportunity for reflective discussions and supportive mentoring by the manager. This contributed to consistent approaches for children.

Children benefitted from a strong staff team who worked well together. The mix of staff skills and experiences supported positive outcomes for children. Respectful and effective communication between the team enabled them to work together to meet children's needs.

Staff were deployed effectively throughout the day to support the supervision of children. For example, two staff members always greeted parents at the door on arrival which limited distraction and supported children's transition into the setting. To support free flow play in the garden, the manager supported children's movement indoors and outdoors, as they were supernumerary and a minimum of two staff were present both inside and out. This supported children's choice and security.

Although children were adequately supervised at all times during outdoor play, the low barriers presented a risk of children accessing the gate to the main street. There was some potential of taller children reaching the gate handle and opening this. The provider should ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce this risk and record this within the risk assessment. Reference should be made to the 'Keeping Children Safe - Look, Think, Act Campaign' available on our website (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should review the management of the bottom half of the garden by removing discarded and risky items, enhancing barriers and reducing children's potential access to the gate. This should be captured within the risk assessment.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability or frailty" (HSCS 3.18).

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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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