

Knockando Playgroup Day Care of Children

Knockando Primary School
Knockando
Aberlour
AB38 7RY

Telephone: 01340 810 257

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 October 2024

Service provided by:
Knockando Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003001927

Service no:
CS2003008921

About the service

Knockando Playgroup is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 14 children aged three years, to not yet of an age to attend primary school.

Knockando Playgroup is located within the school premises of Knockando Primary School in Moray. The playgroup have use of a playroom, including kitchen facilities, and access to toilets. The playgroup also has access to a large outdoor play area.

The playgroup is committee-led and works in partnership with Moray Council to provide funded early learning and childcare.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 October 2024, between 9.00am 3.00pm. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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 four children using the service and one of their family;
- reviewed feedback received from three families;
- spoke with two staff and the manager;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff knew children well, which meant that they were able to anticipate, and meet their needs.
- Staff were skilled in their interactions to support children to extend their play and learning. This meant children were developing a broad range of lifelong skills.
- Resources on offer provided children with a wide range of opportunities to explore and develop their imagination.
- The vision and values of the setting positively informed practice within the playgroup. As a result children received high quality care and support.
- Staff were kind, caring, enthusiastic, and demonstrated a high level of motivation. This contributed to children to have positive experiences.

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

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Staff were warm, caring and nurturing in their approaches to support children. They supported children to manage their emotions with gentle conversation, offering cuddles, and hands to hold. This contributed towards children being able to safely express their needs. One parent told us "there is always the time and space for a cuddle and a chat". As a result, children felt confident and secure.

Staff knew all children well and were able to talk about individual personalities and preferences. Regular sharing of information between playgroup and home contributed to the effective use of personal planning information. Staff took the time to ask children about their lives, showing a genuine interest in them. This meant they were able to anticipate children's needs, and give them the support they needed at the right time.

Staff were aware of the impact that events in children's lives could have on them. They adopted a trauma informed approach to supporting children's holistic wellbeing needs. This contributed to building children and families resilience, where needed.

Snack and mealtimes were calm and relaxed. Children had opportunities to develop their independence skills, for example selecting cutlery and crockery, and pouring drinks. Children enjoyed their morning snack in the garden, which reduced any interruptions to their play. Staff were focussed on children, recognising the value of these daily routines in building strong relationships, and to consolidate learning through fun conversation. Some children were comparing the number of sausages on plates, saying "Two is more than one!". Food offered was healthy and nutritious, following best practice guidance, such as "Setting the Table". Individual preferences were catered for. As a result, children enjoyed a positive social experience.

Staff worked closely with other professionals to identify and implement appropriate next steps based on individual needs. For example, supporting communication. This information was used to support children to achieve their potential.

Staff demonstrated a very good understanding of the processes and procedures they would follow if they had any concerns about children's wellbeing. The manager ensured that all staff understood their roles through regular professional dialogue

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were having fun as they enjoyed high quality play and learning experiences. They were positively engaged from the moment they arrived at the playgroup garden. Well considered arrangements at the start of the day supported children to maximise their time in the setting. For example, storing personal belongings and self-registering in the garden meant they could get straight into play. They were able to choose where they wanted to play, and choose the resources they wanted, supported by staff who were close on hand if needed. This empowered children and supported their developing sense of independence.

Staff used skilled and sensitive interactions to support children's learning and development. For example, using mathematical language to describe and compare the weight and size of tyres that children were rolling, introducing and explaining words such as distance and speed. They used positional language as children built a construction to roll balls along. As a result, children were developing their language, literacy and communication, and problem solving skills.

Some children were supported by staff to identify a helicopter in the sky, recalling that they had seen three the day before. Staff were skilled in using questioning to encourage children to recall previous conversations and learning. One child was excited to show the inspector that they had found the seed of an ash tree, identifying it in a book, telling them "this seed is sometimes called a helicopter seed". Children were developing their sense of wonder and naturally developing curiosities, through creative approaches.

Staff demonstrated that they understood when to interact with children to extend their learning, and when to stand back and allow them to become engrossed in their play. They were knowledgeable about child development and children's preferred patterns of play, providing opportunities for children to play and explore in a way that suited them. This promoted children's development, learning and wellbeing.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's play and interests. Staff were developing their skills in balancing responsive and intentional planning, ensuring that children were given the opportunity to revisit interests and find the answers to questions they had asked. As a result, children were happy and progressing well.

Skilled observations of children's play and learning supported staff to identify progress and next steps. This contributed to planning relevant experiences, and opportunities, for children to consolidate their learning. This highly responsive approach ensured that children were developing a range of lifelong learning skills.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

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

The indoor and outdoor environments were structured to take account of children's stage of development and their ongoing interests. Children made very good use of the playgroup garden and the new outdoor shelter that had been installed. Resources, particularly outside, provided children with a wide range of opportunities to explore and develop their imagination.

Children also enjoyed playing in the playroom, which was clean, tidy and flooded with natural light. They were able to self-select resources, which were attractively stored and displayed to stimulate them. We discussed with the manager, continuing to review and make improvements to the playroom to give it a more warm and homely feel.

Staff worked well together to identify risks and were vigilant about where children were at all times. They supported children to identify and manage risk as they moved about the setting, and between inside and outside, for example, demonstrating how to safely cross over to the school. Children were encouraged to take part in play that gave them the opportunity to push their own boundaries, within a risk enabling environment. Parents highlighted the variety of outdoor play opportunities as a particular strength, with one commenting "They offer so many different and fun activities for the kids, the highlights being playing with tools, fire and playing in the woods." This meant that children were developing their sense of self-esteem.

Overall, infection prevention control procedures protected children from the possible spread of infection. Children were able to wash their hands in warm water when outside, as staff had set up a hand washing station. The manager highlighted to us issues with nappy changing arrangements, which were not following best practice, as children were changed on a mat on the floor. During the course of this inspection, the manager sourced an appropriate changing table to make improvements.

Staff had a good understanding of arrangements for cleaning within the service, ensuring children were able to play and learn in a safe and clean environment. They followed robust health and safety practices around food preparation that also contributed to keeping children safe, and reduced the risk of infection spreading.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are well led

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

The visions and values of the playgroup had recently been reviewed with parents, and we found that these reflected the ethos of the setting. For example, 'providing a positive atmosphere to support a high level of engagement in a stimulating environment'. Parents who gave us feedback either strongly agreed, or agreed that they were meaningfully involved in developing the setting. These visions and values positively informed practice within the playgroup.

The manager valued the views of families and children, which contributed to effective improvement planning. There were a number of opportunities for them to give feedback, both formally and informally. Such as through online surveys, questionnaires, during stay and play visits and through daily conversation. The manager understood the importance of sharing what improvements had been made as a result of feedback, and the impact of changes made on children's experiences.

The manager had developed effective quality assurance processes. They had identified areas for improvement in line with the finding of this inspection. For example, the need to make improvements to nappy changing arrangements. They engaged well in the inspection processes, responding positively to professional discussion. As a result, children benefited from care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

Staff had the opportunity to reflect together, using these reflections to influence positive change for children. They were confident in reviewing any changes made, such as the layout of the environment, considering the impact on children's experiences. They ensured that improvements were underpinned by best practice and reviewed changes regularly to evaluate the impact for children. This meant that staff were able to drive and sustain improvement.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good****Quality Indicator: 4.3 Staff deployment**

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

Staff were kind, caring, and enthusiastic. They demonstrated a high level of motivation in relation to supporting children to have positive experiences. They had developed strong relationships with children and their families. All parents who gave feedback strongly agreed that they had a strong connection with staff caring for their child, telling us:

"The staff are wonderful, friendly, approachable and very caring."

"They are very approachable and friendly."

"The staff are so attentive to the kids. They really go above and beyond to make sure everyone is included."

"I have complete confidence in their care for my children."

Staff deployment throughout the day was well considered, making best use of the skills, knowledge and experience of all staff. Staff had particular strengths in outdoor play and learning, or were enthusiastic about increasing their own skills. As a result, children were well supported throughout the day as they played and learned.

Staff worked very well together and interactions were respectful which supported the positive ethos of the setting. They communicated clearly with each other when they were leaving one area to go to another, or when sharing information about children. This meant that children received effective supervision, and high quality care and support throughout the day.

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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.