

Gargunnock Playgroup Day Care of Children

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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 14 November 2016

Service provided by:
The Committee of Gargunnock
Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003001140

Care service number:
CS2003005441

About the service

Gargunnoch Playgroup is a daycare of children service provided by a committee of parents who are volunteers.

The committee employ two staff to plan and deliver care and learning experiences for children. In addition they have supply staff available to cover absences and parents help out at sessions on a rota basis.

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The playgroup is based in the village of Gargunnoch's Community Hall. The room children use as their playroom leads directly out to a large, enclosed garden with grass and paved areas.

The service operates 09:00 to 11:30 on a Monday and Thursday in term time.

There are places for up to 18 children aged from 2 years to school age. At any given session, no more than five of the children attending may be under 2 years 6 months old.

The playgroup aims and objectives are:

- To recognise all children and adults as individuals with rights of their own
- To promote the importance of learning and development through play
- To encourage children to express themselves as individuals and as a member of a group within a supportive environment
- To offer children a broad and balanced range of activities from which to choose and from 3 October 2016 the playgroup began offering their play sessions on the first full week of each month in woodland on Gargunnoch House estate.

Aims for these sessions specifically are

Promote and nurture learning and development through play in a challenging, spacious and creative environment.

Recognise all children and adults as individuals with rights of their own and support their individual capacity and potential for learning and development.

Encourage children to express themselves as individuals and as members of a group within a supportive environment.

Offer children a broad and balanced range of activities from which to choose.

Develop capacity for staff, parents and children to work as a team and provide a closeness and freedom with nature, deepening the exploration and connection with self and the environment.

Foster adult understanding of the rationale for and benefits of outdoor learning.

Cultivate positive relationships within the immediate and larger community. Promote health and wellbeing through physical and emotional resilience, healthy eating and healthy minds.

At this inspection we focussed on two aspects of Care and Support. These were Responsive Planning (what staff do to meet children's individual needs) and Transition (support for children starting playgroup and as they move on to school). We also looked at Outcomes for children through Woodland Play sessions as part of the Environment Quality Theme.

What people told us

We spent two mornings with the playgroup. On the first occasion the session took place at the playgroup premises. On the second morning the session was held at the woodland area the service had just started to use a few days every month on a trial basis.

The children had a happy and positive time in both places. Indoors and outdoors they were confident to explore and make their own games. They loved when the staff joined in their play and read them stories and snack time was popular and sociable both round their playroom table and when it was picnic style in the woods.

We spoke with three parents and we received feedback from five people through our inspection questionnaires. They were happy with the quality of care their child received and with the range of experiences they had. They said that they felt involved, got good feedback about their child and plenty of information about what was happening more generally in the service.

While one parent thought that "the structure was well thought through and implemented" and was "impressed by the engaging and imaginative use of the outdoor space in all weathers, another parent's view was that "sometimes the staff try to do too many things in one session and it can feel a little rushed " and they "would like the children to go on more outings".

We understand from information the senior playworker provided that similar feedback received by the service was among reasons leading to the development of the playgroup's woodland sessions and more opportunity for child led play at the playgroup's normal premises.

Self assessment

We received a completed self assessment document from the provider before this inspection. This was detailed with relevant information for each quality theme that we inspect.

They provided information about the areas of work they consider they do well, what they have improved and work they plan to further develop.

They also told us how they gather the views of parents, children and staff to help them make improvements.

They should continue to develop use of the self assessment to show what they provide and how this benefits children.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Several factors promoted staff planning in a responsive way for each child's individual needs.

Personal plans were now in a format which showed improved detail for developing accurate support for their individual care, health and learning needs. Staff and parents had very good relationships and a very good range of ways to communicate with each other including the new option of a private facebook page. They were therefore both able to regularly update information about each child's needs and achievements and, from that, have a reliable basis to develop together the support and experiences they needed next.

Staff were also genuinely responsive to children in the playroom. They listened to them, provided for their requests and supported their decisions. As a result, children had freedom to follow their interests and direct their own experiences and learning.

Children had the individual support they needed to settle in confidently at playgroup. A gradual introduction at the child's pace, with their parent's support as required, helped the child become accustomed to their new surroundings and the people there.

A flexible approach meant that the settling in process was shortened if children were quickly confident and coping without additional supports. Where children needed lengthier support or special measures because of their additional needs, plans were put in place until the children showed they were coping.

Children had very helpful experiences when they were moving on to the local primary school. A planned programme of visits, participation in school events and allocation of an upper school pupil as a "buddy" were among the opportunities helping children find out about school and become confident about their move.

The woodland play session was only the third time the children had spent their whole morning there as part of the outdoor pilot. Yet, we saw strong possibility that this would become excellent practice by the playgroup. The senior playworker had undertaken intense training and thorough research into outdoor play, how to offer this safely and its benefits for children's health and well being.

We found that this resulted in development of detailed evidence based policy and practice information which was shared with parents in a handbook and on the playgroup website. This was highly informative and reassuring for parents as it told them exactly what they and their child should expect and the precautions which would keep their child safe.

In practice we saw that because of the careful advance work, children arrived warmly dressed for the cold weather to a very well prepared site which was suitably checked for unexpected hazards yet still offered opportunities for challenge and risk taking within their means.

An initial walk around the boundary of the play site gave children responsibility for staying within safe limits. Close supervision but limited direct involvement in children's play by staff gave children freedom to paddle and experience of gathering and mixing water and mud in the shallow burn, be energetic climbing and sliding down the small hillock and use their imagination looking for creatures in the trees and bushes.

The staff believed in children benefitting from this type of play and they were confident to let children explore and make their own activities. We saw this led to very happy, busy children who were curious, adventurous and exceptionally active for their whole time in the woods.

What the service could do better

During the inspection feedback meeting we discussed the following with the senior playleader and two committee members.

Information Commission Office Registration - They should check with the information commission office if they require to register as they now process information about children electronically.

Homely Remedies - In line with current medicine guidance the playgroup should no longer keep stocks of medicines and treatments for communal use. This includes the arnica and antiseptic which the playgroup had. <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/189567/childrens-service-medication-guidance.pdf>

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
20 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
24 Jan 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
13 May 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
23 Apr 2009		Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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