Dumfries Toy Library
Day Care of Children

Playworks
Children's Services Centre
1 George Street
Dumfries
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Telephone: 01387 249 990

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 May 2024

Service provided by:
Dumfries Toy Library

Service provider number:
SP2003002570

Service no:
CS2003010890

About the service

Dumfries Toy Library, also known as Playworks, provides daycare services to 26 children aged from birth to 16. The children currently cared for are from age 2 to those not yet attending primary school. The provider is Dumfries Toy Library. On the day of inspection, 22 children were registered, all between the ages of 3 and not yet attending primary school.

The nursery is based in Playworks Children's Centre and is open five days a week during term time. It is located in Dumfries town centre, close to shops, local amenities, and bus routes. Children have access to two playrooms, a corridor, cloakroom, toilet, changing and outdoor facilities. The accommodation is on the upper level and children access outdoors via a stairway taking them to ground level.

The service operates in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate, on Wednesday, 8 May 2024, between 09:00 and 15:30 and Friday, 10 May 2024, between 10:00 and 12:15. A team manager was also present at the inspection as part of the Care Inspectorate's quality assurance processes.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about the service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed practice and daily life;

- spoke with eight children using the service;

- reviewed documents;

- spoke with the manager and staff; and

- Three completed questionnaires were received from parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, caring, and nurturing approaches.
- Management and staff were knowledgeable about each child's needs.
- Children benefitted from connections to their local community.
- The management team and staff worked very well together to create a culture of shared
- responsibility.
- Staff were highly skilled in ensuring positive outcomes for children.
- The staff team had a very good mix of skills, knowledge and experience.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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.

Throughout the inspection, children experienced warm, caring, and nurturing approaches. This supported children to be secure, happy, settled, and confident through having developed positive relationships with staff. Children approached staff for cuddles and invited staff to take part in their play and learning. Parents told us about, "Kind, understanding staff who are dedicated to the children."

Lunchtime was in two sittings; some staff supported children with lunch, and others supported the children still playing. Children were actively involved throughout. Lunchtime helpers were observed setting up lunch alongside staff, taking responsibility, and developing life skills. Staff had reflected on the lunch experience, resulting in it being relaxed and unhurried with children. Staff supported individuals and ensured children received a caring and positive social experience. Children were encouraged to self-serve, pour drinks, and clear away after eating. Children were relaxed and enjoyed the food that was provided. After eating, children were free to access the playroom activities. Fresh water was available throughout the day, and children were encouraged to be hydrated and independently access water stations.

Personal plans supported children's overall wellbeing. "All about me" records provided staff with information about children's health, well-being, and safety needs in collaboration with parents. Both management and staff were knowledgeable about each child's individual needs. They had developed clear strategies and areas of development to support children in having a positive experience while in the nursery. This support contributed to the children's resilience and positive outcomes in their development.

Individual support plans had been developed for children who required additional support. The service had good working relationships with relevant agencies, for example, health visitors and speech and language therapists. As a result, children received the help and support they needed to develop and progress.

Medication was stored securely, and medication records were accurately completed. Accidents and incidents were recorded and appropriately shared with parents. These processes supported children's overall wellbeing and safety. We asked the service to streamline paperwork to make it easier for staff and parents to use.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning.

We observed children who were happy and engaged through leading their own play and learning with support from staff when needed. Staff and management had developed play spaces with consideration to providing experiences to develop children's curiosity, imagination, and creativity. These included both planned and spontaneous experiences, which supported children to develop friendships and work alongside their peers.

Children were supported to develop literacy and numeracy skills. For example, the children enjoyed listening to and telling stories. Children were counting blocks when building towers outside, developing their number knowledge. Parent told us "There is wide range of games, books and toys for kids to explore".

We discovered that children had a voice and could influence the experiences offered by staff who considered and implemented opportunities tailored to the children's needs and interests. This was evident in the online learning journals and in the big book, where children's progress and learning were recorded, evaluated, and documented.

Online learning journals were available for all children, allowing parents to access and comment on their child's progress and activities. Observations were used to gather information about children's needs and plan their progress, and this information was also displayed in the nursery and in personal plans. Planning was based on the children's interests and staff observations of their individual needs. Staff told us "We track the way the children are playing and focus our care on what suits their needs best at that time." This ensured that play and learning through focused observations have helped staff make effective assessments and provide opportunities for reflection and improvement in documenting children's progress and achievements.

All children benefited from access to outdoor play. Children were supported when accessing the outdoors, participating in physical play, digging, riding on bikes, running, and balancing. Staff and children participated in mark making at a table. We saw children problem solving when paper was getting blown from the table, and the children used stones to hold it.

Children benefitted from connections to their local community through visits to the local park, where they were learning and developing their knowledge about nature and the world around them. Visits to the local library to choose books for the nursery supports children to develop a love of books and reading. These links with the community supported children in having a sense of belonging, developing social skills, and learning about people while making connections and learning alongside others.

How good is our setting? 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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

The setting was extremely comfortable and welcoming, and furnishings were of a high standard, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had ample space to play and explore their surroundings. We observed children enjoying a story in the quiet area with a comfortable sofa. The children had sensory toys and resources that supported a calm, quiet space if they needed it. Parents told us, "All the staff are friendly and caring. The preschool itself is always clean and has plenty of different things for the children to do" and "Beautiful and bright."

Spaces reflected children's current interests and curiosities, with appropriate resources and materials to support learning. For example, the children were interested in animals, and there were toy animals and books provided indoors and outdoors. The environment was sensitively structured to take account of all children's interests and stages of development.

Real-life resources such as hair styling equipment and gardening tools supported children's imagination, curiosity, and critical thinking skills. Open-ended materials and 'loose parts' were available indoors and outdoors. We observed children using building blocks outside to build a bridge to balance, climb, and drive the trucks over, which helped them develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Infection control measures were in place throughout the service to minimise the spread of infection. Children were reminded and supported to wash their hands. Staff washed their hands often, role modelling for children and sharing the importance of good hygiene. This helped keep children safe and well.

Staff worked well together to identify and remove risks to children within the setting, both indoors and outdoors. For example, risk assessments were in place, and children helped to write some of them. This supported children in understanding and managing their risks through play.

Children were kept safe through a range of safety measures. For example, attendance records were in place, and information on the blackboard identified how many children were in the setting. A secure door entry system was also in place.

Information about children was stored securely. Management was aware of their responsibilities to ensure confidential information was stored safely.

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.

How good is our leadership? 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 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

A shared vision, values, and aims reflected the aspirations of children, staff, and families within the service. The service put the community at the heart of everything they did, and children and families had been involved in creating the shared vision. This meant that staff knew what was important to them and helped them meet the needs of children and families.

The enthusiastic team was committed to delivering high-quality experiences for children and families. Staff spoke positively about their leadership roles within the service which supported them to develop their skills and work well together as a team to promote positive outcomes for children and families. One example of this was a staff member delivering communication development sessions with children who benefitted from extra support.

The service valued the strong relationships they had built with families. Family and children's views were regularly sought through daily conversations, events, online learning journals, newsletters and evaluation and feedback sheets. The service plans to start tea and toast to support parents to be part of the service and support improvements. This meaningful engagement contributed to a culture of continuous improvement.

Management and staff regularly reviewed their practice to ensure that children experienced high quality care, play and learning. They reflected on what they did well and identified what they could improve. As a result, improvements were evident in the service, such as making the children's targets smaller and more achievable and developing observation skills in staff and parental engagement. Staff used good practice guidance to measure their progress and consider what they needed to develop. This supported them to deliver high quality experiences for children.

Quality assurance processes, such as regular monitoring and self-evaluation, ensured any issues were quickly identified and improved. The manager and seniors collaborated with staff to role-model good practice and reflect on the environment, children's experiences, and staff practice. This ensured positive outcomes for children and families.

How good is our staff team? 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 - 4.3 Staff deployment.

The staff team were warm, welcoming, and caring, and the nursery had a positive ethos. The nursery was appropriately staffed, and staff were suitably deployed throughout the day to meet children's needs. Throughout the service, there was a focus on the children as individuals, ensuring that all staff treated children with respect. Staff worked well as a team, and their different skills and knowledge complimented each other. This resulted in positive interactions with the children. Parents told us: "Kind, understanding staff who are dedicated to the children."

Staff responded to children's requests; for example, when some children wanted to return indoors to play staff supported them to do so. They positioned themselves appropriately for maximum supervision both indoors and outside. Staff communicated well with each other, transitions were planned, and children were familiar with the daily routine. This created an environment that promoted children's rights.

The management team effectively supported staff by spending regular time on the nursery floor. This helped to build positive working relationships and allowed time for professional discussion. Staff were happy, engaged, and shared tasks through working as a team. Staff lunches were organised to minimise disruption, ensuring the day ran smoothly to support the play, care, and learning of the children.

Staff met in the morning to share how they were feeling and any information that needed to be shared. At the end of the day, staff had time to reflect, discuss children individually, and plan for the following day as a team. Staff shared, "We have a huddle (am) and cuddle (pm) at the start and end of each day. This gives staff the opportunity to share ideas, raise concerns, reflect on practice, as well as ensuring continuity with communication between staff". Staff meetings were held regularly to discuss planning, supporting children, what worked well within the nursery, and any areas they wanted to improve. This resulted in a staff team who worked well together and met the children's needs in their care.

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 should ensure all information recorded within the children's personal plans reflect the children's progress in learning and development. In addition the manager should monitor the content of personal plans to ensure they clearly reflect how support will be provided to meet individual children's health, welfare and safety
needs.

This area for improvement was made on 30 November 2018.

Action taken since then
All children had a personal plan in place that clearly detailed children's health, well-fare and safety needs. Next steps were identified and linked to planning, evaluation and observation cycles. Plans were created, reviewed and updated with parents in line with current legislation.

This area for improvment has been met

Previous area for improvement 2

Dumfries Toy Library should further develop their quality assurance processes

This area for improvement was made on 30 November 2018.

Action taken since then
Management have developed robust quality assurance systems. Management are observing, meeting, and supporting staff to develop. Any improvements identified are being actioned, discussed, monitored, and reviewed.

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?	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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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