Longniddry Playgroup
Day Care of Children

Longniddry Church
Elcho Road
Longniddry
Prestonpans
EH32 0LB

Telephone: 07391889736

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 June 2024

Service provided by:
Longniddry Playgroup

Service provider number:
SP2003003137

Service no:
CS2003013363

About the service

Longniddry Playgroup are registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 20 children at any one time aged from 2 years to not yet attending primary school. The care service may operate term time only between the hours of 09:15 and 12:15 on a Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday and Friday.

The playgroup is situated in the village of Longniddry, East Lothian. They use the local church hall which is in a quiet residential area. They have access to a hall, toilet facilities, kitchen area for the preparation of snack and a secure garden for children's play.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 30 May 2024 between 9:00 and 13:00. The inspection was carried out by an 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 several children while they played
- reviewed comments made by 10 parents through our questionnaire
- spoke with the manager, staff and the chair of the committee
- observed the experiences of children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

• Children were having fun in their play and learning.

• The procedures for personal planning needed to include children's support needs.

• Children's emotional security was very well supported by kind and knowledgeable staff.

•The outdoor environment provided an exciting and safe place for children's play.

• To ensure ongoing improvement systems for self-evaluation and quality assurance needed to be developed by the manager, committee and staff.

• The staff team were motivated and skilled. Parents spoke highly of their professionalism and approachability.

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?	4 - 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? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 1.1 - Care and support.

Staff welcomed children and their families warmly when they arrived and most children were excited to start their play. Children who needed more support to come into the group setting were well supported by staff, who took time to offer reassurance and comfort. One parent commented "My child is shy when entering and always looks for a member of staff and there is always someone available to support them."

The opportunities provided, as a child's first experience of group care, were positive. Staff knew children in their care well and provided them with many opportunities to be independent, develop skills, have fun and begin to make relationships with their peers.

Basic information had been gathered about individual children but this was not being used effectively. There were no recordings of support strategies for children who would benefit from them. We discussed with the manager the need to gather a range of information that would assist staff to support children. Where needed support plans should be recorded. This would enable staff to assess what progress was being made and evaluate if changes were needed to the support offered (see area for improvement 1.)

Children went indoors for snack It provided children with an opportunity to begin to learn about social skills and healthy eating habits. Staff needed to ensure that the snack process was well supervised and that children remained seated whilst eating as they were excited and ready to go back outdoors. We have signposted the manager to some current good practice to enable them to develop the snack procedures further.

Opportunities to support children's physical health and wellbeing were provided through the sustained use of the garden as the main play area. Children revelled in the physical play opportunities using the equipment with confidence and developing a connection with nature through planting, growing and feeding the birds. Parents told us that the outdoor area was used in a sustained and consistent manner. Comments included "My child loves the outdoors, activities (e.g. painting, splashing water etc.)" "The majority of play is outside, there are so many toys and activities. The communication with playgroup upon starting was great so we knew what appropriate clothing to send him in for outdoor play." and "The playgroup is predominantly outdoors, even in colder weather. We are just advised to wrap them up."

Quality indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were having fun and were engaged in their learning. The play area was set out to offer a rich and varied learning environment. Core activities such as role play, messy play with sand, water and mud, opportunities for mark making and looking at books were available. Parents comments included "My child has the opportunity to play with a variety of toys, engage in fun activities indoors and outdoors such as painting and arts and crafts. They have come home having learnt new words related to the activities they have been doing which is great to hear." and "There is always a new, seasonal craft or messy play on offer which always looks engaging and fun. The garden has been updated with a pirate ship, digger land and bird feeder and bug hotel, all of which my child has really enjoyed playing with.

Children were busy and played by themselves, with their friends and in small groups. Staff supported children well to play together or alongside each other which helped them to develop the skill of more social and co-operative play.

Planning for children's play experiences was in place and focused on children's interests and intentional promotions such as seasons or special occasions. Patterns of repetitive play, schemas, were used by some children. We suggested that staff could increase their knowledge about this learning style and incorporate it in their planning to evidence how it was supported and extended.

Children's learning was identified in the planning for play and children's learning journals. The journal was very well maintained and provided parents with a good overview of what their child had taken part in and the opportunities that were provided at playgroup. In addition the manager used the Facebook page to show parents what activities had been provided for their child that day.

Areas for improvement

1.
To ensure that children receive individualised care and support throughout the setting, information which has been gathered about children and their needs, should be used to develop appropriate strategies to meet children's needs and support developmental progress. These strategies should be shared with all staff to ensure a consist approach to care and support.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15)

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

The playgroup provided most of their service outdoors. Parents dropped their children off at the outdoor area where there was information about who staff were and what was happening in the playgroup. Staff ensured that they were present to welcome children providing a welcoming environment.

The play resources and equipment provided children with a developmentally appropriate area to play. There was enough space for children's play and they could take part in a range of physical activities without getting in each others way and disrupting those who were doing quieter or more sedentary activities.

The quality of resources was very good. New resources such as the tepee and pirate ship were well used by children who used them for imaginative play. The small playhouse had been developed into a well resourced home play area and children played for significant periods of time in the puddles, from rain the night before, and the areas for digging. To further enhance the layout of the play area we asked the manager to consider introducing a comfy area for children to look at the books and sit with staff to listen to stories.

Staff ensured that areas for play were safe. There were good procedures used for getting in and out of the

main building when children went for snack or to use the toilet. The exits from the outdoor play area were safe and well monitored. There were risk assessments to ensure that risks were considered. These needed to be reviewed and updated.

Procedures for infection prevention and control were in place to support children's health and wellbeing. Handwashing was carried out before snack and consideration had been given to how infection prevention and control could be supported when children were outdoors.

Children's information was kept securely by being locked in a cabinet. There was a good understanding of general data protection guidelines. Permissions were in place for the sharing of photos on social media, which protected children's privacy.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

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

The manager of the playgroup had a clear vision for the setting. This was shared by staff who all valued the importance of outdoor opportunities and a positive group care introduction for children. We have suggested that this vision, values and aims should be formalised to ensure that parents and the wider community know the aspirations the playgroup had for children.

The manager could discuss with us several areas where evaluations had been made which had resulted in changes and improvement. The increased use of outdoor play was one area where changes had impacted on positive outcomes for children. The manager and staff now needed to develop a system to evidence self-evaluation. We have suggested the use of 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to assist with benchmarking (see area for improvement 1.)

The manager provided clear and consistent leadership to staff. They were organised and had undertaken some processes to audit and monitor procedures. An understanding of responsibilities in relation to being a regulated service and an understanding of Care Inspectorate procedures would increase the capacity to meet regulatory duties.

Parents received a good range of information about what was happening in the service and the service that their children received. The Facebook page was used to share information and photos of activities and events. The committee should continue to actively encouraged to be part of the life of the playgroup and take part in the processes for self-evaluation. This would enable parents to influence the development of the service.

The manager and staff were very child focussed and the voice of the child was clear in the provision of play activities and the support from staff that individual children received.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children are cared for in a service where improvement is continuous. The manager, staff and committee should develop a proportionate system for the self-evaluation of the playgroup. Findings from self-evaluation should be used to develop an improvement plan.

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

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 4.3 - Staff deployment

The staff team provided a welcoming environment for children. They displayed warmth and kindness, and recognised the importance of nurturing, warm and responsive attachment. The service was appropriately staffed throughout the session which enabled a good level of care and support for children.

Parents spoke positively about staff and made comments including:
"Members of staff are very friendly, approachable and caring - and are always carrying out varying activities with the children throughout the session. The team also ensured that they offered a structured settling in process to the playgroup, and ensured they understood (verbally and form completion) more about our child to support them joining."
"They have very consistent staff members who are rarely off. They are always in abundance to cuddle, hold hands or comfort a child so this to me proves they're in correct ratio. They have at times asked for support in ratio for parties etc and always ensure they are well covered."
"Staff are honest, trustworthy, professional and have built a trusting and kind relationship with my child."
and
"The ratio of staff to children seems great and I feel confident that all children will be kept an eye on."

Teamwork across the session was very good. There were no gaps in care as staff stepped in and helped where needed and communication between staff members was very good. Staff were respectful of children and each other. They provided positive role models to those they were caring for. Consistency of staff and how they interacted with children helped children feel secure. Staff's sense of fun and enthusiasm made the playgroup experience fun and enjoyable for children.

Staff brought a good mixture of skills and experience to their role. As a new team a programme of professional development had not yet been devised but this was planned and would be influenced by the staff appraisal process. There were team meetings and the manager planned to introduce opportunities for staff to discuss and reflect on their practice at these meetings. Sharing of some of the current good practice documents which were available would also take place to help prompt professional practice discussions.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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