

Perth Autism Support Day Care of Children

28-30 Market Street
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Telephone: 01738 451 081

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 October 2021

Service provided by:
Perth Autism Support a Scottish
Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Service provider number:
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CS2019374248

About the service

Perth Autism Support is a registered charity, supporting children under the age of 19 who have been diagnosed with autism, and their families. They offer a broad range of holiday, after school and weekend activities to support children in developing skills and peer friendships. The service operates from their premises in the centre of Perth.

The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 5 July 2019 and is registered to provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 24 children and young people from the age of three. Within this number, young people age from 16 to 19 may also attend the service.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting It Right for Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. These are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

What people told us

We provided the service with an online questionnaire to share with parents and carers using the service. Twenty parents responded with 16 parents saying they were very happy with the quality of care and support their child received. Some of the comments made were:

"I am very impressed with the different activities and support staff can provide to help our daughter with the challenges ASD puts in her socially as she is going through her teenage years."

"The staff are highly knowledgeable, professional and approachable while providing a high level of care and support."

"My child is often reluctant to leave the house, including attending school. The fact that he regularly and willingly goes to PAS activities says it all."

"Perth autism support have been a huge help to our family. Our child greatly enjoys attending activities."

"I have two sons with autism, both of whom attend Perth Autism Support, a fabulous service with trained autism practitioners who actually understand their needs. I can't rate them highly enough."

During the inspection we observed the children engaged in activities and found them to be happy and confident in their surroundings and with the staff. We did not approach the children to ask about their views of the service.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. We discussed how the manager could continue to develop these to support ongoing improvement.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support

5 - Very Good

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|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Quality of environment | 4 - Good |
| Quality of staffing | 5 - Very Good |
| Quality of management and leadership | 5 - Very Good |

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support has been evaluated as very good . We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Staff interactions with children were positive, warm and caring. We saw staff use sensitive interactions to encourage children to participate, offering alternatives when needed such as moving to a quieter area when children were feeling overwhelmed. Children were having fun and were enabled to build relationships with their peers.

Comprehensive sharing of information had supported the development of communication passports for each child, detailing how they communicated and what support strategies worked for them. Staff developed lesson plans which included children's learning targets, these were reviewed daily and outcomes shared with parents. Staff knew the children well and they used the information available to provide the right help at the right time. As a result, children were supported to achieve their full potential.

The service had developed strong links with families. Staff recognised the importance of building relationships based on trust, They took time to learn about individual children's circumstances and communication with families was tailored to suit them. One parent commented that the service was the only one she was "confident takes fully into consideration her additional needs". Children's human rights were protected by staff who fully understood and accepted their needs.

Staff came together after each session to evaluate what had gone well and where improvements were needed to support children's individual progress. They focussed on children's feelings and behaviours, what influenced them and what strategies could be put in place to support individual children. As a result, children experienced care and support that was adapted to meet their changing needs.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures. They spoke confidently about what they would do if they had any concerns. The service had increased the number of child protection officers from one to four since their last inspection. Staff were able to contact one of the relevant people at all times. This ensured that children were kept safe from harm.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The quality of environment has been evaluated as good. We found that there were a number of important strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

The service's main setting was bright and welcoming. Children could access different rooms set out with a variety of resources appropriate for their needs. The ICT room benefited from sufficient equipment to allow all children attending to access resources at the same time. Other rooms offered experiences that children could choose from such as cooking and baking, craft or energetic play. We discussed with the manager and provider reintroducing soft furnishings to give children somewhere cosy and warm to relax. Children were supported to access play and learning opportunities that had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing and happiness.

The service made good use of local facilities. On the day of this inspection the service was operating from Letham Community Centre. Younger children were enjoying a pirate themed session in the morning and older children were taking part in tie dying activities in the afternoon. Staff provided areas within the centre for time for one-to-one quiet time with appropriate resources for children. A 'calm bag' was available with toys for children to play with when they needed time away from the main activity. Children were able to direct their own play, supported by staff who understood their needs.

A clear programme of activities was shared with parents in advance of booking so they could make informed choices for their children. Risk assessments were in place for each venue used, these were available for all staff and were in place on site on the day of inspection. This meant that possible risk of harm was reduced for children, parents and staff.

The setting's registered premises did not have access to an outside area, however the use of community facilities meant that children experienced sessions which were partially or completely based outdoors. We discussed this with the provider who advised us that the service had secured new premises which will include an outside sensory garden. This means that children attending future sessions will benefit from outdoor play and learning which will have a positive impact on their experiences.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The quality of staffing been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

Systematic processes were in place to ensure all staff had the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and values to provide good quality childcare and education. All staff had required pre-employment checks and were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

A high staff to child ratio meant that staff had the time to respond to each child's needs. The staff team communicated clearly and respectfully with each other throughout the inspection. Children received individualised support in a warm and relaxed atmosphere. This supported children to feel valued.

A thorough induction programme was in place for new staff. Staff completed core training and further training more specific to the service, such as practical understanding of autism awareness. They were encouraged to reflect on the training they had undertaken, considering the impact it had for children using the service. We found that staff were confident in their roles as a result and children experienced care from staff who had the necessary skills and knowledge to support them.

Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of how children develop and learn. They were given the opportunity to meet, together and with the manager, to discuss individual children's progress and to develop additional support strategies for children when needed. This meant that children benefited from high quality care and support.

Effective support and supervision procedures were in place. Staff received regular feedback and were able to reflect on their practice and identify further training needs. Staff told us they felt very well supported by the management team and that the support and training they received helped them to feel confident in their roles. Children received care from a staff team that was highly skilled, respected and valued as a result.

We saw that staff undertook their roles with a sense of compassion and fun. One parent told us their child said the staff were "nice, kind and full of fun". Children felt at ease with the staff team who recognised the importance of fun in children's play to take learning forward.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Management and leadership has been evaluated as very good. We found that there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

The service has developed a coherent strategy which set out its vision and approach. Outcomes focused on both children and young people accessing the service and their families and carers, as well as services working in partnership with the service. The views of children and families were actively sought to inform the development of the service.

Effective quality assurance processes were in place. The service undertook consultation with children, parents, carers and staff regularly, using a variety of methods to suit communication needs. Improvements put in place were shared via 'you said, we did' posters in the setting and on social media. This meant that children benefited from a culture of continuous improvement.

Evaluations took place after every session. This gave all staff the opportunity to reflect on what had gone well, discuss areas for improvement and identify further support required for individual children. Staff were encouraged to contribute towards these meetings as the manager recognised the importance of including the whole staff team. Staff felt valued and were motivated as their opinions were listened to.

The management team were committed to developing and sustaining a quality service. Their strategic approach shared transparent information about funding and income opportunities. Children experienced care and support that had them at the centre, from a service dedicated to maximising positive outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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