



A FIFE COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROVIDER

# A Parents' and Carers' Guide

FERRYFIELD PLAYGROUP, CASTLEHILL, CUPAR, FIFE. KY15 4HA  
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## ABOUT FERRYFIELD PLAYGROUP

Ferryfield has been established as a Playgroup in Cupar for over 30 years. It began life with an idea from Isobel Blair who ran the first playgroup in her home at Ferryfield. The Playgroup moved with its name to the present building at Castlehill in 1976. We now see those first children bringing their own children to playgroup. Quite an achievement!

Ferryfield is an under-5 Playgroup and accommodates children from age 2 years 6 months to 5 years. Our opening times are: Monday - Friday 9.15 - 11.45. We are planning to extend our sessions to include Wraparound Care from April 2006. We are also registered to open for afternoon sessions when numbers allow.

We have excellent accommodation (all at ground level with easy access for prams, wheelchairs etc.) comprising two large playrooms, child designed toilets, and kitchen facilities. Access to Playgroup whilst the children are in attendance is via a secure entry system.

As our building is within the Social Work car park, we have safe & convenient drop off / pick up areas. However we do ask all parents and carers to park thoughtfully giving consideration to other users. Social Work employees need access to their cars throughout the day.

### WHY PLAYGROUP?

It is important for children to meet and play with others. It develops confidence and social skills, and is an enjoyable experience. In preparation for nursery, young children benefit from a little more independence from their parents and experiencing a little more structure to their day.

Playgroup is a safe and supervised environment for children to learn through play.

Most of all, Playgroup is FUN.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAYGROUP?

- **QUALIFIED STAFF** - staff hold appropriate qualifications as required by the Scottish Social Services Council and attend regular training / information sessions to keep up to date.
- **QUALITY ASSURANCE** - whilst the emphasis at Playgroup is to have fun, the continuous monitoring by Care Commission, Fife Council and HM Inspectorate ensures the same curriculum provision as found in Nursery. We also carry out regular evaluations of our service.
- **PARENTS' INPUT IS ALWAYS WELCOME** - Playgroup gives parents / carers the opportunity to be involved in their child's early years experience. There are many ways you can be involved.
- **MAKING FRIENDS** - children make new friends at Playgroup and parents and carers also have the opportunity to meet other families. Many friendships formed through Playgroup involvement are long lasting.
- **FAMILY SUPPORT** - If you have any issues or concerns, Playgroup staff are happy to discuss these with you immediately before or after each session. We can access any information or support services you may require.

## BIG LOTTERY FUNDING

Thanks to a £10,000 grant from the Big Lottery, we have refurbished our large playroom and purchased new tables, screens and equipment to enable our setting and curriculum to meet the recommendations of Fife Council and HMI.

## NEW FROM EARLY 2006!

Each morning from Tuesday to Friday, the session will begin with a short "Sticky Kids" work out in the Theatre Block hall. These fun sessions will keep Ferryfield's curriculum in line with Scottish Executive recommendations of 20 minutes physical exercise each day. Parents are welcome to join in too!!

**Wraparound Care** - we plan to have Wraparound Care in the form of either a lunch club or 'early bird' drop off after the Spring Break.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF FERRYFIELD PLAYGROUP

1. To create a safe and stimulating environment in which children feel happy and secure
2. To create opportunities for play
3. To support and extend children's learning and development through play
4. To enable children to develop at their own rate
5. To apply appropriate methods of observing, recording and assessing children's development and learning
6. To provide a balanced and relevant range of learning experiences
7. To encourage the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of children
8. To recognise that children's' play should be encouraged by informed and understanding adults and not be directed or restricted unnecessarily
9. To promote the welfare of children
10. To encourage positive attitudes to self and others and develop confidence and self-esteem
11. To encourage children to explore, appreciate and respect their environment
12. To provide opportunities to stimulate interest and imagination
13. To encourage children to have a positive approach to living in a multi-cultural society
14. To extend children's ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of ways
15. To respect parents as the prime educators of their children

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Ferryfield is a parent-run organisation and every parent is asked to contribute to making it a success by taking part. You can take part in the following ways:

Committee - ALL Playgroups must have a committee in order to stay open. At Ferryfield most of the Committee's workload is carried out by our Admin. Manager but the Committee are responsible for the way in which the group is run. This sounds scary but most often is an enjoyable experience.

Rota Duty - A system is in place where you are required to assist during the playgroup session approximately 2 to 3 times per term. These duties can be carried out by a nominated family member or childminder.

If you are unable to do your duty and do not have another family member to cover for you, you can either swap with another parent or ask a parent on our "standby" list to cover for you - there will be a charge for this cover and also if a relief playworker has to be called in.

If you are pregnant or have a new baby, you will not be asked to do duty from 6 weeks before and until 12 weeks after baby is born. Please advise the Rota Secretary.

Fund Raising - this is an essential part of the running of all Playgroups. Fundraising events are normally held each term and the proceeds are used to provide resources for the children or are put towards running costs. Any fundraising ideas are welcome.

You are welcome to spend time at Playgroup sharing any skills or talents you may have.

## FEES

Playgroup is funded partly by the collection of fees and partly by Fife Council funding received for eligible children.

Fees are set at the AGM each June for the following year and for 2006/2007 will be:

- For children aged 2 years 6 months until they receive funding fees are £2.50 per session (including snack).
- For children eligible for free places (see below) - 20p per session to cover snack.
- To cover the cost of producing a PLP for each child, £4 will be added to the first bill after your child starts playgroup.

We also have a cleaning fee of £0.75 per month to help towards costs.

A fee slip will be given to you at the start of each month (each term for funded children). Please pay by cheque if possible as this is the most secure way of collecting fees and keeping records.

Children who turn 3 before 1<sup>st</sup> March will be eligible for a free place from the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. We are aware that at this point you will be offered a place at the local school Nursery, but you can choose for your child to remain at Playgroup until the summer holidays and then have their pre-school year at Nursery. Whatever you choose, your child's place will be funded until they go to school. Ferryfield is a Fife Council Partnership Provider and is obliged to provide the same curriculum as council nurseries.

You will be offered a maximum of 5 sessions per week. It is up to you how many sessions you want your child to attend. Please note, however, that our funding claims must be in by specific dates. Any changes requested after these dates may not be funded and fees could be charged.

When children cannot attend their nominated sessions for any reason it is requested that playleaders be informed by 09.30 a.m.

## **SAFETY**

We would be grateful if you would provide your child with soft shoes or slippers for playgroup.

Please ensure your child does not bring toys or sweets to playgroup.

Children cannot be left at playgroup before 09.15 a.m. and must be collected no later than 11.45 for insurance purposes.

A fire drill is practised once every month.

Routine safety checks and risk assessments are carried out at appropriate intervals.

Entry and exit to the premises are controlled by an electronic entry system. Child safety gates are in position inside the front door and at the kitchen door. Please ensure that you close them after use.

All Playleaders have current First Aid Certificates.

Adult: child ratios are set by the Care Commission and are adhered to at all times. These ratios include staff and rota parents.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

Your child's well being is paramount and we have a duty to report any concerns regarding their care and welfare to the appropriate authorities. Staff have undertaken child protection training.

## **DISCIPLINE**

No form of punishment is used in Ferryfield Playgroup. Staff introduce the children into a caring environment and encourage them to consider the effect of their actions on others. We aim to help the children to develop a sense of self-discipline and consideration for others.

## PLAYGROUP POLICIES

Playgroup has all the written policies and procedures required by the Care Commission. These include:

- Admissions & Settling In
- Behaviour Management
- Child Protection
- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- Curriculum
- Equal Opportunities
- Health & Safety
- Infection Control
- Outings
- Parental Involvement
- Special Needs
- Staff Development
- Sun Awareness
- Whistle Blowing

Copies of these policies are held in Playgroup. It is important that all parents/carers take time to read them. If you would like to have your own copies of the policies, please speak to the Admin. Manager who will arrange this for you.



We hope that you and your child will enjoy your time at Ferryfield Playgroup and leave with fond memories and valued friendships.

Playgroup is a child-centred environment run by parents for their children. We value input from parents as this ensures playgroup continues to be a positive experience. At playgroup parents can be directly involved with their child's learning, possibly your last chance before they start school.

Coming to playgroup enables each child to establish an identity for him or herself and gain increased confidence and a better understanding of the world around them.

Please be supportive of your playgroup. Help encourage and ensure its continuing success.

We hope this handbook has given you a helpful insight into playgroup. Do not hesitate to contact any staff member or committee member if you have any further questions.

We look forward to meeting you.