

Low Port Primary Out Of School Club Day Care of Children

Low Port Primary School
Blackness Road
Linlithgow
EH49 7HZ

Telephone: 01506 842 060

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 25 August 2016

Service provided by:
Low Port Out Of School Club

Service provider number:
SP2003003101

Care service number:
CS2003013323

About the service

Low Port Out of School Club was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service provides before and after school care during term-time and a holiday care service to a maximum of 48 children of primary school age up to S2 secondary school. The service regularly has a waiting list and had recently varied their registration increasing numbers of children able to attend, to help meet the demand from families.

Low Port Out of School Club is run by a voluntary group of parents who form the committee.

The service operates from Low Port Primary School in the town of Linlithgow. It is conveniently located close to public transport, local shops and supermarket. Children have use of the school playgrounds and have easy access to extensive local parkland known as, 'The Peel'.

Aims of the service included the provision of "high quality childcare" and "stimulating and creative activities for children"

At this inspection we looked at the areas for improvement identified as a result of the previous inspection. We report our findings using all 4 quality themes.

We carried out a quality audit, to gather information relating to 'How Good Is Our School Aged Childcare'. The audit focussed on the quality of children and young people's play experiences and how their rights to play and have fun are promoted and protected.

The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework - SHANARRI, Playwork Principles and Article 31 underpin a list of outcome-focused questions developed for inspectors to work from when inspecting. The information gathered will form the basis of an end of year report in 2017, along with information on service demand for school aged childcare throughout Scotland. Further information can be found at The Hub at www.careinspectorate.com.

What people told us

There were 33 children present during the course of the inspection. We observed the children playing indoors and out. They were enthusiastic about the range of activities that were available to them and talked enthusiastically with their friends and the staff about what they planned to do that day. We talked with a minimum of 15 children and all of them told us that they enjoyed coming to the club.

'This club is brilliant - I never expected bouncy castles and things! I only come in the holidays.'

All of the children we spoke with agreed that they loved coming to the club and talked excitedly together about the wide range of activities and outings that they enjoyed during their time there. They spoke to us about 'going to the Peel' and the secret gardens nearby for adventurous outdoor play. They talked about playing hide and seek, climbing trees, jumping over the burn and making campfires. It was clear that they enjoyed being outdoors and creating their own play using the natural surroundings and resources readily available to them in these areas.

We heard from children about their visits to the nearby supermarket where they learned all about food production through the 'farm to fork' initiative. They enthused about the recent visits from outside specialist agencies, for example one organisation which brought in a range of different animals/reptiles, giving children opportunities to learn about and be 'hands on' with them. Children also enjoyed physical fitness programmes, sports and activities again presented by an outside agency.

'Messy day' had been a clear favourite with all the children. They told us:

"You get really messy. We put out tarpaulins and had flour and water and paint and bubbles! We have things in the paddling pools like beans and cereal! I didn't go into the beans at first because they are really squishy under your feet and go between your toes."

"I fell in the cereal and it was sticking to my head!"

Six parents gave us feedback through our questionnaires. We spoke with 7 parents in a focus group during the inspection. Without exception they were delighted with club and the experiences their children had. They confirmed all that the children had told us and most said that their children wanted to come to the club and not be collected early in case they missed something that was happening. Comments included:

"Excellent out of school service. Lots of opportunities for varied activities. Lots of opportunities for play. Plenty space inside and out so children get lots of exercise. My daughter loves attending...gets very annoyed if I pick her up early. Friendly and committed staff."

"Brilliant service."

Self assessment

The service submitted a fully completed self assessment document to us before we carried out our inspection.

The service identified what they thought the service did well, detailed some areas for improvement and any changes they had planned.

They told us how children and parents were able to be involved and have a say in the running of the service.

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	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found that the service had made ongoing improvements to the quality of care and support children received in the club.

All the children we spoke with during this inspection looked forward to their time at the club. They were clearly enthusiastic about the activities and experiences on offer and they often wanted to attend even on days when their parents were not working, so that they did not miss activities. A continued strength of this service was the opportunity for children to experience a wide range of outdoor play activities which they loved. Their time spent outdoors in the school grounds or in the park meant not only great opportunities for healthy physical exercise outdoors, but opportunities for children to learn and develop new skills, to support each other and to experience challenge and risk-taking in their play.

Discussions with the staff team evidenced that their work with children was soundly based on recognised play work principles. Staff clearly had a very good understanding of children's rights to play that was freely chosen, created and developed by them. They clearly recognised the impact of their intervention in children's play and made good decisions, considering the outcomes for the children overall.

We saw some very good examples of healthy eating initiatives in the club. Children enjoyed and learned a lot from planning themed snacks. Tasting a range of foods associated with different countries provided very good opportunities for them to learn about these countries, their foods and traditions. Alongside the club's links with a local supermarket and children's exciting farm to fork experiences, children developed interests in food, food production and healthy eating.

We asked the manager to consider better routines for meals during the holiday club, for example, timing, grouping and presentation of meals and staff involvement, with particular focus on monitoring and managing allergies.

Since the last inspection, staff had introduced new ways for parents to be much more informed and involved in the service, for example, parents found the information and photographs shared with them, using social media very positive. A comment from one child who wanted her 'mum to be able to play' prompted staff to organise a parents' open evening where they experienced typical club activities. This included rugby; blindfold food tasting; mystery feely box and making popsicles using bananas and marshmallows. All parents gave very good feedback and appreciated the opportunities to share in their children's experiences.

As a result of the previous inspection, staff had reviewed and improved their management of children's healthcare arrangements. This included ensuring detailed information was held on file, that medication was on-site and available for children who required it and more secure storage of medication. We have had some discussions with the manager linked to policies, recording and review which will lead to further improvements in the management of healthcare. Please see quality theme 4.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of the environment very good.

In order to meet growing demand, the service recently varied their registration, increasing the number of children able to attend.

The indoor and outdoor environments were spacious and used to their full potential so that children had very good opportunities to play together in small or large groups. During the course of our inspection, they enjoyed a range of creative arts and crafts, games, construction and sports. Staff encouraged children's choice and supported them as necessary to create and develop their own play situations. The school's gym hall and library were regularly used by children to extend the range of play opportunities available, for example physical exercise, games, sports and dance activities. The older children could, if they wished have some space of their own in the library, so that they could chat together, use their tablets or listen to music. This respected their maturity, growing independence and level of responsibility.

Outdoor areas provided fantastic play opportunities. Children's regular use of the designated outdoor area and the nearby parklands and secret garden meant that children regularly played outdoors and enjoyed leading and constructing their own play. They experienced risk and challenge, when climbing trees, den-building, making campfires and jumping the burn. Staff understood risk-benefit principles of play and worked knowledgeably with children to support their play in different ways taking account of the levels of support / intervention necessary to ensure safety and well-being.

Resources in the club were plentiful and children had a good balance overall of freely chosen activities which might or might not include play workers.

Safety and security arrangements in the club were overall well-managed, meaning that children were safe and secure during their time in the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of staffing as very good.

Since the last inspection, there had been some changes to the staff team. A new manager and depute had been appointed, both of whom were undertaking further qualifications to support them in their roles. The compliment of the staff team had been increased to cater for the additional children attending. Overall, we observed that the changes had been very positive and that all staff were adjusting well to their new roles. They were becoming familiar with changes, such as assuming increased responsibility for developing the quality of play in the setting through planning and evaluation.

Many staff were undertaking qualifications at different levels, and were supported by the management committee in their personal development. This broadened their knowledge, skills and understanding of working with the children in this setting. Staff all recently attended a play work conference and had clearly been very motivated and enthused by this. We found clear evidence of how this training had positively influenced their work practice and children's experiences.

Staff supervision had been established to help staff in their roles, support their work practice and encourage their on-going personal development. We considered this was still at an early stage but confident that benefits would be evident over time. The manager to date had not had her initial support/supervision but we were made aware that this was imminent.

Our discussions with staff were overall very positive. Staff knew the children in their care very well and relationships were well-established. In turn, children told us that staff were fun and that they joined in with their activities when asked. We found that staff had respect for each other as individuals recognising each member's skills, strengths and abilities. This impacted positively in growing the strength of the team and contributed to the overall ethos and positive atmosphere in the service.

The parents we spoke with recognised the strengths and abilities of the staff team and thought they had a good mix of skills and experience to care for their children. This gave them confidence in the staff team, all of whom they found helpful and approachable.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We graded the service as good in this quality statement.

The service had worked hard to achieve the improvements asked of them as a result of the previous inspection. The combined efforts of the new committee, new management arrangements along with a renewed commitment from the experienced and enthusiastic staff team had impacted very positively on the overall quality of the service. Given the amount of change experienced at almost every level in the organisation since the last inspection, this was a significant achievement.

The new committee had enlisted the support of agencies whose role it was to support voluntary sector groups. Through this they gathered information and developed a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities as members of a management committee. They had developed and formalised their meetings to deal with on-going business and make decisions about the organisation and management issues.

One committee member had been appointed to support the manager in her role and acted as a liaison in matters linking to regulation and quality improvement. Another had been appointed to provide support / supervision to the manager. Effectively, this had created opportunities for better communication, shared responsibilities and joint working. Our detailed discussions with the manager and committee representative evidenced close working relationships and a joint approach to quality improvement which was clearly impacting across all aspects of the service.

The views of children and families using the service were regularly sought and used to evaluate the quality of the service and to try out new ideas. Communication with parents had improved considerably with the creation of a new website, regular newsletters and use of social media. We advised the service to register with the information commissioner's office for specific information and support with data protection.

We have asked the manager to make some further improvements for each child with identified healthcare needs and also to ensure healthcare plans are reviewed with parents input, whenever a change is noted and at least 6 monthly. Specifically, additional details should include,

- a) signs and symptoms to look out for that may require staff intervention
- b) protocol and actions to be taken if staff intervention is needed.

This is to fully support children's safety, health and well-being during their time in the service.

See recommendation 1.

The manager agreed to download the most recent medication guidance, available on our website: hub.careinspectorate.com and to use this to further review the club's overall healthcare procedures.

We had detailed discussion about the club's dropping off and collection procedures and found that the club had been very flexible in their approach, for example offering to open the service earlier to accommodate families who needed to drop their children earlier in the morning. Although parents did not take up this offer, the matter of early drop-off was now resolved.

There were still some issues regarding collection of children from the service and a lack of clarity about the club's position on children being allowed to make their own way home. We discussed with the manager and committee representative, the implications of risk and children's safety and well-being. Accordingly, we have asked the service to consult with parents and to review their policies regarding collection arrangements. Parents/carers should be informed about any decisions reached.

We reminded the service to regularly access the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Social Services Council and Scottish Out of School Care websites, to help them be informed and up to date on matters pertaining to all aspects of their service. We signposted them also to the Care Inspectorate hub, where they could see for themselves the vast range of information and good practice documents available to them.

Overall, we concluded that the service had made significant improvements since the last inspection and that they demonstrated a positive approach to further development based on self-evaluation and setting their agendas for on-going improvement.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service should further improve their protocols for managing children's healthcare needs as follows:
 - a) record in children's health plans the signs and symptoms that may occur and prompt staff intervention.
 - b) clearly detail protocol and actions to be taken if staff intervention is needed.
 - c) ensure healthcare plans are reviewed with parents whenever a change occurs and at least 6 monthly.

SSI/2011/210 Regulation 5(1)(a) Personal Plans.

**National Care Standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3.**

Grade: 4 - 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

Date	Type	Gradings
9 Sep 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
1 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
23 Aug 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
22 Sep 2008	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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