

## Smart Cookies After School Club Day Care of Children

The Life Care Centre  
2 Cheyne Street  
Stockbridge  
Edinburgh  
EH4 1JB

Telephone: 0131 343 0940

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 20 March 2017

**Service provided by:**  
Smart Cookies Kids Activity Clubs  
Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2015012531

**Care service number:**  
CS2015338897

## About the service

Smart Cookies After School Club operates from premises in the The Life Care Centre, in the Stockbridge area of Edinburgh. The service has access to a large play room with attached kitchen area and nearby toilet facilities

The service is registered to provide a service to provide a care service to a maximum of 45 children at any one time of primary school age.

The aims of the service include the following:

"We aim to offer a child-centred after school care and holiday club to primary school age children.

We aim to provide play opportunities that are both fun and challenging by assessing the play needs of children and meeting their different needs.

We will promote the dignity, privacy, choice, safety, potential, and diversity of all children, their families and carers, and staff of the club.

We aim to provide support and care to individual children when required and as appropriate.

We will encourage children and their families to help us plan and deliver the service."

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service.

We want to ensure that they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer healthier lives.

We check that services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by the Scottish Government GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people – and what they can do to improve. GIRFEC is being woven into all policy, procedure, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected responsible and included. They are often known as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

## What people told us

During the inspection we spent some time chatting with and observing children in the service. The children appeared happy in the care of staff. Comments from children included "I think the food is ok, it has to be healthy for us." "I do like it here but I wish we could play football more often" and "I think it's good because I can meet my friends and I can have time to play with them before I go home."

Before the inspection took place we sent ten Care Standard Questionnaires to the service to distribute to families using the service. Three of these were returned to us before the inspection took place. One of the respondents told us they strongly agreed and two with the statement "Overall I am happy with the quality of care my child receives in this service. Additional comments included :

"We have used Smart Cookies for over a year and have no complaints with the quality of care. The staff are friendly, professional and obviously concerned for the children's welfare."

"Our observations are that on some occasions when there are lots of children in the club there is limited space for children to have a quiet place if they need it."

"Staff make efforts to provide a variety and range of activities each day. Staff set clear boundaries for children and seem to be able to keep 30+ children happy and harmonious, no mean feat at the end of a tiring school day."

On the day of the inspection we spoke to a sample of parents as they picked up their children. Parents told us they and their children were happy with the service provided. They found staff were helpful and welcoming.

## Self assessment

We received a self assessment before the inspection took place. We found that the service had not yet been able to meet all of the aspirations of the self assessment.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	2 - Weak

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Parents who returned our questionnaires and those we spoke to during the inspection told us they felt they were well informed about the activities their children took part in. They felt that their comments on the service were welcomed and valued as a way of improving the service.

We found that staff were kind and caring in their interaction with the children in their care. They had developed positive supportive relationships with children. It was apparent that they wanted children's after school experience to be fun and relaxed.

Children were encouraged to get involved in discussion about the activities they took part in and to think about the importance of listening to one another and being kind and caring in their interactions. Staff's interactions with one another offered children an effective model of considerate and respectful behaviour.

Project work with children had included looking at keeping safe, the importance of healthy food, regular active play and good hygiene in keeping their bodies healthy. These gave children opportunities to develop life skills.

Staff were able to discuss the care and support needs of children however we found no evidence that information gathered about children's care and support needs was recorded and reviewed at least once every six months in order to ensure it remained relevant to their care and support needs. We made a requirement about this. (See requirement one).

Staff picking up children from their respective schools and when going on outings did not have their medical or emergency contact details. Staff told us were instructed to phone head office where any calls would be forwarded appropriately. The provider assured us that manning the office phone was their number one priority however we remained concerned. We made a requirement about this. (See requirement 2).

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 2

1. The provider must ensure that every child attending the service has a personal plan. The plan should be reviewed with the child's family at least once in every six month period in order to ensure that it contains an up to date and accurate record of the child's needs and how they are being met.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 - SSI 210 Regulation 5 (1) and (2)(a)(b), Personal Plans. A provider must, after consultation with each service user and, where it appears to be appropriate, any representative of the service user, within 28 days of the date on which the service user first received the service prepare a written plan ("the personal plan") which sets out how the service user's health, welfare and safety needs are being met.

Timescale for meeting this requirement: Six weeks from receipt of this report.

2. It is required that at all times staff have access to children's medical and emergency contact details.

This is in order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/210: regulation 4(1)(a)- A requirement to make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

Time scale: This was required at the time the concerns were pointed out to the provider.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 0

**Grade:** 2 - weak

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The play space used by the service was bright and airy. Children had sufficient space to move around freely and make their own choices from the available activities once they were set up.

The service had a range of toys and activities which could be rotated to ensure that children's interests were maintained.

Staff made good use of local facilities including a nearby park. This helped to ensure that children had access to fresh air and active physical play. On the day of the inspection we spoke to children who were positive about the time they were able to spend outdoors.

At the start of the session we found that the only area already set up for play was the arts and crafts area. This resulted in some children who were not interested in that specific area running around without a focus. During this time there was potential in this for accidents to be caused. Some children told us they were bored and had nothing to do. This was the case until snack was served at which point staff set up additional activities. We discussed some strategies to deal with this and made a recommendation. (See recommendation 1).

There were no clearly defined quiet, comfortable areas where children who wanted to relax, read or chat with friends could do so. We discussed some ways that this could be achieved and made a recommendation about this. (See recommendation 2).

We found that staff were not supplied with mobile phones. This meant they had to use their own mobile phones in situations including contacting head office, when picking children up from school, in the event of an emergency in the club or when they were out and about in the community with children. The risks associated with staff having to use their own phones in the course of their work were discussed with the provider. We made a requirement about this.  
(See requirement 1).

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 1

1. It is required that in order to help ensure the safety of children the provider must ensure that staff are supplied with a Smart Cookies mobile phone which can be used at any time to contact the service, parents or emergency services.

This is in order to comply with SSI 2011 NO 210 4(1) A provider must (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

Time scale: This was required at the time we fed back to the service.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 2

1. It is recommended that staff set up the playroom with a range of activities before the start of the session. This is in order to ensure that all children are able to make choices from a range of activities and experiences.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 (NCS).

Standard 5 Quality of experience.

2. It is recommended that the provider establishes a quiet comfortable area for children who want to rest and relax.

NCS Standard 5 Quality of Experience.

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

Staff were welcoming and engaged well with the children. Their varied backgrounds meant they brought a range of skills and interests to the service.

We spoke to staff who were able to describe their induction into the service. They felt this covered the key areas of their work and helped to prepare them for their role in the service.

Recent training for staff had included child protection and food hygiene. The manager had recently taken part in enhanced child protection training which she then shared with staff.

We looked at the recruitment procedures in place for staff. We found issues including the following which we brought to the attention of the provider.

Not all staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is the body that regulates staff working in the Care sector and sets out the qualifications necessary for each post. Staff have six months from the time they first take up a post in the care sector to register with the SSC. Staff who are not registered within this time scale are not eligible to work in the care sector. We made a requirement about this. (See requirement 1).

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 1

1. It is required that all staff working within the service are registered or in the process of registering with the SSSC within six months of taking up their first post in the care sector.

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/ 210: Regulation 4(1)(a) - A requirement to make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The manager regularly spent time working with staff and children in the service at different times of the day and in different situations. This meant she was aware of and able to talk confidently about the strengths, skills and areas for development of the staff team. Staff told us they found the manager was supportive, easy to talk to and willing to listen to their ideas about the service.

These comments were echoed by parents who told us they felt the manager kept them well informed and was easy to talk to. Parents told us they were aware of the options available to them if they had any concerns about any aspect of the service. This included contacting the Care Inspectorate at any time.

There were no records of staff appraisals or support and supervision having taken place within the service. We made a recommendation about this. (See recommendation 1).

The service had not yet established a formal system of quality assurance or developed an annual plan. The impact of this was that there was no clear direction for the future development of the service. We discussed some of the key documents which could help support the development of effective quality assurance. We made a recommendation about this.

(See recommendation 2).

We found that because the manager was included in staff ratios she did not have sufficient time to effectively carry out the roles and responsibilities associated with her role. This had resulted in many of the recommendations and requirements in the report.

We made a recommendation about this. (See recommendation 3).

We looked at a sample of staff recruitment files and found concerns including:

Folders were not filed consistently which made it difficult to see at a glance what safer recruitment checks had been completed.

Not all applicants had completed application forms.

There were files which did not contain a job offer letter.

A member of staff had supplied two references however only one of these had been followed up.

A reference given by a member of staff was not followed up and another reference was sought, there was no reason given for this.

A reference given by a member of staff was not from their most recent employer and no reason was given for this.

A reference was taken on the telephone which was not signed or dated.

All staff must provide the contact details of two people who are able to give them a reference for the work they are employed to do. At least one of these references must be from the individuals most recent employer. Where references are taken on the telephone they must be recorded and include the date and time the references were given. If for any reason an alternative reference is sought a clear reason for this must be recorded in the individuals file. We directed the provider to the document Safer Recruitment for Better Recruitment which can be found on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) We made a requirement about this. (See requirement 1).

The grade for this Quality Statement also takes account of requirements made throughout the report.

## Requirements

### Number of requirements: 1

1. It is required that in order to protect the wellbeing of children the provider takes all necessary steps to ensure that safer recruitment best practice is followed when recruiting new members of staff.

This is in order to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/ 210:Regulation 4(1)(a)- A requirement to make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users & 9 (1)&(2) - Requirements to ensure fitness of employees: and takes account of Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment.

Time scale: Two weeks from receipt of this report.

## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 3

1. It is recommended that the provider establishes a formal system which ensures that staff are given regular opportunities to discuss their work with children, and to identify strengths and areas for development including training. This will help ensure accountability within the service.

NCS Standard 14 Well managed service.

2. It is recommended that the provider supports the manager in developing a system of quality assurance for the service which identifies key targets for the development and on-going improvement of the service. These targets should be shared with families using the service. Targets should be revised regularly in order to ensure that they remain on track to be met or in order for some remedial action to be taken.

NCS Standard 13 Improving the service.

NCS Standard 14 Well managed service.

3. It is recommended that the provider reviews the role of the manager in order to ensure that they are given a realistic amount of time to carry out the responsibilities of their role.

NCS Standard 13 Improving the service.

NCS Standard 14 Well Managed Service.

**Grade:** 2 - weak

## 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](http://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.

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.