

## The Squirrel Club Day Care of Children

Balgreen Primary School  
Balgreen Road  
Edinburgh  
EH11 3AT

Telephone: 07415 739 261

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

29 November 2019

**Service provided by:**

Balgreen Out of School Care Club (The  
Squirrel Club) An Association

**Service provider number:**

SP2003002904

**Service no:**

CS2003012001

## About the service

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 61 primary school age children during term time and to a maximum of 30 primary school aged children during school holidays at any one time.

The service is run from a revamped portacabin in the grounds of Balgreen Primary School. The portacabin consists of two large playrooms, a kitchen, an office, toilets and a cloak room.

Aims of the service had been developed. These included to provide high quality childcare within a warm and welcoming environment. The individuality of each child in our care will be respected and nurtured.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives. 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 parents(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.

## What people told us

We sent 45 Care Standard Questionnaires to the service to give to parents and carers prior to the inspection. Eighteen completed questionnaires were returned to us, nine had written comments. These included:

- 'My kids like the recent activities that have started, such as going to play in the woods. They say they wish they could do more outdoor activities. From my point of view the club has made a lot of improvements recently, they seem more interested in the kids and what they would like to do, rather than just minding them. The new manager is a lot better and I'm impressed at how they have changed things'.
- 'All my three children have used the club and my oldest is 25. They take on both my views as well as the children for ideas and follow up with them. They always speak with the children about trips and what they want to do, if they cannot do a specific trip this is well explained so that they fully understand'.
- 'The staff have worked tirelessly as a team to improve the quality of the service over the last 12 months. The improvements are especially notable since the change in senior manager roles'.
- 'It is clear how hard the staff have worked and the challenges that have faced with changes in venues and changes within the roles of staff, but they have achieved a warm friendly club for my child to attend'.
- 'The staff always have the children's best interests at heart. The holiday programme is fantastic with plenty of trips but also use lots of services in the community. It is very reasonably priced too'.
- 'My children are happy in the club and enjoy themselves so much that they do not want to leave. Says it all really'.
- 'My daughter has been attending for three years and is very happy in the club. The staff are very caring'.
- 'My child has been attending the club for five years and all that time I have found the staff to be excellent. I would have no problem recommending any parent to put their children in the club'.
- 'Squirrel club has been fantastic over the last year with my two children. There is a variety of toys and outings to go on, ranging from safari park trips, local parks, museums, water fun days. I have been so impressed with the care taken over each activity, really taking children's needs into account. My children love squirrel club and are disappointed when they don't go'.

## Self assessment

The service was not asked to complete a self assessment prior to the inspection. We looked at their improvement plan and saw that they had quality assured the service and identified areas for improvement.

## 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

Children were well cared by staff who took into account their home circumstances. Staff were nurturing and had an awareness of the importance of children's mental health and well-being. Staff had positive relationships with families.

Staff had carried out a project on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) with children. Children told us "We have been learning about our rights, the right to play and the right to a home". A display of children's drawing and their rights further reinforced this.

A map of the world displayed where children in the club were from. This reinforced the children's sense of self esteem and belonging and the element of respect for themselves and others. Children could add post it notes to a SHANARRI wall chart when they felt they could demonstrate their achievements and how they felt safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. This demonstrated how staff celebrated children's uniqueness and individuality.

Children told us about the children's committee. They said "We talk about what we want to do in the club and what we want to change. We got to choose the snack menu and now we make our own sandwiches". They also said "Sometimes if there is something we want to do and we can't staff explain why it wasn't possible. That makes it seem fair".

During the school holidays subsidised places were offered to children at the holiday club. This positively impacted on children who otherwise may not have opportunities to go on trips.

All children attending the club had a personal plan with information completed by parents when their child started. We discussed with the manager ways in which they could collect more information from parents about the child when they started. This would mean that they had the information needed to meet the child's needs.

Children with additional support needs had care plans, which detailed what their additional needs were and how staff could meet those needs. These were updated regularly with input from parents. We discussed with the manager ways on which they could further improve on these.

Rolling snack was now on offer throughout the session. This provided children with independence and choice. There was a variety of fruit, water and healthy snack. Children told us that they got to choose what was on the snack menu.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

Since the last inspection the club had moved from the school hall back to the prefab building in the school playground. The prefab had been renovated which the club now had the sole use of. This meant that they did not have to clear their activities away on a daily basis and resulted in the environment being more welcoming.

The prefab was clean and bright. There were now two large playrooms and an office. There were displays of children's artwork throughout the club. This demonstrated the respect staff had for children.

There were a variety of activities set up for the children. A range of toys and resources were available for children to choose from. Children had opportunities to be creative and imaginative through the role play and dressing up. In addition planned activities were carried out with children each day. Children benefited from the varying expertise of staff who brought their own talents to support and challenge children. We saw staff extend children's learning through fun activities, for example mixing paint colours. Throughout the inspection children were engaged in play. Children told us "We do fun activities, X does baking with us which we love" and "We have lots of new activities, role play and arts and crafts". "We had a wish list and got lots more books". It was apparent from speaking with the children who had been attending the club for a few years that the improvements had a positive impact on them.

Children learnt about caring for the environment through projects about the planet. Recycling was carried out throughout the club and we saw that children were knowledgeable about using it.

Staff had begun to use the small wooden area behind the prefab for children to have access to a different learning and play environment. A member of staff planned to attend Forest School training to further enhance this experience for children.

During the holiday clubs, there were weekly trips. This provided opportunities for children to have new experiences. Recent trips included to the Pantomine, Blair Drummond Safari Park, Edinburgh Zoo, a Union Canal boat trip, roller skating and bowling. Children told us about these and how much they had enjoyed them.

Children had the opportunity to attend clubs after school. They were then collected by staff. This allowed children to continue with their own personal interests.

Children told us:

- "I like coming here, you can do what ever you want and play with your friends. There are activities in both rooms and outside. My favourite game is chess. I can play with my friends. There are lots of games".
- "I love it here. I like drawing, jigsaws and all the games".
- "Its really fun here and there are fun activities. Sometimes on a Friday we get to watch a movie".

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 – very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

There was an established staff team at the club. Some of the staff worked within the school, which gave them further insight into the children. This also meant that they received training which impacted on their practice. All staff were registered or in the process of registering with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Most of the staff had a qualification in childcare or play work. Staff had accessed a wide range of training to improve their knowledge. As such they were a qualified and experienced staff team who provided positive experiences for children.

There was a positive atmosphere in the club, staff worked well as a team and were respectful in their interactions with each other and with children. As a consequence there was a respectful environment within the club. There was a good rapport between staff and children, staff engaged well and had fun with children.

Staff had annual supervision with the manager. We discussed with the manager how supervision could be more focused to improve the quality of practice, support the development of integrated working and ensure continuing professional development. We signposted her to the SSSC website, where she would find the Step into Leadership resources.

Monthly staff meetings were an opportunity for staff to share their knowledge from training so that all staff and children benefited. Meetings were minuted and action to be carried out recorded. We suggested that the meetings started with the actions to be carried out from the previous meeting. This would ensure that actions were not lost or forgotten.

Since the last inspection two new members of staff had been employed. We saw that the recruitment policy had been updated to be in line with the national best practice document 'Safer recruitment through better recruitment'. Children had been involved in the recruitment process and had the opportunity to ask questions during the interview.

All staff were due to attend 'Emotion works' training. The course is 'a visually supportive framework for learning and talking about emotions, the goal is to build emotional language and understanding in children and young people to help develop emotional competence and resilience'. Staff understood the importance of emotional resilience. Undertaking this course would further equip staff to support children's emotional development.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

Since the last inspection there was a new manager and depute, who had been promoted from within the club. This had been a positive move, as they knew the staff, children and parents. They worked well as a team and had worked hard to drive improvements forward. The staff team spoke positively about their time at the club, improvements made and the support they received from managers. With staff and children they had developed a new vision and aims for the service. This created a sense of belonging and mutual respect.

An improvement plan had been written which identified three immediate areas for development; these were staff development, play and additional support needs. The areas identified and action planned would have a positive impact on outcomes for all children. We discussed with the manager and depute how they could include other areas in their quality assurance.

The parents committee was very pro-active and supportive of the club. The chairperson had been in place for many years and understood the difficulties the club faced and provided vital support. Committee meetings were open to all children, parents and staff, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) had been well attended by parents. This gave everyone an opportunity to contribute to how the club was run and was meaningful participation.

The club had a good relationship with the headteacher of the school, who attended all the committee meetings and provided support where possible. This benefited the children who attended both the school and the club.

We acknowledge the work which had been carried out by the committee, managers and staff to make positive improvements within the club. They were pro-active and positive about further improvements.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – good

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

## Previous requirements

### Requirement 1

In order to ensure that children are supported by suitable staff, the provider must ensure that by February 2019 staff are recruited in line with safer recruitment practices. A recruitment policy and procedure should be written to support this.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited. (HSCS 4.24).

This is in order to comply with Regulations 3 and 4 (1)(a) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

**This requirement was made on 26 February 2019.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

A new recruitment policy had been written in line with best practice.

**Met – within timescales**

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

## Previous recommendations

### Recommendation 1

The provider should ensure that self evaluation is carried out within the club so that areas for improvement can be identified. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed'. (HSCS 4.23).

**This recommendation was made on 26 February 2019.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

An improvement plan had now been written with areas for improvement identified. In addition many improvements had been made since the last inspection.

## Recommendation 2

The provider should ensure that policies and procedures are clear and current. They should tell staff what action should be taken in a given situation. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed'. (HSCS 4.23).

**This recommendation was made on 26 February 2019.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

Policies had been updated in line with legislation and best practice.

## 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

Date	Type	Gradings
30 Nov 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
8 Sep 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
10 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good



Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
1 Dec 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
17 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
31 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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