

The Big Space Out of School Club Day Care of Children

The Annexe Building
Melrose Primary School
Huntly Road
Melrose
TD6 9SB

Telephone: 01896 822 638

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 November 2020

Service provided by:
The Big Space - Melrose Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2007008960

Service no:
CS2007145276

About the service

The Big Space, referred to as the club in this report, is an after school provision. The club is provided by a voluntary parent committee and is registered with the Care Inspectorate with the following conditions: To provide a care service to a maximum of 45 children at any one time from the age of 4 years to 15 years, of whom no more than 5 are not yet attending primary school.

The club operates from premises within Melrose Primary School in the Scottish Borders. The club have the use of a games hall and the 'quiet room'. Children have the use of school toilet facilities and the use of the playground.

Aims and objectives for the service had been developed. They included:

'We aim to offer play and education opportunities that are both fun and challenging.

We will promote the dignity, privacy, choice, safety potential and diversity of all users and staff in the club.'

We undertook this inspection using a site visit to the service and virtual methodology which includes the use of technology to inspect services. As part of this process we undertook the following:

A site visit to the club on 05 November 2020

A further site visit to the club on 11 November 2020

E-mail request for information and e-mail to be sent to parents using the service

Telephone discussions with staff

Telephone discussions with the provider

Telephone discussion with the manager of the service

Teams meeting with the manager of the service.

As a result of our visit on 05 November 2020 we issued the service with a serious concern letter on 06 November 2020. This letter detailed two requirements with regard to infection prevention and control. At our visit of 11 November 2020 we deemed that enough progress had been made to meet one of the requirements but there was still work to do to fully embed infection prevention procedures. We comment on this within this report.

This was a focused inspection to evaluate how well people were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of people experiencing care during the pandemic.

This inspection was carried out by inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

What people told us

We spoke to six children during our visit to the club. All commented that they liked playing outside and using the local park, which is next to the school playground. When asked about playing indoor we were told there 'isn't anything interesting to do.' 'We get bored.' and 'It's fine if your little.'

We asked the service to issue an e-mail to parents asking for their comments about the club. We received four e-mails from parents.

Parents commented positively on the online system used to book sessions at the club, the use of Hi-vis jackets to be able to monitor children more closely and the communication provided by the manager. One parent commented that her children said they felt safe and protected in the club.

Parents also commented on the good quality and range of the activities however we could not evidence this at the inspection nor through discussion with staff. Parents also commented that although direct communication with the manager was good they would like more information from other staff. They suggested displays outdoors about what their children do while they are at the club and perhaps some pictures of the inside as they have not been able to see it for themselves.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	1 - Unsatisfactory
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

1 - Unsatisfactory

5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19.

Improvements had been made to the range of information that the club held about children and their care and support needs. Work needed to continue with the developing of personal plans to ensure that information was collected consistently and that tools such as chronologies were completed by staff. This would ensure that staff had sufficient information to meet the care and support needs of children.

To promote their physical health children had daily access to outdoor play throughout the majority of the session. Children were supported to go to the nearby tennis courts for tennis lessons and could use the nearby park.

The manner and methods staff used to support children's behaviour in the club did not meet with good practice to ensure that children were treated with respect. Children were spoken to tersely and language used focused on the individual rather than the behaviour being displayed.

Improvements to the methods used in the club to promote positive behaviours need to be developed. These needed to be shared with and understood by staff to ensure that children were at all times treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Staff needed to increase their knowledge and skill to support children with challenges that some of them faced. Support planning needed to focus and build on positive aspects of behaviour to increase children's self-esteem and confidence. These plans needed to be more in-depth and evidence that information had been shared with parents and other agencies who worked with individual children.

Children lacked a range of challenging or interesting activities to occupy them during the session. This impacted directly on the behaviour displayed by some children but this was not understood or addressed by staff.

As a result of these concerns we have made a requirement which has been issued to the service in an Improvement Notice.

5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.

During our visit significant concerns were observed in relation to the lack of infection prevention and control methods used in the club. We issued the service with a serious concern letter on 06 November 2020 which contained two requirements with regard to infection control practices for children and for staff.

We returned to the service on 11 November 2020. We could see that some improvements had been made to the general cleanliness of the premises and that staff had developed some systems for children to follow with regard to infection prevention procedures. However, we found that staff were still unsure of current guidance and that some of the procedures put in place had not been well thought through or embedded. For example, staff wore face coverings during the entire session and when working with children - this is not in line with Scottish Government guidance. Staff were unaware of the procedure they would follow if a child became ill in the service. Children were still not consistently following the guidance they had been given and this was not insisted upon by staff. Staff were unaware of the guidance issued by the NHS on how to use gloves appropriately in the setting. For example staff used gloves for food preparation but then carried out additional tasks whilst wearing those gloves, then returned to food preparation. This evidenced a lack of understanding regarding both food hygiene procedures and current good practice guidance for COVID-19.

The lack of staff understanding regarding how to implement appropriate procedures impacts on children's health and welfare through the increased likelihood of infection and the lack of good role modelling.

As a result of these concerns we have made a requirement which has been issued to the service in an Improvement Notice.

5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19.

COVID-19 has provided staff with many challenges. We spoke to all staff in the club as part of the inspection. On the whole the manager and staff were positive about their respective roles in the club.

During our inspection visit we could clearly identify that staff lacked confidence in carrying out their role. They were unsure of what their responsibility in the club entailed, although the manager assured us that this had been communicated to them. There was evidence, from observation and discussion with them, that they were not using or being enabled to use their qualification and experience to ensure that children received a good service.

The manager found it difficult to motivate staff to implement club procedures or work independently and show initiative. This had led to challenges in forming good working relationships and open communication between those working in the service. This impacted on the consistent methods of caring for children and resulted in staff receiving a lot of direction from the manager to carry out regular tasks.

As a result of our last inspection the committee had dedicated considerable time to try and support staff to make improvements. However, at the time of our inspection there was little monitoring of the quality of the club being undertaken by the committee, and insufficient support being given to the manager to enable her to drive forward the improvements which were noted in the last inspection report.

The committee and manager of the club required to familiarise themselves with the range of information needed by the Care Inspectorate to ensure that the service maintains their regulatory duties. This included understanding the types of notifications which must be made with regard to incidents, accidents and COVID-19 cases, and changes to committee or manager and action plans as a result of the inspection process.

Improvement was needed to the staffing and management and leadership in the club. This would help to ensure that the manager and staff are confident in their given roles and can be relied upon by children to provide a service which promotes positive outcomes.

As a result of these concerns we have made a requirement which has been issued to the service in an Improvement Notice.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

In order to demonstrate that children's health, welfare and safety needs are met. By 31 March 2020 the provider must develop a system that ensures there is a sufficiency of information gathered about each child to meet their medical, care and support needs and that the information is recorded in each child's personal plan. The personal plan must include any individual strategies for support that is to be implemented and must be reviewed at least once in every six month period.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 5 of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This requirement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

Overall a sufficient amount of information had been gathered about each child to enable the service to develop a personal plan. One of the children who had an additional support plan needed further information in it to include evidence that the plan had been shared and agreed with parents. We comment on this in our report

Met - outwith timescales

Requirement 2

In order to ensure that children are protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. By 31 March 2020 the provider must evidence that members of staff employed in the care service have a clear understanding of child protection and the safeguarding of children.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 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 27 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

All staff had carried out child protection training. Staff we spoke to evidenced that they understood the procedures they would need to follow if they were concerned about a child.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 3

To meet individual needs and promote positive outcomes for all children attending the club. The provider must at all times ensure there are staff present in such numbers as are appropriate to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 15(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This requirement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

On the days of our visits there enough staff present to meet appropriate adult/child ratios.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 4

By 11 November 2020 you must ensure that children's health, welfare and safety needs are met. To achieve this, you must:

- a) Ensure that children are cared for in a safe and hygienic environment, and
- b) Ensure that staff understand and implement current Scottish Government Coronavirus (Covid-19) and NHS guidance with regard to Infection Prevention and Control.

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

This requirement was made on 6 November 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

On our second visit to the service the environment was visibly cleaner and areas were tidy, which enabled more effective cleaning. However, staff were still not following the national guidance appropriately and through our discussions with them we identified gaps in their knowledge and understanding of infection prevention and control.

Not met

Requirement 5

By 11 November 2020 you must ensure that children's health, welfare and safety needs are met. To achieve this, you must:

Support children to understand and follow the procedures which must be put in place to support infection prevention. This is in order to comply with Regulation 4 - (1)(a) and (d) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This requirement was made on 6 November 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

On our second visit to the service children were more familiar with the infection prevention and control measures. Staff needed to ensure that children understood why they needed to follow the given guidance and ensure that handwashing and one way systems were adhered to.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

Children should be supported to take responsibility for their behaviour and develop a respect for themselves, each other and staff. To achieve this staff should develop strategies to ensure that there are clear, realistic and consistently applied expectations of children's behaviour.

This is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards 2.15 'I am enabled to resolve conflict, agree rules and build positive relationships with other people as much as I can.' and 3.14. 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.'

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

We comment on the handling of children's behaviour and the development of appropriate strategies in this report. This recommendation was not met.

Previous area for improvement 2

Children should take part in a snack process which encourages an understanding of healthy eating at a pace which enables a social experience for children. Snack should be substantial enough for the needs of children and be consumed in the allocated snack areas. To ensure that children are sufficiently hydrated fresh water should be made available to children throughout the session.

This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 1.33 'I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables and participate in menu planning, 1.35 'I can enjoyed unhurried snack and meal times in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible.' and 1.39 I can drink fresh water at all times.'

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

Some progress had recently been made to the snack foods provided to ensure that they met with good nutritional practice. However water was not available during the snack time on both days of our visit. We have asked that this is addressed. This recommendation was not met.

Previous area for improvement 3

Children should be able to engage in a range of innovative and interesting play opportunities which have been planned by staff using observations of children's interests and an improved range of quality play resources. To enhance children's play staff training should be undertaken to highlight and share some of the current good practice and documents which focus on school aged play activities and resources.

This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 1.30 'As a child I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving including through imaginative play and

storytelling.' and 1.31 'As a child my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials.'

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

There were no activities set up for children to engage in on either of our visits to the club. Children did enjoy outdoor play but the resources for this play were very limited. There was a clear link between the lack of stimulating play and children's boredom leading to some difficult behaviour. This recommendation was not met.

Previous area for improvement 4

Treatment given to children for accidents or incidents should be effective and follow good practice guidance for first aid. This will help ensure that good hygiene procedures and wound management procedures are followed. Information about accidents should be shared with parents using the appropriate recording methods.

This is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.24 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective.'

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

All staff had received first aid training. Accident reporting was in place and information shared with parents. This recommendation was met.

Previous area for improvement 5

Children should be cared for by staff who are skilled and knowledgeable about current good childcare practice. The provider should assess training, ensure that it is effective and pulled through to practice within the club. Additional training tailored to the areas of improvement identified in this report should be accessed by staff.

This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 3.14 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'.

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

All staff were either qualified or doing a childcare qualification. Training had been impacted upon by the COVID-19 pandemic but the manager was looking at methods for staff to carry out on line training. This recommendation was met.

Previous area for improvement 6

To ensure that the club can accurately assess the quality of the service and develop plans for improvement the committee, manager and staff should develop an effective and evidence based system for quality assurance.

This is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 4.11 'I experience high quality care and support

based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' and 4.19 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'.

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

The manager had carried out some evaluation of the service and could talk to us about the areas where improvement was needed. We assessed that the committee needed to provide more support in this area and that a clear action plan for improvement was needed. This recommendation was not met.

Previous area for improvement 7

To protect children's rights. Personal information about children should be kept in a confidential manner.

This is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 4.1 'My human rights are central to the organisation that supports and cares for me.'

This area for improvement was made on 27 January 2020.

Action taken since then

Children's information was held securely in the service. This recommendation was met.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	1 - Unsatisfactory
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	2 - Weak
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	1 - Unsatisfactory
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	2 - Weak

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