

Lincluden After School Group Day Care of Children

North West Resource Centre
College Drive
Lincluden
Dumfries
DG2 0BX

Telephone: 01387 259 626

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 July 2022

Service provided by:
Lincluden After School Group

Service provider number:
SP2003002520

Service no:
CS2003013475

About the service

Lincluden After School Group is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 39 children aged from primary school attendance (four and half) up to 16 years, and up to the age of 18 years and nine months where a child has additional support needs and/or disabilities.

Care is provided from within a resource centre, located in a residential area of Dumfries. The service is close to schools and shops. Children are accommodated in two indoor play areas, over one level, and an enclosed outdoor play space at the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 5 July 2022 and Wednesday 6 July 2022. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with people using the service and two of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Our inspection raised significant concerns in relation to how children's health, welfare and safety needs were met. As a result, the service was issued with an Improvement Notice by the Care Inspectorate on Monday 18 July 2022.
- Medication procedures needed to be improved.
- There was not enough staff to meet children's individual needs.
- Personal plans had not been reviewed and updated within the required timescales.
- Safe recruitment procedures had not been followed for new staff.
- Management and staff did not demonstrate a clear understanding of child protection procedures.

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, play and learning?	2 - Weak
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	1 - Unsatisfactory
How good is our staff team?	1 - Unsatisfactory

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

2 - Weak

We made an evaluation of weak for this key question. Whilst some strengths could be identified, these were compromised by significant weaknesses. As these weaknesses concerned the welfare and safety of children and young people, we issued the service with an improvement notice and made several requirements for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support.

Overall, children were happy, settled and having fun. They were supported by friendly, caring staff who took time to listen to them and respond to their needs. This helped children feel valued and secure. Children told us that they enjoyed going to the service, and the activities offered. One child commented, "I love playing football and gaming".

During the inspection, we were concerned that staff could not locate one child's medication. This was later found in the child's bag in the corridor, which could be accessed by other children. Medication records were also confusing. For example, one child's medication records detailed instructions for administration which did not match instructions contained on the prescription label. This put children's health and wellbeing at serious risk. Following the last inspection, we recommended that medication procedures be reviewed to ensure children's safety. This had not been addressed. See requirement 1 and Improvement number 2 of the Improvement Notice issued by the Care Inspectorate on 18 July 2022.

Children's personal plans had not been reviewed or updated to reflect children's current needs. This meant that staff did not up to date information to support children. We made a requirement about this following the last inspection and have repeated this requirement. See requirement 2 and Improvement number 1 of the Improvement Notice.

Meal and snack times should be improved to ensure that it is a sociable experience for children that is relaxed and unhurried. Children had to indicate they were hungry before snacks were offered, and children were not encouraged to sit at a table while eating. Children had access to diluting juice throughout the day. We asked that staff provide children with fresh drinking water for hydration.

1.2 Children are safe and protected.

Children were supported to play online safely. Staff ensured that games were age appropriate, and supervised children when accessing digital and on-line games.

Management and staff did not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, and were not supported by comprehensive child protection procedures to inform their practice. For example, concerns about one child had not been raised promptly, and management could not provide us with records relating to the concern. This meant that the relevant people did not have access to information needed to assess children's needs and keep them safe. Confidential information should be stored securely within the service. See requirement 3 and Improvement number 5 of the Improvement Notice issued by the Care Inspectorate on 18 July 2022.

We noted an incident where physical restraint had been used to keep a child safe. Staff were not aware of their physical intervention policy and had not attended recent training. This put children at risk of harm. Management and staff should review their policy and access physical intervention training to ensure that children are cared for in a safe way. See area for improvement 1.

1.3 Children's play and learning.

Overall, children enjoyed the toys and activities on offer. They could choose where they wanted to play, and toys and games reflected their individual interests. As a result, children were content and engaged in play.

Children could access a range of equipment, furnishings and resources to support their wellbeing. For example, we saw children accessing a cosy sensory room when they wanted to rest. Free access to the outdoor space supported children to enjoy fresh air, develop their curiosity and participate in physical play. We observed children having fun playing football, playing in the sand and bouncing on trampolines.

Children were included in their community through local walks and outings. However, there were missed opportunities to develop children's independence and life skills. For example, we observed children going a walk to the local shops, but children were not supported to purchase anything, although some children indicated that that they would like to.

Children had access to technology which, at times, supported their wellbeing. For example, one child was soothed by her favourite nursery rhymes. However, a combination of sound from computer games, tablets and the television created a high level of noise at times, and reduced staff's interaction with children. Management should monitor the use of technology to ensure it consistently enhances children's experiences.

Requirements

1. By 29 July 2022, the provider must ensure children's health and safety in relation to the administration of medication. In order to achieve this, the provider must ensure, at a minimum:

- (a) There are safe and effective procedures in place to direct members of staff employed in the provision of care in the care service on the action that must be taken when medication is required to be administered to a child.
- (b) Staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to the storage and administration of medication and the keeping of appropriate records.
- (c) Effective quality assurance processes are in place and monitored by management to ensure the safe management of medication.

This 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 is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective" (HSCS 1.24).

2. By 12 August 2022, the provider must ensure that the care and support needs of children are being effectively met. In order to achieve this, the provider must, at a minimum:

(a) Ensure there are appropriate personal plans in place for children, detailing their individual needs and how they are to be met.

(b) Review the personal plan:

(i) when requested to do so by the service user or any representative

(ii) when there is a significant change in a service user's health, welfare or safety needs

(iii) at least once in every six month period whilst the service user is in receipt of the service.

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

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15).

3. By 12 August 2022, the provider must ensure that effective procedures are in place to support the health, welfare and safety of service users.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

(a) Ensure staff receive appropriate training to recognise appropriate timescales for raising concerns, and complete accurate chronologies of significant events.

(b) Ensure they record child protection information in a way which makes it clear what concerns have arisen. This information should be clearly communicated with all agencies and used to improve outcomes for children and families.

(c) Children's records must be stored securely in the service and accessible if needed.

This is to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011. SSI 2011/ 210 Regulation 4 (1) (a) Welfare of Service User.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities" (HSCS 3.20) and "I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or at risk of harm" (HSCS 3.21).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children are kept safe, staff should review their policy and procedures in relation to physical intervention. Where physical intervention may be required, this should be agreed with the parent or carer and reflected in the child's personal plan. Any instances of physical restraint should be appropriately recorded and reported.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective" (HSCS 1.24).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's and young people's experiences.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

Children were cared for in an environment that was bright, well ventilated and welcoming. There was ample space to meet children's needs. Cosy spaces were available for children to rest or enjoy quieter activities, and there was sufficient space for children to play independently or with others.

Children could access a range of toys and materials. This allowed them to make choices about what they wanted to play with, supported by staff when needed. For example, we observed children playing games on the computer, completing jigsaws and, and exploring art and craft materials.

Direct access to the garden meant that children benefitted from regular fresh air and outdoor play. Specialist play equipment ensured that all children could access outdoor play, helping them feel included. Some natural materials were available to help children develop their curiosity and imagination.

Children were kept safe through a modern secure entry system: entry to the premises was through a buzzer system. Accidents and incidents were appropriately recorded and shared with parents. Maintenance issues had been addressed quickly to ensure a safe environment. Records should be updated to reflect this.

How good is our leadership?

1 - Unsatisfactory

We evaluated this key question as unsatisfactory. We found significant weaknesses which compromised the safety and wellbeing of people. We issued an improvement notice on 18 July 2022, as improvements were required to ensure people were safe and protected.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are well led.

Management and staff had failed to address requirements and recommendations identified at the last inspection, and previous improvements had not been sustained.

Processes for monitoring and evaluating the standard of care provided were inadequate. As a result, management had failed to identify poor childcare practices, and act upon potential risks that compromised children's safety. Following the last inspection, we recommended that the service implement a robust monitoring system to identify and implement improvements. This had not been addressed effectively to influence positive changes. See area for improvement 1.

The provider and manager failed to plan sufficient staffing levels to meet the health, welfare and safety needs of children using the service. This put children's safety and wellbeing at risk and meant that children did not receive the care and support that had been identified in their personal care plans. See requirement 2 under the quality theme 'How good is our staff team?' and Improvement number 1 of the Improvement Notice issued by the Care Inspectorate on 18 July 2022.

Management and staff did not demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. For example, in relation to management of medication, child protection, personal planning and the safe recruitment of staff. This limited the service's capacity to improve children's health, welfare and safety needs.

Management must notify the Care Inspectorate immediately if certain events take place. This provides assurances that events have been appropriately addressed. We noted some instances where management had failed to make appropriate notifications. See area for improvement 2.

Areas for improvement

1.

To ensure that children benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, management should develop a systematic approach to the improvement of the service. They should ensure that there are effective procedures in place for monitoring all aspects of the service, including staff practice and the safety of the premises. Staff should be supported through regular supervision and appraisals.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state: "As a child, I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

2. To ensure that children receive responsive care and support, management should make appropriate notifications to the Care Inspectorate when certain events take place. Management should refer to good practice guidance, "Records that all registered children and young people's care services must keep and guidance on notification" to identify events that require them to notify the Care Inspectorate.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I benefit from different organisations working together and sharing information about me promptly where appropriate, and I understand how my privacy and confidentiality are respected" (HSCS 4.18)

How good is our staff team?

1 - Unsatisfactory

We evaluated this key question as unsatisfactory. We found significant weaknesses which compromised the safety and wellbeing of people. We issued an improvement notice on 18 July 2022 as improvements were required to ensure people were safe and protected.

4.2 Staff recruitment.

Recruitment procedures were inadequate which compromised the welfare and safety of children. For example, new staff members had started working in the service before all the required checks had been undertaken or received. Staff records were not in place for some staff, and Protection of Vulnerable People (PVG) checks had not been returned by disclosure Scotland prior to them starting work at the service. This created a risk to children's safety and welfare. We made a requirement about this following our last inspection, but improvements had not been made. See requirement 1 and Improvement number 4 of the Improvement Notice issued by the Care Inspectorate on 18 July 2022.

4.3 Staff deployment.

On the first day of our inspection, there was insufficient numbers of staff to meet the ratios required to safely care for children. This compromised children's safety and meant that they did not receive the required individual support that was detailed in their personal care plans. See requirement 2 and Improvement number 1 of the Improvement Notice issued by the Care Inspectorate on 18 July 2022.

Systems to support staffing levels when planned or unplanned absences occur were poorly managed. We sampled attendance registers and found several occasions when there was insufficient staff available and deployed effectively enough to provide children with adequate care and learning experiences.

Requirements

1. By 12 August 2022, the provider must ensure that the care and support needs of children are being effectively met by suitably qualified staff. To do this, you must ensure that staff are safely recruited in line with best practice guidance which requires, at a minimum:

- (a) Essential checks must be carried out to confirm applicant's suitability for the role they will carry out.
- (b) Protection of Vulnerable People (PVG) checks must be carried out prior to new staff commencing their role. When short notice recruitment is required to maintain levels of care and support:
 - (i) this must be agreed with the regulatory body
 - (ii) a risk assessment must be carried out and the staff member awaiting checks must be mentored and supervised at all times.
- (c) Staff must be appropriately registered with the appropriate regulator, such as Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC) or General Teaching Council (GTC) within the required time scales.
- (d) The provider must develop a safe recruitment policy that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities in relation to registration requirements with SSSC.
- (e) Accurate and complete records should be kept for all staff employed in the provision of the service.

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

2. By 29 July 2022, you must ensure that the care and support needs of children are being effectively met.

To do this, you must, at a minimum:

- (a) Ensure that at all times suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service in such numbers as are appropriate to meet the health, welfare and safety of service users.

(b) Put in place and maintain an accurate record of children's attendance in order to help determine the number and skill set of staff required to be working in the service at any given time to meet children's' needs.

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 is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "My needs are met by the right number of people" (HSCS 3.15).

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 1 December 2021, you must ensure that the care and support needs of children are being effectively met. In order to achieve this, you must:

(a) Ensure there are appropriate personal plans in place for children, detailing their individual needs and how they are to be met;

(b) Review the personal plan:

- (i) when requested to do so by the service user or any representative
- (ii) when there is a significant change in a service user's health, welfare or safety needs;
- (iii) at least once in every six month period whilst the service user is in receipt of the service.

This is in order to comply with Regulations 5 and 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 1 October 2021.

Action taken on previous requirement

Children's personal plans had not been reviewed or updated to reflect children's current needs. As a result, staff did not up to date information to support children.

Not met

Requirement 2

By 1 December 2021, recruitment of staff should be reviewed in line with best practice guidance 'Better Recruitment for Safer Recruitment':

- (a) Essential checks should be carried out to confirm people's suitability for the role they will carry out.
- (b) Protection of Vulnerable People (PVG) checks should be carried out prior to new staff commencing their role. When short notice recruitment is required to maintain levels of care and support:
 - (i) this should be agreed with the regulatory body
 - (ii) a risk assessment should be carried out and the staff member awaiting checks should be mentored and supervised at all times.
- (c) Staff should be appropriately registered with Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC) within the required time scales.
- (d) Management should develop a safe recruitment policy that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities in relation to registration requirements with SSSC.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" (HSCS 4.25) and 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 1 October 2021.

Action taken on previous requirement

New staff members had started working in the service before all the required checks had been undertaken or received. Staff records were not in place for some staff, and Protection of Vulnerable People (PVG) checks had not been returned by disclosure Scotland prior to them starting work at the service.

Not met

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

The provider should ensure children's health and safety in relation to medication. In order to achieve this, they should ensure:

- (a) there are safe and effective procedures in place to direct members of staff on the action that must be taken when medication is required to be administered to a child.

(b) staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to the storage, administration and record-keeping of medication.

(c) effective quality assurance processes are in place and monitored by management to ensure safe management of medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective" (HSCS 1.24).

This area for improvement was made on 1 October 2021.

Action taken since then

Staff could not locate one child's medication. This was later found in the child's bag in the corridor, which could be easily accessed by other children. Medication records were confusing. One child's medication records detailed instructions for administration which did not match instructions contained on the prescription label.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been made a requirement.

Previous area for improvement 2

Appropriate training should be sourced to support staff to extend their learning to support positive outcomes for all children. The impact of training should be discussed with the whole team and how this will be taken forward in the service. Staff should be mindful of the training requirement that is part of their registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This is the national body that regulates Social Service Workers and Employers.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "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" (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 1 October 2021.

Action taken since then

Staff had undertaken some core training. For example, first aid, child protection, infection prevention and control. There was some evidence that staff had evaluated training as a team.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The management team should develop a systematic approach to the improvement of the service. They should ensure that there are effective procedures in place for monitoring all aspects of the service, including staff practice and the safety of the premises. Staff should be supported through regular supervision and appraisals.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state: "As a child, I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 1 October 2021.

Action taken since then

Management had failed to identify poor childcare practices, and act upon potential risks that compromised children's safety. Management and staff had failed to address requirements and recommendations identified at the last inspection, and previous improvements had not been sustained. While staff supervision had been carried out, this did not positively impact the quality of children's care and experiences. This area for improvement has not been met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	2 - Weak
1.1 Nurturing care and support	2 - Weak
1.2 Children are safe and protected	2 - Weak
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	1 - Unsatisfactory
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	1 - Unsatisfactory

How good is our staff team?	1 - Unsatisfactory
4.2 Staff recruitment	1 - Unsatisfactory
4.3 Staff deployment	1 - Unsatisfactory

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