

Montrose Out Of School Enterprise Day Care of Children

Lochside Primary School
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Montrose
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Telephone: 01674 677 955

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 January 2023

Service provided by:
Montrose Out of School Enterprise

Service provider number:
SP2003000578

Service no:
CS2003002922

About the service

Montrose Out of School Enterprise provides a day care of children service. The service is provided from Lochside Primary School and is situated within a residential area of Montrose, Angus. It benefits from being close to local amenities such as greenspaces, shops and parks. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 25 primary school age children at any one time. Children are cared for within a dedicated playroom and can access a rear enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 and 17 January 2023 between 15:30 and 18:15. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children and parents using the service
- spoke with the staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm and caring interactions, which helped them to feel nurtured and valued.
- Personal planning should be further developed to ensure children's health, welfare and safety needs are consistently met.
- The spaces used by school age children must be improved to take account of age, stage and development.
- Staff required more training to support confidence, knowledge, and ensure their continuing professional development.
- The service needs to implement effective quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, to continuously improve children's experiences.
- The service created an encouraging atmosphere for both staff and children to feel safe and secure in.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	2 - Weak
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 evaluated this key question as weak. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were observed to be happy, settled and supported by staff who were nurturing and kind towards them. For example, children invited staff to join in their activities and staff and children were observed engaging in meaningful conversations. Conversations were based on children's interests which included skiing, football and family arrangements. This contributed to the friendly, happy atmosphere and positive ethos.

Personal plans included basic information about children. We identified missing information and some information which needed to be updated to support children's current interests, preferences and care needs. There was no evidence to show how plans were regularly reviewed and updated in line with national guidance and legislation. To fully support children, the service must gather a range of information, for example, progress and achievements, medical information and use this effectively to develop support plans to meet the needs of all children. To reflect children's changing needs, information must be reviewed at least every six months. We signposted the manager to 'A guide for providers on personal planning: early learning and childcare' to support the development of personal plans. This would ensure children receive consistent care that is right for them. (See Requirement 1).

Children were not fully protected through robust safeguarding procedures. For example, the service did not have dedicated child protection officers, as per their own policy. Staff were also unfamiliar with details on how they record and share concerns in the absence of a dedicated child protection officer. This had the potential to compromise children's safety and wellbeing. The service must ensure there are clear procedures in place, which staff understand and follow, to safeguard all children. (See Requirement 2).

The snacks provided were nutritious and reflected current guidance. Snacks took account of children's individual cultural and dietary needs. We discussed with staff how they could further strengthen opportunities for children to be involved in the planning and preparation of snacks to promote responsibility, independence and life skills.

No children required medication at the time of inspection. However, to prevent inconsistency or a lack of understanding regarding the management and administration of medication, the service should review their medication policy and procedure to ensure it is in line with the 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'.

1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun and were happy playing with their friends and staff. They were well mannered, confident and respectful individuals who played well together. Children had some opportunities to be creative with the resources available to them and could engage in freely chosen activities. Children told us they enjoyed participating in 'Just Dance' and 'arts'.

Children had access to some resources that were adequate to support play and learning. Resources included games such as Connect 4, Uno and Guess Who ? The activities, interactions and engagement from staff supported children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy. We discussed with the service how further consideration is needed for the quality of play and learning experiences for school age children and the opportunities to support social, physical, age and stage capabilities. For example, through more risky play, messy play and accessing resources within the local community. Children told us "We have been to the park once", "We don't really go outdoors in the winter" and "We don't go out in the community".

The service had a floor book to capture children's experiences, which included baking activities and themed parties. The floor book had not been used for some time and did not capture children's involvement. To support staff to plan and offer stimulating and challenging play experiences for the needs and age range of children moving forward, the service should build on the use of the floor book to include planning, reflections and next steps. (See Area for Improvement 1).

Requirements

1. By 31 March 2023, the provider must ensure that all children's personal plans are reflective of their care and support.

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

- a) up-to-date children's care and medical needs are included as part of the personal plan
- b) personal plans are reviewed at least every 6 months
- c) children's likes, interests and wishes form part of the personal plan.

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

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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) and 'My needs as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).

2. By 31 March 2023, the provider must ensure that all children are safeguarded through having a robust child protection procedure.

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

- a) staff know how to record and report child protection concerns
- b) staff have access to up-to-date guidance
- c) the child protection policy and procedure are updated and are in line with current guidance and legislation.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1)(a) (Welfare of users) 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 (HSCS) which states that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

Areas for improvement

1. To support the quality of children's play and learning experiences, the service should ensure there is a system in place to plan, record and capture children's experiences.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors' (HSCS 1.25).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The spaces used were clean, welcoming and bright. There was a secure entry system in place, which was monitored by staff and supported children's safety. Staff demonstrated good infection control procedures by using Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) and regularly cleaning surfaces. This helped to prevent the potential spread of infection and created a safe environment for children and staff.

Children benefitted from free flow between the indoors and outdoors. Safety measures whilst children were outdoors were supported through effective communication, appropriate levels of supervision and sufficient teamwork by the staff. For example, staff discussed children's movements, deployed themselves in different zones, carried out head counts and used registers to monitor children. These measures helped provide a safe outdoor environment for children.

We discussed with the service how the indoor and outdoor environments did not support children's stages of development, sense of belonging, offer comfort, or facilitate stimulating play opportunities. For example, the toilets, furniture, table, chairs and spaces used were uninviting for school age children. To support comfort, wellbeing and ensure the environments are appropriate with high quality furnishings and equipment, the provider needs to explore more inviting spaces for school age children to access. (See Area for Improvement 1).

Staff we spoke with told us they were in the process of ordering new resources and better storage, which would offer children further opportunities for challenge, support independence and stimulate curiosity and creativity.

Risk assessments, policies and procedures were unclear and not up to date. To provide a safe environment that fully considers children's wellbeing and safety, the provider needs to review their policies, procedures and risk assessments and ensure these are understood and followed by staff, in line with current best practice. (See Requirement 1).

Arrangements for the storage and processing of children's personal information were managed to ensure children's records were kept safe and took account of their confidentiality.

Requirements

1. By 31 March 2023, the provider must ensure children's safety and wellbeing is not compromised. To do this, the provider must ensure, at a minimum:

- a) risk assessments are reviewed and relevant to the service, with staff having an awareness and understanding of these
- b) Policies and procedures are in place and are in line with current best practice.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 4 (1)(a) (Welfare of users) 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 (HSCS) which state that 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

Areas for improvement

1. To enhance children's play experience, spaces, facilities and resources should be improved to take account of age, stage, wellbeing and the development of school age children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'As a child I can direct my own play and activities in a way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

How good is our leadership?

2 - Weak

We evaluated this key question as weak. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

There was the potential to compromise the welfare and safety of children because key elements of the service's recruitment process were not followed. For example, relevant checks such as references, ID checks and induction information were unavailable at the time of inspection. The provider must ensure that staff recruitment follows safe recruitment practices, as detailed in the good practice guidance, 'Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment' to ensure the right people, with the right skills and values, care for children. (See Requirement 1).

There had been some changes to management and not everyone involved in the service was aware of the aims or their role in promoting these. We discussed the need for management to ensure all staff understood and promoted the service's aims and values. The service should review these to ensure all staff and families are part of their vision going forward.

At the time of inspection, the service did not have a quality assurance process or system in place. As part of quality assurance procedures, a quality assurance calendar which includes items such as reviewing risk assessments, updating personal plans and updating policies should be in place. This would ensure children's health, safety and wellbeing continues to be maintained. We also discussed opportunities to include an overview of planned play experiences and practice, to address issues identified within key questions one and two. (See Requirement 2).

The service had not started a self-evaluation process and there were limited opportunities available for children and their families to become meaningfully involved or influence change within the setting.

Parents comments included: "I would like to see a return to picking up my child from the areas where they are spending time..." And "We have only been accessing the service since August and are unsure what really happens, in particular around snacks and activities, but my child is happy attending."

We signposted the service to the Care Inspectorate's 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' available on the Care Inspectorate Hub to help develop a self-evaluation process. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The service had failed to properly notify the Care Inspectorate of changes to the committee. We reminded the provider of their role in informing the Care Inspectorate and signposted guidance outlining what must be reported. This is to ensure the service is operating to meet legal and regulatory requirement. (See Area for Improvement 2).

Requirements

1. By 31 March 2023, the provider must ensure that all children are cared for and kept safe by safely recruited competent and skilled staff.

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

- a) ensure all staff in the setting have been recruited in line with 'Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment' guidance
- b) put quality monitoring systems in place to ensure the provider has an overview of recruitment within the setting
- c) implement effective systems to monitor and support staff practice.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing 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 (HSCS) which states that: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

2. By 31 March 2023, the provider must ensure improved outcomes for children by implementing effective and robust quality assurance processes.

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

- a) regular, effective, and focused monitoring is carried out across the setting
- b) robust audits are developed and implemented, with any actions addressed promptly.

This is to comply with Regulation 3 Principles and Regulation 15 (a) and (b) Staffing 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 (HSCS) which states that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

Areas for improvement

1. To support a culture of continuous improvement that addresses key areas for improvement, the provider should implement a robust and effective quality assurance system to monitor and sustain positive experiences for children across the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

2. Information should be submitted to the Care Inspectorate in line with the provider's registration requirements.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

4.3 Staff deployment

The deployment and number of staff working in the service was adequate to meet the needs of children. The service ensured that children were cared for safely. For example, staff sensitively prepared and accompanied children for transitions and handovers at home time.

We found that the current national staff recruitment and retention crisis affecting the early learning and childcare sector in Scotland had directly impacted on the mix of skills and experience within the staff team. A parent shared "There have been occasional short notice closures which have been problematic". Management had been identified to work on a temporary basis, which offered children continuity of care through staff knowing the children and the service. Although there were enough staff, we encouraged the provider and the team to build on their confidence and practice in working with school age children, for example, by introducing a more robust induction for staff and sourcing a variety of training to upskill and promote high quality outcomes for children.

We found that the process for undertaking staff professional development, reviews and management of the service could be strengthened. The provider should review skills, knowledge and experience to inform staff training and professional development. Clear roles at all levels should be established, to ensure these effectively guide and support accountability, effective leadership and drive improvement across the team. This will help children experience quality care, which supports their overall development, delivered by highly skilled individuals. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The ethos and interactions between staff were warm and respectful. This helped to create an encouraging atmosphere for both staff and children to feel secure in. A parent we spoke to told us "The staff are hardworking, friendly, welcoming and caring. You can relax knowing that your children are in safe hands whilst at after school club."

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are cared for by skilled and competent staff who base their practice on appropriate training, learning and development, staff should develop a record to demonstrate how their knowledge and skills have helped them to improve outcomes for school age children. The provider should also develop clear roles at all levels of the service, to support responsibility and accountability.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that '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).

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
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	2 - Weak
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	2 - Weak
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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