

Letham Mains Out of School Club Day Care of Children

Hays Walk
Haddington
HADDINGTON
EH41 3FH

Telephone: 01620 826454

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 August 2023

Service provided by:
Edinburgh and Lothians Out of School
Care Network

Service provider number:
SP2004006938

Service no:
CS2021000023

About the service

Letham Mains Out of School Club is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 30 primary school aged children at any one time. The manager is peripatetic and is also the manager of Longniddry Out of School Club (CS2009233779).

The club operates from the dining area in Letham Mains Primary School. The club have access to a large storage area and kitchen facilities. The playground is accessible directly from the hall.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 21 August 2023 between 14:00 and 18:00 and an announced visit on 23 August 2023 between 15:00 and 18:00. Feedback from the inspection was given to the provider on 25 August 2023.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 several children using the service
- received six completed questionnaires from children's family representatives
- spoke with staff and management and received one completed questionnaire
- observed practice and daily experiences for children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing care from staff who engaged very positively with them.
- Children told us that they had fun and interesting activities to do at the club.
- Staff were well led and developing their reflective practice to help them achieve positive outcomes for children.
- The staff team worked very well together to ensure that children were safe and having fun.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths taken together clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were confident and happy to come into the club. They were made to feel welcome and secure by staff who greeted them warmly and with enthusiasm. The term had just started. To further increase children's sense of security and belonging, staff spent time reminding children about the routine for the session and ensuring that the new children knew what was happening and what the play options were for the afternoon. One parent commented "Our child has settled in seamlessly. There seems to be so many activities available and a substantial snack which is great."

To support individual children there was a system for personal planning. This included the registration information completed by parents. As an organisation the information collected directly from children was being assessed to include asking children what they thought staff needed to know about them. This would make these forms more engaging and meaningful.

Staff knew children in their care well and could talk confidently about their needs, likes and interests. Staff had made some recordings which indicated that some children needed further support but there was limited detail as to what that would look like. To further develop individual plans we have asked the manager to, develop methods to develop clear up to date meaningful strategies. These should be recorded, monitored and evaluated to ensure they are having an impact on the child. This would support children to have consistency and experience predictability in their overall care, play and learning.

Children enjoyed snack when they came into the club. One child told us it was the best bit of the afternoon. Children told us that they liked baking and making a range of foods with staff. Staff had re-introduced opportunities for children to help prepare snack and serve themselves and as this developed it would provide children with a fun and meaningful experience. The current process was a social experience where staff took the opportunity to sit and chat with children about their day and include them in the plans for the session.

Systems to promote children's safety, health and wellbeing were in place. Medication procedures were well organised and known to staff. Staff had an understanding of child protection and safe guarding through child protection training. To further support understanding and skill we have asked the organisation to look at more in depth child protection training for the trainee manager, to ensure that they feel confident when the peripatetic manager is not present.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

A good balance of planned and responsive experiences meant children were engaged in meaningful play of their choice. Experiences such as arts and crafts, reading, small world play and role-play supported children to explore their own ideas and be creative. Through these activities children experienced a sense of achievement and were having fun. One parent commented "My son has fun. He likes the staff and always has fun. I actually get told off if I pick him up earlier than usual because he's having too much fun. I enjoy the fact there is an option to go out to the park etc."

Children had significant opportunities to be active through the use of the school playground, some access to the gym hall and the use of some sports coaching opportunities provided by the organisation. Children told us that they liked playing outside as they had lots to do in the playground. This included the use of loose parts and an interesting and varied environment. Staff supported outdoor play well and engaged in what children were making and doing in a respectful way, which took account of children's rights and demonstrated a genuine interest in their ideas.

The peripatetic manager and staff understood types of play and that the planning of play activities supported learning. Interactions between staff and children during play made use of comments to support learning and understanding. Staff were using a floor book to record activities and where the ideas for some planned activities came from. To further develop this we suggested that learning or achievements could be added to the floor book to identify learning outcomes.

The floor book showed how children were included in the planning through discussion, observations and voting for what children wanted to do. At the time of our second visit staff tried to do a planning discussion with children after snack but this did not hold their attention as they wanted to get on with their play. Staff could have a discussion with children about how they wanted to be consulted with, to give meaningful ideas and suggestions for play and learning ideas.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The club operated from the dining hall in the school. Children had access to the hall, toilet facilities and playground. In addition there was a large room for storage of resources and snack making facilities.

The hall was bright, well ventilated and provided direct access to the school playground. The space provided plenty of room for children's play. Staff had ensured that the hall was fully set up and arranged for children coming in. This showed children that they were valued and that staff were prepared for them to have fun when they arrived. Space had been allocated for children's art work and larger displays. These were attractive and well maintained, which promoted a sense of pride and achievement for children.

The hall was well arranged to provide a welcoming and relaxing environment. There were play zones where children could relax and be cosy in the tent with cushions and books or take part in using the small world resources to promote imaginative play. One parent commented that there was a "Relaxed atmosphere, kids always seem to be settled and happy." The range and quality of resources enabled children to take part in a very good selection of activities and children told us that "We have lots to do." and "We can go and ask for toys if we need them."

The storage and snack making facilities were clean and very well organised. Staff had developed very good procedures to ensure that infection prevention and control measures were in place. Children washed their hands at appropriate times and were well monitored by staff during this process. Staff were trained in food hygiene procedures and ensured that food storage facilities were clean and organised to reflect good food storage practice.

Children's safety and security was promoted through the use of completed risk assessments. These included the risk mitigations but in some cases they also promoted the taking of calculated risks in children's play. This helped children to understand what their bodies were capable of and how to calculate risks for themselves.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths taken together clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The club was managed by a peripatetic manager. They were in the club at least two days per week. The manager was assisted by a trainee manager who was the person in charge when the peripatetic manager was not in the club. There was a good system for joint working and through discussion with the manager and trainee manager they were confident in their different roles and responsibilities. To enhance this we asked that they expand this understanding to record who is responsible for which aspects of the service. This would ensure that areas for auditing and monitoring are not missed and that the trainee manager is given further responsibilities to develop her managerial skills.

The peripatetic manager had carried out work to develop the staff team and provide them with opportunities and support to be reflective practitioners. There was now a good process for staff meetings where reflective discussions took place and staff were actively encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities. Staff told us that they felt confident in the peripatetic manager and valued her support to develop them into confident practitioners.

There were processes for auditing and monitoring of procedures and processes. This could be further enhanced by ensuring that the management team know who is responsible for auditing which areas of practice.

There were good examples of self-evaluation. The peripatetic manager was improvement focussed and had used good practice documents to make assessments for example, an environment rating scale had been used to assess the environment for older children. It was observed that they were a bit bored in the club. The evaluation then led to a separate area being developed for the older age group. The processes in place for self-evaluation could be further developed to enable the managers and staff to develop an improvement plan for the club, which would be shared with parents and evaluated to evidence improvement. We have sign posted managers to the self-evaluation resources developed by the Care Inspectorate.

Throughout our visits to the club there were many opportunities for children to share their views and give their comments. Staff ensured that these were recorded and used to influence the programme of activities or suggestions for snack. One child said that they felt staff listened to them, another said "If there is something I want I can ask staff. I might not get it straight away but they try." To include parents in the life of the club they had been given opportunities to make comments through questionnaires. Staff were developing the range of information for parents through their newsletters and conversations with parents at the end of the sessions. During our visit staff were very proactive about introducing themselves to new parents and giving a good range of feedback at the end of the day.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question, as several important strengths taken together clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a caring and nurturing staff team who knew them well and were focussed on providing high-quality care and support. Effective use was made of staff experience, knowledge and skills, to ensure children's experiences across the session were positive.

Staff worked well together. They provided children with a well paced and organised experience where children did not need to wait for staff to make arrangements or plans. Most tasks had been carried out before children came into the club therefore staff could spend their time engaging with children and ensuring that they had fun. This enhanced the relaxed and settled feel of the club.

Staff were aware of their roles for the session and supervised children well. The system to ensure that staff knew if children were in doors or outdoors was effective and staff had been deployed to enable the free flow element to outdoor play.

The staff team were appropriately skilled and held a very good level of childcare qualifications and experience. Where staff were not as experienced they were very well supported by their colleagues and the management team. This helped them to grow in confidence to help achieve positive outcomes for children.

To enhance staff development, staff had received an appraisal which identified some strengths and training needs. There were also opportunities for one to one discussions throughout the year. The organisation had developed an enhanced process for monitoring and assessing staff performance. This process would improve the opportunities for staff to direct their own professional development.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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