

# Aberlady Out of School Club Day Care of Children

Aberlady Primary School  
Moor Road  
Aberlady  
Longniddry  
EH32 0RQ

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
25 September 2025

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

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004006939

**Service no:**  
CS2016349531

## About the service

Aberlady Out of School Club is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 25 children of primary school age at any one time. The manager is also the manager of Stoneyhill Out of School Club.

The club is provided by Edinburgh and the Lothians out of School Care network (ELOSCN).

The club are situated within Aberlady Primary School in the coastal village of Aberlady in East Lothian. They have the use of the gym hall, owls nest (summer house) and playgrounds. The premises is situated close to local amenities, parks, woods and beaches.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 September 2025 between 14:45 and 18:15. 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.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke/spent time with several children across the day
- reviewed comments made by ten parents using our questionnaire
- spoke with staff, the manager and operations director
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met.
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

## Key messages

- Children's experiences were underpinned by the shared vision, values and goals which were developed with children and families.
- Very good processes for evaluating the quality of the club and outcomes for children resulted in continuous improvement.
- Children were having fun and experienced a good range of play opportunities which were based on their interests.
- Children were well supported by staff who knew them and their needs very well.
- Children had very good relationships with staff and each other.

## 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

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

## Leadership 5 - Very Good

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

### **Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources.**

Children, parents and staff had recently reviewed the vision, values and goals for the club to ensure that they reflected shared aspirations for children. The vision, values and goals were achievable, centred around children's rights and positive outcomes such as inclusivity and boosting confidence. The visions for the club were live aspirations. For example, staff and children were working on the vision of being more involved in the local community. To achieve this they were working with a community gardening group and were active in joining local and school events.

Children had a number of opportunities to provide views and evaluations of their experiences in the club. Staff had taken account of children's right's with a focus on their right to play. They also provided children with opportunities to influence the pace of the session, choice of snacks and opportunities to agree boundaries when it came to supporting their behaviour and relationships.

Continuous improvement was well supported by very good systems for purposeful evaluation of children's experiences. This included the system developed for use in the club and the external monitoring and evaluations from other managers in the organisation. The manager and staff used good practice documents to benchmark the quality of outcomes for children. Staff told us that they were very involved in self-evaluation discussions and the monitoring of the improvement plan. This helped staff to actively engage and influence the quality assurance processes.

The improvement plan was detailed and up to date to evidence where the club were in meeting their improvement targets. It was used as a live document used to promote continuous improvement. The manager had shared the improvement plan with parents and involved them in some of the evaluations. The uptake of involvement was limited and the manager and staff were looking at other ways to gain opinions and suggestions.

There were a number of areas of practice and record keeping processes which were regularly audited. Staff used information from auditing to change or improve practice. For example, changes to risk assessments where it was found accidents had increased. Children's health and wellbeing was very well supported by monitoring of medication procedures. Recordings and follow ups in personal plans were audited to ensure that they had up to date information on each child, which supported staff to meet their changing needs.

To support a consistent approach to carrying out recruitment checks, recruitment was carried out centrally by the organisation. Recruitment procedures were based on current good practice information and guidance to ensure that staff were suitable for their childcare role.

Staff told us that they were very familiar with their roles and responsibilities as part of a childcare team. These had been shared with them as part of their induction and was discussed during the appraisal process and team meetings. The induction procedure had been adapted to specific job roles and included mentoring from more experienced staff. Induction and staff development was well organised. The manager monitored the process regularly with suitable support, feedback and opportunities for regular 1:1 meetings. The time

taken to carry out induction helped to ensure that people had information and support to carry out their role in providing positive outcomes for children.

## Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where there were strengths within the settings work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

### Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing.

Children were provided with a range of good play experiences which focused on their right to play. Staff had observed that many children were familiar with play activities being planned and provided for them. Staff had used their skills to provide play approaches that were beginning to develop children's confidence and imagination in leading their own play. This provided children with opportunities to be motivated and have fun with experiences that interested them.

Staff ensured that children were aware of the play opportunities on offer to them over the session. They could choose to play indoors or outdoors, which was well organised, and children were very familiar with the process. In both play environments there were a good range of play resources which were varied and age appropriate. Children could also access additional items from the storage areas to enhance their play experiences.

Most children engaged with the range of play opportunities on offer. Further consideration was needed to the way some resources were arranged to provide additional curiosity and excitement. For example, there were a number of loose parts, which children use to make, build and problem solve, scattered around the outdoor area. This meant that children could not clearly see what was available and if they needed additional resources for their play ideas. Staff should ensure that there were opportunities for sensory play and where planned activities took place that these provided opportunities for challenge, extension to ideas and sustained interest.

The provider organisation had a number of sports coaches who visit the out of school clubs. The plan of sports coaching activities was well organised and included individual sports such as tennis and golf, group games such as cricket and basketball and activities such as playground games. One child told us "I really enjoyed the basketball. But I really like tennis best"

Staff enabled children to direct their own play and supported this as part of their play strategy. Interactions from staff to support critical thinking or creativity could be further improved. However, where children tried things out, staff encouraged and praised them. This resulted in children sustaining their interest in solving some problems or developing their skills.

Planning for play experiences centred around children's interests and stages of development. Staff were using observations of children's play to inform the planning process and actively involved them in asking for ideas and suggestions for activities. As well as longer term plans there was responsive planning for the experiences which staff supported on an immediate basis.

Play experiences were evaluated by staff and children in the floor book. This interactive record compiled by children and staff showed what children had enjoyed, what they wanted changed and what they had achieved. Children were very familiar with the floor book and shared their reflections about how much they enjoyed their play experiences with us.

## Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

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

### Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children were well supported by staff who understood the importance of building relationships to support them. The consistent staff team knew children in their care very well which further supported relationship building. They had a kind and calm approach towards children who went readily to them for support, advice or just to have a chat. Parents commented positively on the relationships between staff and children. "The engagement from all staff and the interest they take in my child's welfare." "It's so nurturing and I know my children are always so well catered for and looked after." "The staff are so welcoming and know all of the children extremely well."

Staff supported the relationships between children through the development of agreed ways in which they wanted to be treated by each other. They supported self-regulation and empathy between children in an age appropriate way. They were aware of those who needed more support in this area and provided clear and consistent reminders where behaviour affected others.

There was an understanding that the transition to the club and the transitions throughout the session needed to be supported. Staff had communicated well with families to ensure that new children settled well. To assist with this staff ensured that children knew what was happening, what choices were available and why things may need to change. This increased children's sense of security and confidence.

Children were given opportunities to be independent and make choices in the club. For example, where to play and whether to have snack. They could choose to play in small groups or alone if they wished. Privacy and dignity was promoted through the provision of a private place to share information and discreet access to toilet and changing facilities.

Children were provided with a healthy snack when arriving at the club. Due to the timing of access to the gym hall, the manager planned to move snack to the owls nest, which was a building in the school playground. At the time of our visit snack was held outdoors which children enjoyed. However, approaches to good practice around meals and snacks needed further consideration. The move to the owls nest would enable staff to monitor more effectively handwashing and safety when eating.

Children's health and wellbeing was well supported by very good procedures for the administration of medication. Detailed and regularly reviewed health support plans were in place and where needed additional training for medical conditions had been undertaken by staff.

Children's individual needs were very well supported through the personal planning process. Staff collected information from a number of sources such as the registration form, All About Me (completed by children), from the school and parents. This helped to build a picture of children's needs. Information was regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that plans were meaningful and suitable for the individual child.

A child-centred approach guided the process for developing support strategies for some children who needed them. Support plans focused on children's strengths as well as areas where additional input from staff might be needed. Staff took the approach that strategies were not just for children with identified additional needs, but could be short term supports for a number of situations or reasons.

Staff had made very good connections with families and the warm and welcoming environment provided for parents, when they arrived to collect their children, made them feel part of the club. Handovers from staff were positive and in enough detail to evidence what children had experienced across the session. Parents commented "We have regular chats and if I did have any concerns I would be comfortable going to any member of staff with those concerns." "Always told what snacks are on offer and what my child chose, as well as what activities they carried out that day. Communication is excellent." "Staff are available if you need to talk about anything on any morning, and would make another agreed time if a longer discussion was needed." To build trust and engagement with families staff had provided opportunities to give feedback about the service, take part in evaluations, been provided with newsletters and opportunities to visit the club and talk to staff.

The manager and staff had developed positive connections with the school and local community. They attended events and contributed to community activities such as the fete and the local garden club. Children told us about a recent activity where local people found painted stones, which had been hidden in the community by children. These activities had raised the club profile but also involved children in the life of their community which impacted on their social wellbeing.

## 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).

## Detailed evaluations

Leadership	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good



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