

Pirniehall and St David's Out of School Provision Day Care of Children

Pirniehall Primary School
West Pilton Crescent
Edinburgh
EH4 4EP

Telephone: 01313 154 420

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 October 2025

Service provided by:
North Edinburgh Childcare

Service provider number:
SP2003003092

Service no:
CS2003048347

About the service

Pirniehall and St David's OOSC is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time of primary school age during term time and a maximum of 60 children at any one time during school holidays. Children must be aged 4-13 years and must either attend primary school or be commencing primary school within two months of their start date at the club.

Adult:child ratios will be a minimum of:

- 3 years and over - 1:8 if the children attend more than four hours per day, or
- 1:10 if the children attend for less than four hours per day
- If all children are over 8 years old 1:10

Children may access areas of the premises as designated by the headteacher.

The manager is also the manager of Forthview Out of School Provision CS2003048328.

The service is delivered from Pirniehall Primary School.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which started on Thursday 3 October 2025 between the hours of 15:00 and 18:00. We returned to complete the inspection on Friday 4 October 2025 between the hours of 14:00 and 17:00. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out this inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- observed children using the service and received feedback from one parent;
- spoke with staff and management;
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment;
- observed practice and daily routines; and
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service.

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, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within the Leadership heading and the section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.

During this inspection we 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; and

- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

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

Key messages

- Children were nurtured and welcomed into the service by friendly and calm staff who knew them well.
- The quality of snack time had improved, resulting in children enjoying a relaxed, safe and nutritious food experience after school.
- Play experiences and resources were not yet consistently interesting, intriguing and appropriate for the age group of children present.
- Three areas for improvement from the last inspection were not met. While some progress had been made, children were not yet consistently receiving a high quality service.

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

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Leadership | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children play and learn | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children are supported to achieve | 4 - Good |

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

Leadership 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

The service worked towards an overall organisational aim to provide affordable childcare in the local area. As a result, families benefited from an accessible and flexible service. Families could be confident in the staff team as they were recruited safely into their role. Staff were inducted over a period of time to ensure they were knowledgeable about the children and families they worked with. This helped the building of relationships. In addition, parents were asked for annual feedback and suggestions for the service. This gave opportunities for them to be involved in service development.

Following the last inspection, an action plan was created to aid improvements for children. Some of this was achieved and as a result, children were experiencing an improved snack time for example. However, self-evaluation for improvement was at the early stages of development. While regular audits were identifying areas for development, improvements were not fully embedded or sustained over a period of time, such as the manager having an oversight of the service. As a result, children were not yet experiencing enhanced outcomes across all aspects of the service. An area for improvement from the last inspection was not met (see area for improvement 3 in the section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Furthermore, some changes had taken place within the staff team. The peripatetic manager was not consistently present in the service to support these changes. Moving forward the team would benefit from consistent leadership and modelling of good practice to support development and improvement. The provider should refer to the peripatetic management guidance to support the planning for effective leadership and management of staff and resources to consistently benefit children (see area for improvement 1).

Quality indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Children were benefiting from the professional values shown by staff in daily practice. For example, children were nurtured and their choices respected. As a result, positive relationships were evident between staff and children, bringing a relaxed and friendly atmosphere to the service. Children were comfortable and confident approaching staff to express their needs and wishes.

A range of opportunities were available for staff to develop their skills and knowledge. Staff could access a training platform to refresh their understanding or learn new information. Regular meetings took place to give staff time to reflect on their learning, however these were not yet effective to aid improvements in day to day service provision. For example, staff could talk about their knowledge of children's play and developmental stages, however the experiences on offer for children did not reflect this knowledge. While there were processes in place to support staff to develop their practice using best practice guidance, the provider should further consider how to enable staff to use these processes to aid improvement (see area for improvement 1).

The provider had responded to the need for additional staff to meet individual needs of children. Overall however, while staffing was consistently meeting the recommended ratio, the level was not always effective enough to ensure children received a flexible and responsive service. The meant that children were potentially not having their needs and wishes consistently met.

Staff mostly worked as a team, sharing information and communicating to ensure children were safe. They were able to position themselves around the space to offer children choice of movement where possible. Staff used their knowledge of children to make decisions about deployment and the level of supervision needed. To further secure this approach, the team should reflect on how the setting is risk assessed and firm up procedures for when children are moving between one area and another. This would raise staff awareness of potential issues and further reduce any risk to children.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children receive a consistently high quality service, the provider should ensure management arrangements meet the needs of the team and adhere to best practice guidance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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).

Children play and learn 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Children's stages of development and individual interests were not fully being considered to create intriguing and challenging play and development opportunities. While younger children generally settled to play quickly, older children were disengaged. For example, a child sat alone watching others while a few older children disrupted younger children's play. There was a mix of free play and planned activities, however the quality of them was not consistent enough to hold children's attention for long.

Free play was impacted on negatively by the environment and resources available for children. The setting lacked inspiration with limited attention to detail around play provocations and independent decision-making. For example, paper was not freely available at the drawing table; the home/kitchen area was cluttered and uninviting. Open-ended materials were available but not stored with intention and so children did not use them. The room used by the service was small and so creativity is needed to make the space engaging for children.

During inspection there were a few planned activities on offer. One had intention and had been initiated by children, therefore they were animated and using their imaginations. The others, however, were limited for an age group which needs stimulation, interest and some guidance so they can learn new things. Children would benefit from intentional interactions from staff, which would add value to their experiences. For example, staff missed opportunities to extend children's thinking through decision making and problem solving.

A strength of the service was the daily access to physical activity throughout the session, either in the outdoors or the gym hall. Children had fresh air, space to run and time to explore a more natural environment. This strength should be built upon with the addition of new resources and quality interactions from staff to inspire children in their play.

Children are supported to achieve 4 – Good

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well. Individual friendships, needs and preferences were often used to provide their care. Children were warmly welcomed into the service and were treated with kindness and respect. Overall, children were given a strong message that they mattered through positive relationships and connections.

More nutritious food choices were being introduced with a new menu, following a review of the updated best practice guidance. This ensured children had balanced food choices each day. The quality of snack times had improved since the last inspection. Children had opportunities to independently practice new skills in a safe and sociable environment. They could eat at their own pace in a relaxed environment.

A commitment to building positive family connections meant that parents were comfortable and happy in the setting. Staff welcomed them warmly as they gave verbal handovers of each child's time in the service. Parents were instrumental in completing and updating children's personal plans to ensure staff had significant information about children. This meant that they were involved in planning children's care.

Children's current needs were recorded in their personal plans and reviewed regularly by parents. Some children had their individual needs well planned for and so they received the support that they needed. Other children were not well planned for and so there were missed opportunities for consistent and planned support for them. Furthermore, children's preferences and interests were not yet being fully used to plan play experiences. As a result, an area for improvement from the last inspection was not met (see area for improvement 1 in the section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'). The provider should ensure personal planning is progressed so all children are supported to reach their full potential.

To further support children's overall welfare and safety, the organisation intended to review the policy for children walking home by themselves. This would ensure children's individual needs can be planned for by a service which prioritises the nurturing of children as a core aim.

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

In order to enhance support for children's health, welfare and safety needs, the provider should ensure personal plans reflect children's current needs and preferences. These can then be planned for and monitored to ensure progress.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, '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).

This area for improvement was made on 28 January 2025.

Action taken since then

Personal plans had been maintained since the last inspection and so information about children was current. Further work was needed to ensure the information was being consistently used to plan for meeting children's needs. For example, samples checked during inspection showed that information had not been followed up with parents to ensure staff were fully informed about a health need; and children who were needing extra support should have this planned for continuity.

In addition, further work was needed to ensure children's interests and preferences from their All About Me pages were being used to plan for experiences and opportunities. This would help children to flourish.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to enhance children's play experiences, the provider should increase staff understanding of quality play and learning for school aged children. Quality assurance processes should then support the use of this knowledge to improve provision.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.

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Action taken since then

Opportunities were provided for staff to reflect on and enhance their knowledge of play and their role in it. Staff were able to talk about their knowledge, however this was not consistently demonstrated in practice. As a result, children did not receive consistently intriguing and challenging play experiences for their stage of development. During inspection, this was not identified and addressed throughout the sessions.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support continuous improvement, the provider should ensure the manager has sufficient oversight of the service through robust quality assurance processes and by being present in the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, '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 15 November 2023.

This area for improvement was made on 15 November 2023.

Action taken since then

The frequency of the managers presence in the setting had improved following the last inspection. As a result, quality assurance processes had been enhanced. This however, had not been sustained or developed over a period of time. Overall, the manager did not have sufficient oversight of the service or the needs of children and staff. This was impacting on the quality of service children received.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain.

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

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|--|-----------------------------|
| Leadership | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Leadership and management of staff and resources | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children play and learn | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Playing, learning and developing | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children are supported to achieve | 4 - Good |
| Nurturing care and support | 4 - Good |

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