

# Newtongrange After School Club Day Care of Children

c/o Newtongrange Primary School  
Sixth Street  
Newtongrange  
Dalkeith  
EH22 4LB

Telephone: 0131 561 9330

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 April 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Newtongrange After School club SCIO

**Service provider number:**  
SP2012011908

**Service no:**  
CS2012310959

## About the service

Newtongrange After School Club is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 55 primary school age children at any one time.

The service operates from Newtongrange Primary School in Midlothian. The school is situated in a quiet residential area of the village. The service is provided from the dining area and a small additional room with kitchen facilities. Children have space for their belongings and have access to the playground.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 April 2026 between the times of 09:00 and 13:00 and 9 April 2026 between the times of 14:30 and 15:40. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- reviewed eight completed questionnaires from families and five from staff
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

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.

**Key messages**

- Management and staff were committed to the continued development of the service to improve outcomes for children.
- Staff continued to build their skills and extend their professional knowledge.
- Children experienced rich play and learning experiences which supported them to be imaginative, curious and creative in their play.
- Children were valued, secure and supported because staff created a consistently nurturing environment.

**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	4 - Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very 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 4 - Good

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.

### Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service's vision, values, and aims focused on kindness, respect, and compassion. Staff reflected these values during their interactions with children, families and each other. Children's feedback was positive about the service, one child told us, "We can talk to staff they are kind and always help us and I love coming to the club." Children enjoyed a safe and engaging indoor and outdoor environment where they experienced joy and happiness. One family described the after school club as, "An inclusive, open, warm, and safe environment." The values led approach supported consistent care. As a result, children were secure, respected and well supported in their wellbeing and development. The service was renewing their terms and conditions, we discussed with the provider and manager the importance of introducing these in a way that reflected the service's vision, values, and aims.

An effective improvement plan was in place and supported ongoing development of the service. Clear priorities and documented evaluations across key areas included snack routine, outdoor play, personal planning, holiday club provision, staff training and reflection. The service gathered feedback from children, families and staff to guide improvement and review progress. All families who responded to our questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed they were meaningfully involved in developing the service. Staff told us, "We evaluate what is working and not working within the setting". Since the previous inspection progress had been made. Improvements had enhanced children's experiences, play, learning and development resulting in strengthened quality of the service.

Overall quality assurance processes were effective. A previous area for improvement had been met. Staff reflection helped improve consistency of care. While progress was evident, the service needed to continue embedding improvements through ongoing self evaluation. To maintain high standards, improvement plans should reflect the most up to date guidance. For example, the improvement plan referred to outdated food and nutrition advice. Consistently using and sharing current best practice guidance with staff, including the Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare sectors, would strengthen leadership. This would ensure practice remained current, build staff confidence, and continue to improve outcomes for children.

Staff had been recruited in a way that had been informed by all aspects of safer recruitment practices. An effective induction process for new staff had been developed and implemented. This helped new staff understand their roles and feel supported as they joined the service. One staff commented, "I was welcomed into the setting very thoroughly and any questions I've ever had have been answered well. We also have one to one meetings which are great". The manager should ensure that all staff maintain their professional registration with the appropriate regulatory bodies. More consistent monitoring is needed, as one staff member's registration had not been renewed. Strengthening this process will support safer practice and ensure children continue to receive high quality care. (see area for improvement 1).

Staff told us they were well supported. They described positive relationships and clear support from the manager. Communication was clear and consistent through regular team meetings. This helped staff share information, reflect on practice and work well together. As a result, staff were confident and motivated, which contributed to high quality care and positive experiences for children.

### Areas for improvement

1.

To maintain the safety and welfare of children, the provider should improve procedures to ensure that all staff employed in the club registered with the appropriate professional regulatory bodies. The manager should support staff to maintain their registration and meet ongoing professional learning and development requirements, including those set by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This will ensure staff understand the standards of practice and behaviour expected of them and ensure employers meet their responsibilities under the codes of practice.

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

## Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

### Playing, Learning and developing

Children were confident and engaged in a wide range of play experiences that supported choice, creativity, curiosity, imagination and social skills. The well-resourced environment encouraged child-led play through stimulating and open-ended materials. One child told us, "I like the reading corner with fidgets, bean bags and books. It's a wee box of books but we can look in cupboard if we want more".

Children led their own play. For instance, a group were deeply engaged in imaginative role play setting up a café. They named the café and created a menu, which supported early writing skills. Staff were invited to join in the play and responded to children's ideas. They extended learning by effective questioning and providing materials the children requested. This supported sensory play, creativity, imagination and expressive language. When finished, staff encouraged and supported children to tidy up. This promoted responsibility, independence, and life skills.

Interactions with children were warm and responsive. Staff helped children express their ideas and offered regular praise, reassurance, and encouragement through natural, caring responses. One child commented, "I really like the staff they are good fun and play games with us". Staff supported children to develop their thinking and problem solving skills by using prompts such as, "How can we figure it out?". For instance during activities such as the jelly bean and stick challenge. Their comments supported early science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning and helped children describe, extend, and adapt their creations. This encouraged perseverance when things did not go as planned.

Outdoor play enriched children's curiosity and supported their physical development. Children moved freely between indoors and outdoors, which promoted choice and independence. One child commented "I love going to the park listening to stories". Another said, "I like it when come outside and play 'red, red river', sometimes we go to the park and Edinburgh". Some children chose to relax outside and read on a bench they created from tyres and mats. Others worked together with loose parts to solve problems. With staff support, they built a pull along cart. Staff stepped in at the right times and held back when needed. This approach strengthened children's imagination, teamwork, turn taking, and problem solving skills.

Child centred planning effectively supported children's interests and choices. Staff regularly observed play and used this to build on children's emerging interests. Children shared ideas through conversations and contributed to mind maps in the big book. The book showed strong ownership, with frequent entries from children about ideas, resource requests and feedback. This approach ensured planning reflected what mattered to children and strengthened their voice, confidence, and engagement in play, learning and development.

Staff regularly shared children's play and achievements with families through an online platform. Some families responded and added comments, which strengthened communication between home and the club. Strong links with the school were evident, with some staff working across both settings. This helped staff understand children's emotions and needs. As a result, children received consistent support, experienced smoother transitions and were better supported after a busy school day.

## Children are supported to achieve **5 - Very Good**

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

### **Nurturing care and support**

Children were valued, secure and supported because staff created a consistently nurturing environment. Staff interactions were warm, kind and compassionate. They responded sensitively to children's emotional needs. They listened carefully and respected children's wishes and choices. This helped children feel understood and cared for. One child told us, "We always chat with staff, they really do listen to me, some staff work in school, so we know them well". One family commented "My child has become more confident since attending this club and developed more friendships". Positive relationships created a strong sense of belonging and connection. As a result, children's wellbeing and emotional development were well supported.

The lunchtime routine was calm and well organised. Children washed their hands and chose where to sit, which supported independence. They brought their own packed lunches and food was discreetly provided when a child forgot their lunch. Staff sat with children, encouraged positive social interaction and provided time to eat without rushing. This helped children feel relaxed, included, and supported. Fresh fruit and water were available throughout the session to support hydration and manage hunger. Children shared their likes and dislikes, which informed menu planning and supported healthy choices and participation.

Personal planning had strengthened and the area for improvement following the last inspection had been met. Children's individual plans had been reviewed in line with best practice guidance. Staff worked well with children to identify what helped them when situations felt difficult. This respected children's rights and strengthened their ability to manage emotions. As a result, children were listened to and supported in their wellbeing. All families agreed or strongly agreed they were fully involved in their child's care including developing and reviewing their personal plan. One family commented, "Staff are helpful, friendly and very quick to respond to questions or requests for extra care". Some wellbeing records were strong, but recording was not always consistent. The service could strengthen monitoring and recording of children's chronologies. This would help staff identify patterns early, provide targeted support, and improve outcomes for all children.

Children's healthcare needs were met through safe and effective systems. Robust auditing processes ensured medication was stored correctly, consent was in place, and information was accurate. This helped staff identify signs and symptoms early and administer medication safely. As a result, children experienced safe, well-managed healthcare that supported their wellbeing.

The service created a welcoming and inclusive environment for children and families. Staff valued strong partnerships with families and understood the positive impact this had on children's outcomes. They shared information daily through conversations at drop off and pick up and through regular updates on the service's online platform. One family commented, "The family app is a great tool for communicating with the club and is regularly checked by every staff member". This supported clear communication and consistent care. Staff built trusting and caring relationships with children and families. As a result, children experienced stable, well supported care between home and the after school club, promoting their wellbeing and play, learning and development.

Opportunities were available for families to connect with the service. Some families took part in annual general meetings (AGM) and supported fundraising events such as bake sales and planning for the community gala day. One family commented, "We always have the opportunity to speak with the staff and are invited in to observe what the kids are doing". These experiences strengthened relationships with families and built positive connections.

## 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

To enable all children to benefit from care and support that meets their individual needs, the provider should ensure planned support is in place for children who need it. Support strategies should be clearly documented, consistently implemented and regularly reviewed. Improving how personal plans are used will promote children's wellbeing, safety, choices and individual needs.

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

**This area for improvement was made on 19 August 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had improved children's personal planning. Children received support when they needed it. Staff worked with children to develop their own strategies using mind maps. This meant children were fully involved in developing their own plan. Staff, children, and families reviewed these plans during scheduled reviews and whenever needed. We discussed the importance of robust monitoring and recording systems. For example, regularly updating children's chronologies would help ensure plans accurately reflected their wellbeing. See the main body of the report under the heading, Supporting children to achieve.

**This area for improvement has been met**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing and promote the continued development and improvement of the service, the provider, manager and staff team should ensure robust self-evaluation and quality assurance is taking place. This should be well organised, so it is achievable, reviewed and monitored over time. This is so that improvement is focused in the places that will have direct impact on improving outcomes for children.

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

'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 19 August 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

The service had continued to improve and showed clear progress. The manager had strengthened their leadership skills. This supported positive and ongoing change across the service.

Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were becoming more effective. The improvement plan supported clear and purposeful action and evaluation. Strong teamwork and continued support from the board helped drive improvement. Most systems worked well. Although systems were in place and quality assurance activity was taking place, these needed to be more consistently embedded across the service. See the main body of the report Under the heading leadership.

The appointment of a qualified practitioner was positive. This would contribute to supporting the manager, strengthen oversight, and improve consistency.

**This area for improvement has been met**

### Previous area for improvement 3

Management should monitor staff practice to evaluate how training had influenced practice, understanding and positive outcomes for children. Staff should then reflect on their learning and embed it in their practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which states:

'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 19 August 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

Staff identified and completed further training. They had completed training logs and clearly reflected on their learning. They had time to share and discuss learning at team meetings and through daily practice. Training included, neurodiversity, trauma-informed practice, the united nations convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC), and play. Staff were encouraged to build on their strengths and knowledge. As a result, training and ongoing learning strengthened practice across the service. We observed warm, nurturing interactions. Staff listened carefully, valued children's views, and consistently promoted children's rights. Rights were visible in the environment and supported through daily practice. Children told us they felt safe, listened to, and confident to share ideas. Trauma-informed and active listening practice increased staff empathy and supported positive outcomes for children.

**This area for improvement has been met**

### Previous area for improvement 4

To maintain the safety and welfare of children, the provider should improve the recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff employed in the club have been recruited in line with safe recruitment practices.

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).

**This area for improvement was made on 19 August 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

All new staff had been recruited using safer recruitment practices. References and disclosures were completed before staff started in their roles. This ensured children were cared for by trusted adults. As discussed in the Leadership section of the report, a new area for improvement has been added. This is to

focus on strengthening systems to ensure all staff are registered with, and supported to maintain, their Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration.

**This area for improvement has 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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

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

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