The Poppy Club
Day Care of Children

The Clachan
Balfron
Glasgow
G63 0NY

Telephone: 01360 440454

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 January 2020

Service provided by:
The Poppy Club Limited

Service provider number:
SP2004938256

Service no:
CS2003055311

About the service

The Poppy Club is an out of school care service that has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011. It is provided by The Poppy Club Limited and operates from a purpose built log cabin in the village of Balfron, Stirling. There is also a smaller cabin known as 'the shack' which is multi purpose but mainly for the use of older children. The club has access to a large, well equipped garden area.

The Poppy Club provides a care service to a maximum of 30 children aged 4 - 16 years of whom no more that 4 children are aged 4 years to 4 years and 6 months.

The service operates Monday to Fridays between the times of 8am - 9am and 3pm - 6pm during term time. During school holidays and in-service days the service can operate between 8am and 6pm.

The main aims of The Poppy Club are:

- To provide a childcare service for parents in the Balfron area
- To provide a service before and after school and during school holidays and in-service days
- To provide friendly, consistent and reliable quality care
- To promote equal opportunities to ensure the wellbeing of all club users.

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC); Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. GIRFEC supports children and their parents to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

What people told us

There were 10 children attending the service on the first afternoon of our inspection and 17 on our second visit. We observed that during both sessions children were familiar with routines and quickly settled into chosen activities. It was evident that children felt ownership of their club, they were interested in the purpose of our visit making us feel welcome. Five children agreed to fill in questionnaires for us about the quality of their experience at The Poppy Club. They all believed the adults that cared for them were kind and helpful. Children's comments included:

They felt good at the club because -

"I have fun." (age 6 years)
"There are lots of games." (age 7 years)
"There are lots of fun games for everyone." (age 11 years)

Children's opinions of the games and activities -

"There are loads of board games and we can play games inside if it is dark." (age 11 years)
"They are fun." (age 6 years)

Children wouldn't change anything about their club and told us they mainly made decisions about games although an 11 year old expanded on this -

"We can ask for toys and we can choose a project to learn about."

We issued eight care standards questionnaires to the service to distribute to parents/carers prior to the inspection taking place. We received four completed questionnaires. All responses from parents were very positive; three were substantiated with written comments:

"The Poppy Club provides fabulous care for our children and they love their time there. Christine also provides a service to all our family, she is incredibly generous in the flexibility she allows us. I don't know what we would do without Christine and Poppy Club."

"The Poppy Club in Balfron provides an excellent service in what can be a challenging rural area for working parents. My children have been here for nearly 10 years and have both always been very happy, secure in their environment and well looked after."

"Poppy Club provides a safe and welcoming environment for children with a personal approach to care. Children are treated as individuals and with a range of activities suitable for all ages that attend, there is always something stimulating to do as well as being encouraged to complete homework. The children, despite age differences, clearly get along well together and our daughter has formed friendships with other children at Poppy Club. Christine Davies goes out her way to ensure the children are safe, happy, occupied and enjoy their time at the Poppy Club."

We also spoke with four parents during the inspection process who echoed the above sentiments. They spoke highly of the provider/manager's commitment to the local community and their professional while compassionate approach. Parents particularly appreciated the flexibility of the service.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own quality assurance paperwork, which highlighighted the service priority area for development and how they were monitoring the quality of provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The club displayed an inclusive and respectful ethos toward children and families. We observed that children using the club were happy, confident and engaged in activities of their choice. They played well together and had formed positive relationships. Staff chatted to children and listened to them in ways that encouraged them to feel valued, included and nurtured. From wall displays and children's personal plans we could see that children's achievements were celebrated by staff and shared with parents so that children developed a positive view of themselves.

We found that children's views were at the centre of planning for the service as a whole. For example children were involved in fundraising for their chosen charity in a meaningful way, taking responsibility for collection, organising and pricing of items. In this way children were developing a range of skills, such as numeracy, literacy and citizenship.

In response to our recommendation, children's personal plans had been developed and parents/carers were given the opportunity twice per year to meet with the manager to discuss their child's progress and future needs. Alternatively, parents could complete and return a questionnaire by email. Some children had completed 'all about me' information about their preferences and interests. There were GIRFEC templates for children to share what the wellbeing indicators meant for them and where they would benefit from more support. The manager agreed to continue to consolidate and embed this approach in consultation with staff, children and parents. They also agreed that more work could be done on identifying and recording meaningful next steps in children's learning and development with parents as well as children. This approach will help ensure that children's personal plans are responsive to children's needs and respect their wishes and choices.

Staff told us that child protection was included in their induction programme and they were confident that they would be able to follow through any concerns they had about the welfare and safety of children. The manager should continue with plans to provide formal child protection training for new staff. We signposted them to the online programme available from NSPCC https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/scotland/ NSPCC is a national charity that promotes action to better protect children and young people.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We observed the club accommodation to be clean, bright and well maintained. Children freely chose resources that were appropriate for their age and ability but also knew where additional
resources were stored, which they could easily access to develop their play ideas. Children confirmed that when they asked for new toys or equipment the manager usually respected their suggestions. For example they were very excited to tell us about the purchase of a hot tub for the club: a request they did not expect to be taken seriously. We noted that risk assessments were undertaken for new equipment added to the club to ensure children's safety.

The outdoor environment was the current focus for service development. The manager had created a powerpoint presentation to share photographs and information about progress and children's involvement in this. This kept everyone informed about children's learning experiences and respecting children's ideas contributed to them feeling included and valued.

The majority of children attending the club were collected from the nearby primary school and walked to the club with staff. This had the added benefit of children learning about following club rules to keep themselves safe, for example waiting for the known adult and road safety. Staff told us they also sometimes stopped at the park so that children could be active in the fresh air.

We saw that the staff managed infection control well in the service and that children were aware of when to wash their hands in order to keep themselves healthy. We asked the manager to change the way that paper towels were dispensed and disposed of during hand washing routines: they implemented this immediately. This will reduce the risk of cross
contamination and infection among people using the service.

Both staff were trained in paediatric first aid which meant that they were well prepared to take care of any children involved in an accident. Although there had been no recent accidents/incidents involving children, we could see there were appropriate systems for recording these when necessary. This included holding children's emergency contact details so that staff could easily organise children's on going care or medical treatment with their parents/carers. These measures contributed to children's health, safety and wellbeing.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The club was staffed by the manager and one support worker and we found children experience a warm atmosphere because this small team had a good working relationship. In our conversations staff demonstrated a good knowledge of children's individual needs, preferences and personalities. One parent commented to us that they believed the compassionate care offered by staff meant their child felt "loved" at the service.

Children were safeguarded because the service provider followed safe recruitment processes, ensuring staff were fit to practice with children. Staff who had been most recently recruited could confirm that they had been vetted and that their employment had been subject to a six month probationary period. This was a previous recommendation that had now been overtaken. We were particularly impressed by how the manager was using Scottish Government's new 'Early Learning and Childcare - National Induction Resource' to welcome new staff and support them to become reflective practitioners.

In addition to their induction programme, staff had participated in a range of online training to support children's health, wellbeing and development. They had engaged in professional reading and we looked at their folder where they had written reflective statements to demonstrate their understanding of legislation and national guidance. We acknowledged that accessing training that was cost effective and in keeping with a work/life balance was challenging. We signposted the manager and staff to the open badges scheme offered by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This scheme recognises learning that staff have engaged in and contributes towards their post registration training and learning (PRTL). https://www.sssc.uk.com/supporting-the-workforce/learning-zone/ SSSC is responsible for registering people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

The service provider provided two out of school care services and was the manager of one. In response to our previous recommendation the two managers were at an early stage of implementing a system for their own staff appraisal. From sampling their peer review templates it was evident that the managers were developing skills in offering constructive criticism of each other's practice. They were reflecting on their practice in reference to their professional codes and national guidance. The manager should continue to develop this approach as it will give families confidence that staff are competent and skilled in delivering positive outcomes for their children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We found, and parents confirmed, that the manager was good at sharing information with families about the operation of the service. Parents felt confident to speak with the manager about any concerns or if they required advice.

We had previously recommended that effective decision making processes were implemented to enable the continued development of the service. The provider/manager took account of everyone's views when making changes to the service. Both staff and parents intimated that they felt listened to and that their feedback influenced the plans for developing the service. Children were learning about decision making and analysis of information through activities such as voting and participating in children's meetings.This made it more likely that people felt included and respected.

At our last inspection we had asked the provider/manager to create an improvement plan for the service but from our conversations it became apparent there was confusion over what this should include. For example whether this differed from an action plan. Both are concerned with taking the service priorities forward within an achievable timescale. An improvement plan should include who is responsible for leading the priority and the resources needed. Progress with service priorities should continue to be evaluated, for example at staff and children's meetings, thus helping to identify any additional actions or resources needed.

We could see the club had been focusing on developing the outdoor area but their 'action plan' did not recognise the work that had been planned and undertaken in response to our recommendations. It gave more emphasis to the process than the initial plan. We signposted the manager to our recent guidance 'Self-evaluation for improvement - your guide' (2019) to assist with the improvement cycle. This will make sure that children benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the club having robust and transparent quality assurance processes. https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/Self_evaluation_for_improvement_-_your_guide.pdf

We suggested that the manager streamline their approach to documentation to avoid duplication of effort. This should include archiving. For example, there was a range of systems for logging children's attendance at the club. There was a separate fire register with contact/details of parents/carers. Registers were not differentiated to help account for children actually present at any given time/date. We asked the manager to review the format of registers, ensuring that everyone understood their responsibility for keeping records up to date. This was implemented before the second day of our visit. It included additional measures such as a whiteboard with a running total to account for children being picked up, outside playing or temporarily absent at another activity. We advised the manager familiarise themselves with our guidance on records that all registered services should be keeping. This was to help demonstrate management accountability and contribute to children's safety and wellbeing.
https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1601/records-that-all-registered-care-services-except-childminding-must-keep.pdf

We discussed the importance of the provider/manager distinguishing between mobile phone for personal and professional use. For example so that there are clear protocols for where children's photos and emergency contact numbers are stored, professionally and lawfully. We signposted them to guidance provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which is an independent public body that helps protect personal information, thus safeguarding children. https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

The manager should further develop children's care plans using the wellbeing indicators from Scottish Government guidance, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) to assess children's learning and development. This should also include the identification of next steps for learning for children.

Health and Social Care Standards 1.15 - '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'.

This recommendation was made on 31 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's personal plans had been developed and parents/carers were given the opportunity twice per year to meet with the manager to discuss their child's progress and future needs. Alternatively parents could complete and return a questionnaire by email. Some children had completed 'all about me' information about their preferences and interests. There were GIRFEC templates for children for share what the wellbeing indicators meant for them and where they would benefit from more support. The manager agree to continue to consolidate and embed this approach in consultation with staff, children and parents. They should pay attention to ensuring that children's individual next steps are explicit and meaningful.

This recommendation had been met.

Recommendation 2

The manager should further develop the systems in place to show how decisions are made about the continued development of the service and who has responsibility for particular tasks.

National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standards 13 - Improving the service and 14.7 - Well managed service.

This recommendation was made on 26 February 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The manager had continued to implement systems that demonstrated how decisions were made about the development of the service. These included questionnaires and meetings for parents, staff supervision and children's meetings. They should continue to streamline their systems so that old information is archived and current evidence is readily accessible and meaningful.

This recommendation had been met.

Recommendation 3

The manager should review service recruitment procedures in accordance with Scottish Executive guidance, 'Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment'.

Health and Social Care Standards 4.11 - 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'.

This recommendation was made on 31 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

One member of staff had been recruited since the last inspection. Safe recruitment systems were in keeping with current legislation and good practice. Appropriate vetting had been completed prior to applicants taking up post. The provider/manager had made good use of Scottish Government's new 'Early Learning and Childcare - National Induction Resource' to ensure new members of staff understood their role and responsibilities and were supported to reflect on their practice.

This recommendation had been met.

Recommendation 4

The manager should ensure suitable arrangements are in place for her appraisal.
Health and Social Care Standards 4.11 - 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'.

This recommendation was made on 31 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service provider provided two out of school care services. The two managers engaged in peer review underpinned by a template provided by Scottish Out Of School Care Network (SOSCN). From the most recent sample we could see that the managers were developing skills in offering constructive criticism of each other's practice. They were reflecting on their practice in reference to national guidance and best practice, such as GIRFEC. They should continue to develop this approach.

This recommendation had 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.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
31 Jan 2019	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 3 - Adequate Not assessed
15 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
16 Jan 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good
26 Oct 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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