Southwood Out of School Club
Day Care of Children

Southwood Primary School
Marchmont Crescent
Glenrothes
KY6 1JU

Telephone: 07515 189 485

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 April 2024

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2005088459

About the service

Southwood Out of School Club is a daycare of children service provided by Fife Council from Southwood Primary School. It is located in a residential area of the town of Glenrothes. The service is registered to provide school aged childcare to a maximum of 40 children at any one time, for children from an age to attend primary school up to 14 years old.

Children are cared for in the school's community room which is sometimes used by the school during the day. There is a door to the playground very close to the room, as well as toilets in the corridor outside the room. Children also have access to a nurture room which offers a quieter space for them to enjoy.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 30 April 2024 between 15:00 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with eight children
- received feedback from two of their family members
- spoke with four staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and independent in their care, play and learning experiences because staff had an enabling attitude towards them.
- Children and staff had fun together as they played games, enjoying each other's company, building strong and trusting relationships.
- Families were happy with the quality of children's experiences and spoke positively about their relationships with staff.
- Staff were committed and passionate about providing high quality care, play and learning through love, nurture and respect, working effectively as a team to meet their needs, rights and choices.
- The setting was mostly clean, safe and well-maintained and some changes would improve children's experiences, such as updating the kitchen space.
- Leaders were developing good systems for quality assurance and self-evaluation at an appropriate pace, using the views of children and families to inform change.
- Staff should continue to use best practice guidance to reflect on their work and evaluate children's experiences so that they are confident they are meeting national expectations for school aged childcare.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - 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? 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 key question as **very good**.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were treated with warmth, kindness and compassion in their daily experiences. Staff had built loving and trusting relationships with children. As a result, there was a positive, fun and supportive atmosphere that helped children to feel safe and secure. Children were confident because staff encouraged them to be independent, respecting their needs, rights and choices. Families told us they felt included and respected by staff and were confident that their children were well cared for. Throughout our time in the service, it was clear children were relaxed, comfortable and enjoying genuine discussions with staff who cared deeply about them.

Each child had a personal plan that detailed their needs and interests. All staff were aware of allergies, dietary requirements or health needs so they could keep children safe and healthy. If children needed medication, there were very good procedures in place to do this safely. Staff had made some changes to children's personal plans, sharing photos of their individual achievements and play experiences. This was beginning to show what mattered most to each child as an individual, reflecting their unique choices and interests. We encouraged staff to continue developing this approach, considering children's rights in how they record what they see and hear in children's experiences. This will ensure that their approach is focussed on rights based care that promotes positive outcomes in line with best practice.

Children were almost completely independent at mealtimes, setting the table, choosing their own snacks, serving themselves and washing their own dishes. They were fully involved in deciding what the snack menu included and could change their mind each day, if this is what they wanted. Mealtimes were calm, relaxed and social, giving children quality time with staff to chat about their day. This gave them a genuine and natural opportunity to share their achievements as well as discuss if anything was worrying them. Staff responded sensitively and offered children possible solutions to any concerns they had in ways that helped them to build emotional resilience. Children were also included in cooking and baking activities, helping them to build positive relationships with food through real life experiences.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children led their play and learning throughout their experiences and their ideas were respected and acted upon by staff. Staff understood that play was an essential part of building children's confidence, independence and self-esteem. As a result, they encouraged children to be independent in choosing their own play, solving problems and selecting resources. Children were mindful of when they needed to take time to relax, creating a natural flow of play across the day. We heard children laughing together with staff and their friends, having fun and enjoying each other's company. We were confident that children's needs and interests were at the heart of their play and learning.

Staff spoke warmly and passionately about the children in their care. They knew each child's unique interests, needs and choices and used this to plan fun and exciting play and learning. Children proudly shared their learning, including their numeracy and literacy skills. Children's play and learning was also shared more widely through floorbooks which had photos and comments from children and staff.

Children enjoyed revisiting their play experiences this way, speaking excitedly about their own creations. Children's artwork was also displayed throughout the room, openly celebrating their successes with others. Staff had also created a display that shared children's ideas for play and then showed how they had taken these ideas forward. This included spending time in the local community, exploring their surroundings and finding interesting places close by. Staff were solution focussed and consistently found ways of respecting children's ideas and including them in their experiences. This respected children's right to be heard. We encouraged staff to keep thinking creatively about children's play so they continue to develop valuable skills for life.

How good is our setting? 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as **good,** where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children felt a sense of ownership over their play space. They were confident, independent and recognised that they were the leaders of the space. Staff responded quickly to their requests for play, including whether they wanted to play indoors or outdoors, based on their changing interests. There were some good resources for children to choose from that offered fun play experiences they enjoyed. Children particularly enjoyed outdoor play, spending time on the 'trim trail', a wooden obstacle style course in the playground that helped them to keep active and develop balance and coordination. Children also enjoyed team games together outside, working cooperatively, while being supported sensitively by staff. Staff were beginning to increase the amount of interesting, unusual and open-ended play resources for children to play with. They were committed to continuing this development so children had a range of play opportunities that helped them to be creative, curious and imaginative. We encouraged staff to prioritise this area for development as part of their improvement plan, as this would have the biggest impact on promoting positive outcomes for children.

Children were safe and healthy because staff recognised most risks in the space and worked to remove these. For example, they were mindful of slip and trip hazards and spoke to children about keeping themselves safe in their play and learning. Risk assessments had recently been updated and these were detailed, clear and concise. There were plans in place to develop these further so staff and children were more included, as well as more clearly identifying the benefits of measured risk for children's development. We agreed that this would be an appropriate improvement for the service. We also discussed that they may wish to amend procedures if children bump their head, so that everyone understands what to look out for if there is a suspected concussion. This will keep children safe and healthy in the event of this type of accident.

Most of the premises was well-maintained and any outstanding items were reported to the school janitorial staff. They responded quickly for items which were in their control so the premises remained safe and secure for children. Staff had worked to create a welcoming and comfortable space for children, within the resources they had available. The room would benefit from having paintwork refreshed and some resources replaced, such as the sofas and the kitchen space. This would improve the quality of the environment as well as improving infection prevention and control measures.

Infection prevention and control measures were generally well managed by staff who cleaned spaces throughout the day. Children were also included in taking responsibility for cleaning after snack which helped them to develop skills for life.

We asked staff to ensure that children were encouraged to wash their hands more frequently and at appropriate times to reduce the risk of the spread of infection. We also asked that they ensure cleaning materials are consistently stored out of reach of children so they remain safe and healthy.

How good is our leadership? 4 - Good

We found important strengths that clearly outweighed areas for improvement in this key question. This contributed to positive outcomes for children and, therefore, we made an evaluation of **good**.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children and families were given some opportunities to share their views and opinions of the service. They completed questionnaires and children's ideas from their personal plans were also included as part of the development plan. Families had been asked to be involved in developing the service as well, bringing in 'loose parts' for junk modelling and creative play. These approaches helped children and families to feel included. There was a clear system in place for children and families to raise any complaints or concerns using a QR code, making this accessible to almost all families. Families also told us they felt comfortable speaking with staff if they wanted any changes made to their child's experience. One parent said, "Staff are always very helpful, supportive and friendly." We shared the Care Inspectorate document, 'Me, my family and my childcare setting' with the service which offers advice on how to build stronger connections and meaningful relationships with families. This will support the service as they develop their approaches to including children and families in the life of the service.

Children were benefitting from a culture of continuous improvement led by staff who wanted to offer all children high quality care, play and learning. Leaders were developing quality assurance and self-evaluation systems which helped them to reflect on their practice in line with national expectations. The provider had invested in having development officers recruited who were supporting managers across the out of school care service in Fife Council to learn and develop. The manager of this service spoke positively about this support and was working proactively with them to improve. For example, there were clear audits in place to check the quality of some aspects of practice such as medication, allergies and personal plans. Leaders were taking a measured and staged approach to introducing new systems and we agreed that this would ensure any work is manageable and sustainable. We encouraged leaders to continue developing how they include staff in self-evaluation with a clear focus on the quality of children's experiences while respecting their needs, rights and choices.

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of **very good** for this key question. We identified major strengths in supporting outcomes for children and there were very few areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Children were cared for by a strong and committed staff team who were dedicated to promoting positive outcomes for children. They had a shared vision to offer high quality care, play and learning based on the values of nurture and play. Their nurturing approach showed children love, trust, respect and positivity. Staff understood that spending quality time with children was important in building their confidence and self-esteem. They prioritised this in their work and, by making children as independent as possible, they were able to deploy themselves to consistently meet children's needs and choices.

Each member of the team brought different strengths, skills and experience which meant children were offered balanced and varied care and support that could be tailored to their needs. Staff communicated very well with each other throughout the session and had well defined roles and responsibilities that maintained a smooth and calm routine for children throughout their daily experiences.

Staffing arrangements were planned to meet children's needs. There had been some changes to children's routines, with some days being spent in other services so that children had the chance to play with other children in the community. This had been well managed to ensure there was consistency and continuity for children with trusted adults. If supply staff were needed, leaders had experienced and familiar people to choose from who were also committed to supporting children in their more temporary role. This commitment had been promoted because the manager made staff feel valued, respected and included, regardless of their working pattern. As a result, absence was unusual and children were cared for by a consistent and stable team. Staff worked flexibly to meet children's needs and understood the importance of their role in their lives. As a result, we found that these very good staffing arrangements promoted positive outcomes for children and families.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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