

Lawhead Out of School Club Day Care of Children

Lawhead Primary School
Strathkinnes Low Road
St. Andrews
KY16 9NG

Telephone: 07515 189460

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 April 2026

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2005107496

About the service

Lawhead Out of School Club is provided by the local authority and located within Lawhead primary School, St Andrews, Fife. They are registered to provide a daycare of children service to a maximum of 24 children at any one time from primary school aged to 14 years of age.

Children have access to a designated play room, large garden, gym hall and toilet facilities. The service is close to green spaces, schools and amenities. It can be reached by public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 and 29 April 2026 between 14:30 and 18:00. 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:

- spoke to and spent time with 22 children using the service
- spoke with nine families and received five completed questionnaires
- spoke with three staff and the management team
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- 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

- Children were happy, confident and felt respected by staff and peers.
- Children benefitted from strong, trusting relationships with staff and peers that contributed to a positive ethos.
- Children led their play and made independent choices that contributed to high levels of engagement.
- Children and families benefitted from a consistent staff team. This supported effective partnership working.
- Staff felt supported by the leadership team and enjoyed their role. This contributed to a positive culture for children, families and staff.
- Families felt welcomed into the service and well informed.
- Self-evaluation and improvements continued to be developed and embedded to ensure children continue to experience a high-quality service.
- Quality assurance processes require improvements to ensure audits and documentation are completed effectively.

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	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - 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.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service aims and objectives were displayed in the setting. These shared the vision to deliver high-quality childcare, maintain standards, and meet children's needs. We encouraged the service to further develop their vision, values and aims at a club level and involve children, families and other stakeholders in this process.

Children spoke confidently about their club, including why they enjoyed attending. They described the service as 'amazing, fun, good and feeling safe'. This reflected the positive ethos and relationships between staff, children and families. As a result, children were happy, engaged and having fun.

The service had systems in place for quality assurance. We found that these were not always completed with relevant detail or effective at identifying inaccuracies. For example, medication audits had not identified differences in completed documentation and personal plans were not fully completed with details requested. To ensure children's needs can be fully met, the service should ensure quality assurance processes are effective and completed as intended. (See area for improvement 1.)

Staff had begun to engage in self-evaluation, reflecting on current best practice guidance. For example, they had attended training on 'A Quality Improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: school aged childcare'. They told us they had discussed this guidance at staff meetings. We encouraged them to evidence their engagement with self-evaluation by recording how they were doing, how they knew and what they planned to develop. This could be done through reflections as a team, consultation with children, families and other stakeholders. Staff shared they found it difficult to gather feedback. We gave them suggestions on how the views of families could be gathered through discussions, focus questions and consultation with children. For example, children were confident, capable learners and there was scope for them to design and lead consultation with stakeholders. This would further support children's rights and strengthen the quality of evidence to support improvements. Staff were keen to develop this.

The service had an improvement plan that focussed on their indoor and outdoor play environments and consultation with children and families. Some progress had been identified. Staff recognised the pace of change had been slower than planned and evidencing improvements had been challenging. We suggested displaying their improvement journey and involving children and families in this process. For example, children and staff could display pictures, ideas and developments throughout the session, giving children ownership of the display. Staff were keen to implement this and involve all stakeholders.

The team had been part of the service for a period and worked very well together. They appreciated each other's skills and valued the experience individuals had. They commented on it being a lovely place to work and it feeling good to be part of the team. Comments included "our voice is heard", "our voice matters" and "its hugely supportive". Staff who were more recent to the service spoke positively about their induction experience and support received from the leadership team. Families told us the team had been consistent, and they appreciated this continuity for children. As a result, families had confidence and trust in the team that fostered positive connections.

Areas for improvement

1. The service must ensure that effective quality assurance arrangements and monitoring is completed as intended. This is to provide assurance that children's safety, wellbeing, and healthcare needs can be consistently met.

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

Children play and learn 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.

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

Children were happy, settled, and fully engaged during their time in the service. They spoke confidently about their club, describing the activities they enjoyed and expressing a sense of belonging. There was a positive culture and connection between children and staff with staff responding to children's requests. This demonstrated they were at the centre of the club. All families we spoke with told us that children really enjoyed attending and they were happy with the selection of activities on offer.

Children led their play and reported that staff listened to their ideas and provided resources to support them. Comments from children included "staff always get us what we want, even if the budget is tight, they always think about us and what we want before themselves", "staff always listen and provide the best things" and "we do lots of activities". This demonstrated that children are valued and that staff are responsive to their interests.

Children were able to make independent choices throughout the session, supported by a range of accessible resources. Families confirmed that experiences reflected their child's interests and contributed positively to their engagement and enjoyment. Staff showed good awareness of children's preferences, particularly for creative activities, with the drawing and craft area being consistently popular. Children proudly shared their creations with families at collection time, supporting confidence and self-esteem.

Children were confident, engaged and capable learners and made use of most spaces indoors and outdoors. The service planned to improve their environments. This would further support a breadth of challenge and rich play experiences. Children and families spoke positively about the new addition of the pool table. We found this had been removed from play for an extended period. We suggested the service look at this to allow all children the choice to engage with this new resource as it offered opportunities to develop important social skills. The service should reflect on how club rules are balanced with children's right to play, choice, and challenge.

Staff interactions were warm, responsive, and nurturing. Children sought comfort and connection from staff, demonstrating secure, trusting relationships. Staff showed understanding of when to engage and when to step back, allowing children autonomy whilst being available to support requests. This balanced approach of interactions supported children to feel both secure and independent.

Staff communicated with children at their level, listening and responding calmly. Children told us staff were kind, helped keep them safe, listened to them, and treated them with respect. These interactions promoted a positive ethos where children felt valued.

Peer relationships were strong, with children naturally forming friendship groups and collaborating in play across different areas of the service. Staff respected these interactions, supporting children's social development, confidence, and sense of connection. Children spoke positively about their club, describing it as a nice environment where they play together and feel happy and supported. As a result, children experienced a positive sense of connection, wellbeing and autonomy.

Planning activities and resources were influenced by children's ideas, with some evidence recorded in the floor book, but this was not yet consistent. The service recognised this as an area for development. Evidencing planning and consultation with children through the floor book could support self-evaluation and progress in their improvement journey. Strengthening this approach would allow children to revisit their learning, reflect on achievements, and share experiences more meaningfully with families.

Children are supported to achieve 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.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing, responsive care from staff who knew them well and were proactive at supporting emotional wellbeing. For example, staff implemented de-escalation strategies to support children to regulate their emotions. Staff spoke about it being a privilege to work with children. Care routines supported independence, choice, and positive relationships. Staff practice was mostly kind and compassionate. We encouraged the service to ensure language used when talking with children reflects a rights based and trauma informed approach.

Mealtimes routines were unhurried and child led. Children were involved in menu planning, food preparation and at times, clearing of the snack area. The relaxed pace meant children had choice about when they ate and staff used the opportunity to sit with them, engaging in discussions. This supported positive connections. Children and families told us they thought the quality of snack options had improved and saw this routine as a strength. One family commented on how well staff worked to ensure children's dietary requirements were catered for and how this promoted inclusion in this routine. As a result, children developed important skills for life, independence and awareness of risk.

Children demonstrated a sound understanding about their rights and how these were respected within the club. For example, they told us staff included them, listened to them, kept them safe and respected them. We encouraged the service to strengthen the visibility and connection of these rights to daily experiences and learning.

Medication and allergy information was generally managed effectively, with information displayed to support staff to meet children's healthcare needs. Medication was securely stored and reviewed regularly with families, reflecting the service policy. Audits of medication were carried out as part of the service quality assurance. Strengthening these processes should ensure information is recorded consistently.

Personal plans were in place for all children and recorded what was important, their routines and preferences. As part of the plan, children had been developing their all about me, this recorded their likes, wishes and how the service could support their next steps. This demonstrated children had ownership of their plans. We encouraged the team to ensure all sections of the personal plans were completed with important details. For example, doctors' details and start dates.

Support plans were in place for some children where additional planning was identified to meet their needs and wishes. These plans had been well-developed in consultation with children and families. They clearly outlined what is important to the child, effective strategies to be used, and essential information for staff. Plans reflected Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) principles and promoted continuity and responsive care. We encouraged staff to consider how and where they record strategies for children who do not have additional plans in place. This should include a clear overview of what is important to each child and where to locate further information. For example, how children are being supported through transitions, and other events in their life.

Strong, trusting relationships had been developed with families. This was a strength of the service and contributed positively to children's continuity of care. Staff were warm and respectful with families that promoted partnership working. Children benefitted from consistent, trusting relationships and communication between home and the service. This ensured children's routines could be supported.

Families told us they felt welcomed into the setting and staff took time to talk with them. They felt communication was good, always kept informed about the club and that staff were responsive to their requests. Communication methods included termly newsletters, emails and informal discussions. All families we spoke with and received feedback from, were happy with the methods of communication.

Families valued that the staff team had been consistent, recognising the positive impact this had on children's sense of security and wellbeing. Comments included "We really appreciate this service", "Happy with the service, keep up the good work", "staff are excellent, they know the children" and "The OOSC provides an essential service for our family". They recognised it was a small team, and one commented potential impact on staff wellbeing if there were to be fewer of them, feeling it is not sustainable for them as a team. We shared this with the manager of the service.

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

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

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