Drakies Out of School Club
Day Care of Children

Drakies Primary School
Drumossie Avenue
Inverness
IV2 3SG

Telephone: 07876 542 621

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 October 2026

Service provided by:
CALA Out of School Care

Service provider number:
SP2010011111

Service no:
CS2010278924

About the service

Drakies Out of School Club is a day care of children service located in Drakies Primary School in the Drakies area of the city of Inverness. The service is provided by CALA Out of School Care.

The service is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 20 primary school aged children during term time. The service is situated in a residential area near parks, shops and other amenities. Children are cared for in a room used by Drakies Primary School during school hours. They also have access to a large secure enclosed outdoor area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 and 7 October 2026. Feedback was given on 8 October. 2026. 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:

- spoke with seven children using the service;
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment;
- spoke with four staff and management;
- reviewed feedback received from six families;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- 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

- Staff were nurturing, caring and responsive in their interactions with children. Some staff knew children well and had developed positive, trusting relationships which helped children feel safe.
- Partnerships with families contributed positively to children's progress and wellbeing.
- Children experienced a wide range of play opportunities that supported their confidence, creativity, friendships and social development.
- Improvements to the play space and the introduction of additional resources had enhanced the overall atmosphere, supporting children's wellbeing, comfort and enjoyment.
- Self-evaluation processes were not yet fully embedded or consistently focused on measuring the impact of changes on outcomes for children.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The service had identified the need to review its vision, values and aims and had plans in place to involve children and families in this process. Staff and children demonstrated aspects of the current values through their interactions, particularly relating to care. However, there was limited evidence to demonstrate how the vision, values and aims were being used to inform practice, drive improvement and improve outcomes for children.

The service had demonstrated commitment to improvement and had taken some positive steps to address areas identified at previous inspections. Records of visits and quality assurance activities demonstrated management oversight. However, current staffing pressures had reduced opportunities for staff to engage in regular reflection, evaluation and professional discussion. As a result, self-evaluation processes were not yet fully embedded or consistently focused on measuring the impact of changes on outcomes for children. This was identified as an area for improvement at the previous two inspections and has not been met, it will therefore be continued **(see section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection).**

A strong culture of participation to help ensure improvement priorities were informed by the experiences of children and families was not yet fully embedded in practice. Children's views were routinely sought in relation to resources and activities, and their feedback had influenced some improvements within the environment. However, children and families had not recently been involved in wider self-evaluation. Opportunities to gather feedback were limited and there was scope to strengthen consultation arrangements .

We recognised the challenges the service had experienced in recruiting and retaining a second member of staff. Despite these difficulties, appropriate recruitment processes were in place. Safer recruitment practices were being followed, including obtaining references and ensuring PVG checks were completed before staff commenced working with children. This helped to promote children's safety and wellbeing.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 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.

Children experience high quality spaces

Children benefited from an environment that had become more welcoming, nurturing and inviting since the previous inspection. Improvements to the playroom and the introduction of additional resources had enhanced the overall atmosphere, supporting children's wellbeing, comfort and enjoyment. Staff had worked proactively to create a more homely and child-friendly environment despite the challenges associated with setting up the space each day. The service had worked positively with the school to improve the quality of the environment by removing items that were no longer suitable and replacing them with more natural,

appealing resources. To build on these improvements, consideration should be given to ensuring staff have sufficient time to prepare the environment fully before sessions begin, maximising children's access to all available play spaces and resources.

Children had regular access to the school playground, providing valuable opportunities for outdoor play, physical activity and fresh air. These experiences supported children's health and wellbeing while enabling them to enjoy a range of active and social play opportunities.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of safety within shared environments and took appropriate action to identify and manage potential risks. Risk assessments were completed when required, including when contractors were working within the school grounds. This helped ensure children could continue to access outdoor play safely while benefiting from a stimulating environment.

Children experienced a safe and well-supervised service. Regular headcounts were completed throughout sessions, enabling staff to monitor children's whereabouts and support their safety while allowing them freedom to choose where and how they played. One parent who gave feedback commented "Gate security etc is very important to the staff and they are very diligent."

Resources supported a wide range of play, including imaginative, creative, physical and problem-solving activities. New outdoor storage improved children's access to loose parts and open-ended materials, encouraging creativity, teamwork and challenge. Children confidently used these resources to build, balance and construct, developing confidence and resilience through managed risk-taking. The addition of a trim trail within the school grounds enhanced outdoor play and supported children's physical development, coordination and self-esteem. Children spoke positively about the equipment and understood the need to use it safely with adult supervision **(see section, What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection).**

Measures to support infection prevention and control were effective. Handwashing was embedded into daily routines and children were supported appropriately to develop good hygiene practices. Younger children received additional support where required, helping to keep children safe and healthy.

Children's personal information was stored securely and managed appropriately. Record-keeping systems were organised and accessible, ensuring staff had the information required to support children's individual needs and provide continuity of care. Despite operational and staffing challenges, systems remained effective in promoting children's wellbeing and safety.

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children experienced a wide range of play opportunities that supported their confidence, creativity, friendships and social development. They were actively engaged in play and demonstrated enjoyment, curiosity and a strong sense of ownership over their experiences.

Children had choice and control over their play. They moved freely between inside and outside for most of the session and selected activities based on their interests. Staff were deployed effectively to maintain

children's safety while supporting independence. Play was largely uninterrupted by adult directed tasks, allowing children time to become fully absorbed in their chosen experiences. Although end-of-session routines occasionally influenced play opportunities later in the session, staff demonstrated an awareness of the importance of sustained play and adapted approaches where possible to minimise disruption.

Most children were engaged in their chosen activities for sustained periods of time. Children showed creativity and problem-solving skills as they worked together. For example, two children were creating a garden, incorporating a variety of resources and their own artwork into their play. Staff supported them effectively through well-timed interactions and thoughtful suggestions, helping to extend children's thinking without directing the play.

Children accessed opportunities to be active outdoors and engaged enthusiastically in games such as football. One parent commented "Football is very important to child". These experiences helped to promote physical wellbeing, teamwork and enjoyment. Parents spoke positively about these opportunities and the contribution they made to their children's happiness and engagement with the service.

Interactions between staff and children were warm, responsive and supportive. Staff encouraged children to think, explore ideas and solve problems through effective questioning and discussion. Children appeared comfortable approaching staff and benefited from positive relationships that supported their learning and enjoyment.

Displays and floor books, celebrated children's achievements, interests and learning while supporting parents to engage with and understand their children's experiences within the setting.

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.

Nurturing care and support

Staff were nurturing, caring and responsive in their interactions with children. Some staff knew children well and had developed positive, trusting relationships which helped children feel safe, secure and valued. Parents commented that staff were "Very approachable, can see they have great relationships with the children" and "They remember life events and remember every child and what they do so they can pass on information on how well your child is getting on". As a result, children were confident and relaxed in the setting.

Transitions between school and the service were well managed. Children arrived confidently and settled quickly into activities of their choice. This helped to promote children's wellbeing and enabled them to make the most of their time in the setting. Children of different ages played well together, with older children supporting younger children during activities and routines. This promoted children's social skills, confidence and sense of belonging within an inclusive environment.

Snack times contributed positively to children's wellbeing. Children accessed nutritious food choices and were encouraged to develop independence through routine tasks. Staff created a relaxed and sociable atmosphere by sitting with children and engaging them in meaningful conversations. This helped children develop communication skills and foster positive relationships.

Staff worked well together to ensure children received consistent support. Effective communication between staff enabled them to respond to children's individual needs and provide continuity of care. Personal information about children was clearly recorded and supported staff to understand what was important to each child, helping them achieve positive outcomes. Parents were welcomed in to the setting when collecting their children, with staff taking time to share information for each child. Partnerships with families contributed positively to children's progress and wellbeing. Digital communication through Class Dojo further supported family engagement and enabled children's experiences and achievements to be shared.

The storage of medication followed current best practice, guidance and policy. Staff worked with families to ensure medical information was reviewed and kept up to date. This contributed to the health, wellbeing and safety of children.

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 support the effective development of the service and improve children's experiences, the provider should ensure effective quality assurance processes are developed. This should include, but is not limited to:

a) implementing clear and effective plans to develop and improve the service; and
b) ensuring effective systems are in place to monitor and improve the quality of children's experiences and the service as a whole.

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 29 August 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had some systems in place to quality assure the service. These included monitoring key processes and procedures. However, these processes mainly focused on whether tasks were being completed rather than on the impact on children's experiences and outcomes.

Ongoing difficulties recruiting and retaining a stable staff team reduced staff capacity to take part in meaningful self-evaluation and quality assurance activities. While support and supervision arrangements were in place, these did not routinely include observations of practice, constructive feedback, or opportunities for professional development. As a result, the improvements made had not yet led to consistent improvements in the quality of children's experiences or in the overall quality of the service.

An area for improvement made at two previous inspections has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's safety, health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure that staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to providing care and support that reflects best practice guidance, Management of medicines in daycare of children and childminding services, and apply this in practice.

This should include but is not limited to:

a) Ensuring that staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to safe, consistent record keeping and administration of medication.
b) Implementing a system for management to audit and review the storage, management and administration of medicine.

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

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled.' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 26 February 2026.

Action taken since then

The service had taken effective action to strengthen medication management procedures and ensure children's healthcare needs were met safely. Staff were knowledgeable about the medical needs of children attending the setting and important information was shared appropriately with supply staff to promote consistent and safe practice.

Medication was stored securely and records were well maintained. Required documentation, including current consent forms and records of termly reviews with families, was in place and accurately reflected the medication held within the setting. Clear processes and procedures also supported the safe administration of both prescribed and ad hoc medication. As a result, children benefited from a consistent and robust approach to medication management, which supported their health, safety and wellbeing. **This area for improvement has been met.**

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children have access to a range of developmentally appropriate resources which reflect their interests, encourage creativity and allow them to develop lifelong skills, the provider and manager should review and improve opportunities for play and learning indoors and outdoors. This should include but is not limited to providing suitable resources and materials to effectively engage and challenge children's play, learning and interests.

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

'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors.' (HSCS 1.25); and

'As a child, my social skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through the balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials.' (HSCS 1.31).

This area for improvement was made on 26 February 2026.

Action taken since then

The setting had reviewed the availability and organisation of resources to enhance children's play and learning experiences. Improvements had been made to storage arrangements, including the addition of an outdoor storage unit, which increased access to resources and supported children's ability to make independent choices during play.

A range of new resources had been introduced across both the indoor and outdoor environments, providing children with greater variety and challenge. Children were observed to be highly engaged in their play, sustaining their interest for extended periods as they explored activities that promoted problem-solving, creativity, imagination and physical development. **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.scot.

Detailed evaluations

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Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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Children experience high quality spaces	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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