John Fergus Out of School Club
Day Care of Children

John Fergus ASN School
Erskine Place
Glenrothes
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Telephone: 07515 289 971

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 August 2023

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2014325608

About the service

John Fergus Out of School Club provides care to a maximum of 10 children and young people at any one time, from age four to 18 years. The service will have access to areas of the premises as designated by the headteacher.

The service is run from John Fergus School in Glenrothes in Fife. It offers out of school care to children and young people with complex additional support needs. The service operates term time providing after school care from 15:00 till 18:00 and full days during school holidays. The service is close to local shops, library, and a wheelchair friendly adapted park.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 2 August 2023 between 09:20 and 15:45. We provided feedback at the end of the inspection visit. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration and any complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:
- spoke with two children using the service
- received feedback from two families
- spoke with manager and staff team
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced very warm, loving and nurturing support from staff who knew them very well

- Children were being well-supported to reach their potential.

- Children benefitted from a highly skilled staff team. All staff worked very well together and had created a welcoming and enabling environment

- The indoor and outdoor learning environments carefully considered the individual needs of children.

- Staff promoted a positive and caring ethos, this resulted in respectful interactions with each other, with children and their families.

- There was a strong sense of community in the out of school club which supported children's sense of belonging and ensured they felt valued.

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 experienced warm, caring, and nurturing care to support their wellbeing. Staff were kind and loving towards children. As a result, children were happy, secure, and settled.

Staff were committed to providing warmth and nurturing care to children. They knew children very well as individuals and were responsive to their needs. One parent told us, "The staff know my child well and are able to make her feel safe and secure in the setting. Staff are friendly, approachable, and very well trained."

Children were very well supported, and staff worked collaboratively with other agencies for example occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and psychology. As a result, children received care and support that was right for them.

Personal plans were in place for all children. Families were included in completing care plans which detailed essential information about their child's health care needs. This approach ensured children were supported to reach their potential and families could influence their child's care. These were regularly reviewed to ensure staff had relevant information to meet children's most current needs. The service was in the process of changing the format of these plans to ensure that children could be more involved in this process. Detailed communication passports further supported inclusion and resulted in children being respected and valued.

Mealtimes were a sociable and relaxed experience. Children were encouraged to be as independent as possible. Staff sat with children and supported them during lunch time. Water was available throughout the day to ensure children were hydrated. Staff kept children safe by having a very good awareness of potential choking hazards.

The service had developed robust medication procedures. We found medication was stored securely. Documentation was accurate and reflected children's individual health needs and requirements. Staff were confident in administering medication and this resulted in children's medical needs being met safely.

Staff understood child protection procedures and were confident in safeguarding children. As a result, children were kept safe from potential harm.

There were effective systems in place to control and prevent the spread of infection within the service to protect staff and children.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were being well-supported to reach their potential. Staff had a strong understanding of child development and additional support needs. This allowed them to support the individual learning of children in their care.

Communication and language was a high priority for the service. Staff understood that not all children learn at the same pace or in the same ways. Staff were skilled at using different strategies to support each child. For example, PECS (picture exchange communication system), Sign along and board maker symbols. These strategies encouraged children to express their needs, wishes and choices.

The large outdoor area provided many opportunities for children to take part in active play experiences. The sensory and planting garden encouraged children to learn important life skills such as planting and growing.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their community. Staff were passionate about being part of the local community and children had regular opportunities to visit local shops, the library and swimming pool. This helped children feel included and connected to their wider community.

Families were very happy with the progress their children were making, commenting, "there are a range of activities available, and staff are so nurturing and lovely."

Staff valued a child's right to play. Children's rights were promoted, and children had opportunities to develop a range of skills through their play experiences.

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

Play spaces were clean and well ventilated. Staff followed both verbal and non-verbal cues and supported children to make choices in where they played. This included accessing a variety of resources on tables or on the floor.

The outdoor environment provided children with a wealth of opportunities for meaningful play and learning. There were good opportunities for children to experience physical challenge, for example climbing and using specialist equipment.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and maintained a high standard of infection prevention and control practices. Clear policies and procedures ensured that there was a consistent approach across the service. This ensured that children were cared for in a safe environment. Effective hand washing routines were embedded, and this helped to minimise any risk of spread of infection.

Children's safety was carefully considered across the service. For example, daily checks and robust risk assessments were in place. A system for reporting accidents and incidents was also in place and had been audited to help ensure a safe environment for children.

Staff had identified areas for improvement in the service. Plans were in place to upgrade and further develop both soft play and sensory spaces for children. This would further enhance opportunities for children to reach their full potential, by offering children different spaces to be both active and calm.

How good is our leadership? 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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A shared vision, values and aims supported the positive ethos of the service. This was shared with families and the local community. Improvement was a priority for the service. A relevant improvement plan had been developed with staff and identified focus areas across the service. The service had identified the need to involve children and families in this process. This would ensure that children and families were actively involved in the life of the service and their opinions were valued.

All staff had strong values and promoted a positive nurturing experience for all children using the service. Families told us they valued staff and trusted them with their children's care. Positive relationships with families ensured that information was shared and that children were supported well by staff.

The manager who was new to the service visited every week to offer support and to carry out monitoring of quality across the service. Clear and concise records were in place to document monitoring and highlight actions needed to improve quality across the setting.

Staff had opportunities to talk about their work through regular support and supervision meetings. They were encouraged to reflect on their practice and identify their strengths and areas for professional development. These opportunities enabled staff to develop as practitioners. As a result, children and families received support that was right for them.

How good is our staff team? 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 4.3: Staff deployment

Children benefitted from a caring and nurturing staff team who knew them well and were focussed on providing high-quality care and support. Effective use was made of staff experience, knowledge, and skills, to ensure children's experiences across their entire day were positive. One to one care and support was well managed and children's needs were always met.

Children had developed strong attachments with staff in the setting. This ensured positive transitions for children and very good communication with families. The small staff team were stable and consistent, which ensured families always knew which staff were supporting their children. Some members of staff worked in both the school and the out of school club and this further supported transitions and continuity of care for children.

Staff were confident in their roles and responsibilities. They were passionate and committed to providing quality outcomes for children and their families. Staff fully understood the key role they played in safeguarding children. This approach ensured that children were safe and protected from potential harm.

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

It is recommended that the service continue to assess and develop the quality of experiences for children. The manager and staff should review how they plan for children's experiences. They should develop a format for planning which involves children and is responsive to their interests and needs.

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement has been met. The manager and staff have developed their planning approach to be responsive to children's individual interests and needs.

Previous area for improvement 2

The service should record the experiences of children while they are attending the club. They should consider how and when this information is shared with parents. They should consult with children and parents as part of this decision making process.

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement has been met. Personal planning is used to reflect children's learning and development in the service. This is regularly shared with families.

Previous area for improvement 3

It is recommended that the service develops the use of risk assessments as a working tool to assess and check for risks to young people using the service on a daily basis. This should include a detailed check of the extensive outdoor area.

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement has been met. Robust risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed to ensure children and young people are safe.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support the improvement and quality assurance of the service it is recommended that the manager, with key stakeholders, develops a plan for the improvement of the service.

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement has been met. An improvement plan is in place with realistic and achievable focus areas.

Previous area for improvement 5

The service should continue to develop the participation and involvement of the children and parents using the service.

This area for improvement was made on 13 September 2017.

Action taken since then
This area for improvement has been met. The manager and staff team have developed this and family engagement has improved. The service is also mindful of the respite opportunities the service provides for fsmilies.

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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