Pencaitland After School Club
Day Care of Children

Pencaitland After School Club
Pencaitland Primary School
The Glebe
Pencaitland
EH34 5EZ

Telephone: 01875 341 466

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 September 2023

Service provided by:
Edinburgh and Lothians out of School Care Network.

Service provider number:
SP2004006939

Service no:
CS2015342406

About the service

Pencaitland After School Club, referred to as the club in this report, is one of nine services provided by Edinburgh and Lothians out of School Care Network (ELOSCN).

The club is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children at any one time currently attending Primary School or S1. During the Summer Holiday period care may be provided to children who are in the transition between Nursery and Primary 1 subject to their care needs being fully met. Care can also be provided to children in the transition between Primary and Secondary School during this time. The maximum number of children who can be cared for at any one time must not exceed 40.

The club operates from the primary school in the rural village of Pencaitland in East Lothian. They have use of a dedicated playroom, kitchen and toilets. They also have additional space in the dining hall and the use of the gym hall.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 September 2023. The inspection was carried out by an 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 several children using the service
- reviewed comments from seven parents
- spoke with two staff, the manager and director
- observed practice and experiences for children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

•Children had developed good relationships with staff which made them safe and at ease in the club.

• The continued development of personal planning would help staff further support children.

• There were good play opportunities which children were actively engaged in. Further development of loose parts would enhance children's experiences.

• Parents and children spoke positively about the staff team.

• The manager and staff had made progress to evaluate the service provided to children. Self-evaluation needed to continue to be developed.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning? 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 1.1: Nurturing care and Support

Children said that they liked coming to the club because staff were funny and kind. Children were welcomed warmly when they came into the club and staff were well prepared for their arrival. Children were familiar with the daily routine and this predictability made children feel secure in the club.

Snack provided children with healthy food options. To make sure that children were well hydrated staff ensured that children had access to their water bottles or provided a drink for them. Children had opportunities to make choices at snack and this was well supported by staff. Opportunities to sit and chat with staff or friends made the snack experience a social and meaningful one.

Children were cared for by staff who knew them well. Staff could discuss some of the individual care and support needs for children and there was information that made up the personal plan. Improvements to the recording of individual strategies would help staff to agree with parents some of the support needed for their children, and enable an assessment of that support.

The pace of the session provided children with a busy but calm experience. There were opportunities for physical play using the gym hall and outdoor areas. We suggested to staff that to enhance children's health and wellbeing more outdoor opportunities could be provided.

Children understood the club boundaries. Staff were about to go over these again to agree them with the new children in the club. Children benefitted from a staff group who respected them as individuals and provided clear and consistent expectations of children's behaviour. This had a positive impact as the group of children were respectful, confident and having fun with each other and with staff.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children had access to a good range of activities which had been planned using their ideas and suggestions. Parents commented on the good range of activities on offer. We spoke to children about play and were told that staff made sure that there were interesting things to do.

The floor book, which was used to evidence activities and record where ideas came from, showed us that there were a wide range of planned and free choice activities on offer to children. We suggested to staff that these recordings could be further developed to include what skills children were learning through their play.

Children could access a good range of resources independently throughout the session. For example some children wanted to make pompoms and were able to find the resources for this themselves. There was some access to loose parts indoors and in the school playground. Staff should continue to provide this type of play to encourage creativity, problem solving and imagination.

The organisation had provided sports coaches to increase opportunities for physical play and develop skills. One child said that they had enjoyed basketball but they could have taken part in golf and cricket also.

Opportunities for planting and growing had been provided. One parent commented on the opportunities for children to grow and care for a range of plants in the premises before a fundraising event. Staff were planning to provide children with more growing opportunities, which would help children to foster a sense of responsibility.

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

The main room used by the club provided a warm and welcoming place for children to play. It had been well laid out and play activities arranged before children arrived. This enabled children to get on with their play when they arrived.

The room provided plenty of space for play and the use of the dining hall enabled some children to use large spaces for big projects. For example, two large boxes of lego were set up in the dining area as children were making large scale builds.

Children were familiar with their surroundings and where they could and could not go. Staff ensured that areas of the premises were supervised appropriately to help keep children safe and offer support during play. Staff had recently updated risk assessments and were actively thinking about ways in which they could provide the choice to play indoors or outdoors safely.

The main room was comfortable with areas for play set out in zones. The tent and book area provided a quiet space for children to chat or read. We suggested it could be enhanced by the use of a rug to make it warm and cosy. The good use of displays and children's art work gave the room a club identity giving children the message that this was their space.

The room and play resources were clean. Appropriate procedures were in place for the making of snacks and breakfast. Food was stored appropriately and safely. To ensure that children remained safe and healthy infection prevention and control practices were in place and embedded in children's routines.

Personal information about children was kept in a safe and secure manner and in line with current legislative guidance.

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

The organisation had provided good strategic management to support the day to day manager. Staff were

aware of their roles and responsibilities and able to take on leadership roles where necessary. This good team working ensured the smooth running of the club.

Staff told us that they felt very included in the running of the club. They actively participated in the weekly staff meetings and spoke positively about the wider organisation.

There was an improvement plan for the wider organisation, which was known to staff. Areas for improvement had been identified for the club as part of the self-evaluation process and staff could discuss some of their future plans for improvement. To continue their improvement journey staff needed to identify areas for improvement through self-evaluation. This should include the views of children and parents. This would enable them to develop an improvement plan for the club and share progress to make improvements with parents and children. We have signposted the manager to the improvement and support questions in 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to help with self-evaluation.

Children told us that they had 'lots of ideas'. They had opportunities to influence the snack menu, comment on play activities and if they liked them, staff talked to them to make sure they were happy and engaged in their play. Throughout our visit we could hear children telling staff what they liked and how things had gone. Talking to staff they said it was very important that children were 'heard' and that their voice was meaningful. This made sure that children's comments, suggestions and opinions were valued.

Parents were given opportunities to share comments and suggestions through the organisations questionnaire. We have suggested that parents could be further included in the clubs own self-evaluation but that this needs to be simple an not onerous. All seven parents who responded to our questionnaire indicated that they felt that they and their child were involved in the setting in a meaningful way.

How good is our staff team? 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 4.3: Staff deployment.

The staff team were motivated to provide positive outcomes for children in their care. They did this through their knowledge of childcare and their enjoyment of caring for school aged children. Although most did not have a formal childcare qualification they were experienced in childcare and training provided by the organisation enhanced staff knowledge and understanding of key childcare practices.

The team meeting minutes showed some of the reflective practice discussions which were held between staff members. The new staff appraisal process adopted by the organisation, would further enhance staffs opportunities to reflect on their practice and identify areas of professional strength and areas for further development.

Parent who responded to our questionnaire made positive comments about the staff team.
"I love the staff at Pencaitland After School club - always happy and friendly.'
"Such a lovely bunch and so good with the kids'.
"Great leadership. Staff are excellent."
"Having young staff on placement has been a really positive addition."

The session ran smoothly as there were an appropriate number of staff for the number of children and the layout of the premises. Deployment was enhanced by staff who knew their roles and responsibilities well. They were busy and there was a good balance between getting some tasks completed and being meaningfully engaged with 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

In order for children to experience high quality care the senior managers, club manager and staff should develop an evidence based system to assess the quality of the service. From this assessment, which will include views of children and parents, they should identify priorities for improvement and identify how these improvements will be made.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 23 May 2022.

Action taken since then

External managers had supported the club manager in her understanding of self-evaluation. Work had begun and there were aspects of the service which had been evaluated and an action plan for improvement developed. This work needed to continue and be broadened out to meaningfully include views of children and parents. However, staff could discuss with us their areas of strength and those they wished to improve.

This area for improvement was met.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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