Low Port Out of School Club SCIO
Day Care of Children

Low Port Primary School
Blackness Road
Linlithgow
EH49 7HZ

Telephone: 01506 670789

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 February 2020

Service provided by:
Low Port Out of School Club a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Service provider number:
SP2017012982

Service no:
CS2017360066

About the service

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. GIRFEC is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

The service is provided from Low Port Primary School in Linlithgow which is located in the town centre of Linlithgow and benefits from direct access to a local park and large natural surroundings. The children have access to a large indoor play space, a library for quieter activities and a large outdoor play area.

Low Port Out of School Club is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation(SCIO) with charity trustees overseeing the service.

The service is currently registered with the following condition:

1. To provide a day care of children service to a maximum of 72 school aged children up to end of secondary year 2 at any one time.

What people told us

During our inspection visit, approximately, 64 children were present throughout the day. We could see children had formed positive relationships with staff and were happy and confident within the club. Some children talked to us about their time at the club and told us what they like to do there. The children we spoke with told us they enjoyed playing with their friends, going outside and doing gymnastics.

We provided the service with 18 Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) to be distributed to parents/carers before the inspection. We received seven completed questionnaires before the inspection visit. From the responses, we found that all parents/carers agreed their child appeared happy and confident with staff and that their child regularly got fresh air and opportunities for energetic play.

Some parents/carers did not agree the service involved them or their child in developing the service. We shared this with the manager and found recent improvements had been made to communication with, and the participation of, those that use the service. The manager continues to monitor and develop practice in these areas.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. During the inspection we looked at the service's improvement plan which demonstrated their priorities for development.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

It was evident that improvements had been made since the club's last inspection. For example, staff were more confident about implementing the services' child protection procedures and improvements had been made to the accompanying recording tools. We previously asked the club to develop a group agreement about expected behaviour. We found, in response to this, that the club had developed a core set of values which were used to support and protect children.

We could see that children experienced warmth, kindness and compassion in their care and support. We found staff and children had developed positive relationships and a new 'key person' system was ensuring that every child had a named person to look out for them, although we observed all staff working together to support children. This helped ensure that children had someone to talk to about their life experiences.

Every child had a 'Personal Plan in place, and we could see that the 'Personal Plans' were now subject to six monthly review. We highlighted the need to update plans when there was a significant change in a child's life or their development. This is to ensure that the plans reflect the significant needs of children and so staff can effectively offer additional support if required.

Children had opportunities to explore their local community and wider world because the club arranged trips away and for outside professionals to visit. For example, children had been to the Edinburgh Fringe and had a Samba band visit so they could experience the music, instruments and movement. This helped children foster a sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them, whilst creating memories with their friends.

Children continued to experience a relaxed meal and snack time, before and after school. The service had improved children's food choices following the last inspection. Staff had significantly reduced the amount of high sugar foods on offer to children. This was something that the children told us was important to them. We asked the club to promote better hydration by ensuring that water is always available and to consider having light snack options for children who choose not to eat at the start of their session.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The premises had a secure entry system in place, with children signed in and out. We asked the manager to ensure that visitors are also signed in. This would ensure there was an accurate record of people in the building in the event of an emergency.

A 'location board' indicated whether children were indoors or out, and a 'Walkie-Talkie' system enhanced staff's communication. This meant that children had increased freedom of movement, indoors and out, because staff regularly updated one another on children. This was helping to promote children's independence, safety and security whilst attending the service.

Children were encouraged to be active and had free-flow access to a natural playground. The playground offered opportunities to learn from, and experience, nature. Children were taking meaningful risks in their play. For example, climbing trees. Taking risks in play was enhancing children's physical development and helping them to develop their resilience.

Quiet spaces had been created for children wanting to relax or to be used when feeling overwhelmed. This was encouraging children to take control of their own emotions and provided a safe base, should children need one.

The environment was clean, tidy and well maintained. Infection control practices, such as hand washing and regular cleaning, ensured children were kept healthy, minimising the risk of the spread of infection. Staff were also empowering children to take control of their own hygiene through the club's 'Hygiene Hero's' initiative.

The toys and equipment on offer supported a very good quality of play. Children were developing their social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity through freely chosen play experiences. During our visit children enjoyed making slime, baking with apples and performing in a 'talent show'. To continue to support children in developing their creative, social and physical skills the manager shared the club's plans to increase the quality, and quantity, of open-ended (loose parts) resources on offer, indoors and out.

The children were unable to access a home corner in the space as it belonged to the school. We spoke about developing role play areas for younger children to allow them to explore their experiences from their day through play.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Staff were friendly and engaged fully in the inspection process. Parents told us that they had trust in the staff caring for their children, and we observed nurturing and positive interactions between staff and children.

Since the last inspection, there had been significant changes to the staff team. We found that these changes had been positive. The new team worked well together and shared the same vision for high quality care. They met regularly to discuss children's needs and it was evident children's needs were discussed at meetings. This ensured that all staff were informed about children care and support needs.

During our visit we completed a safer recruitment audit and found that all newly employed staff had been recruited in line with legislation and best practice. Recruitment processes, such as obtaining references and police checks, had been completed prior to staff starting.
This helped to ensure the right people, with the right skills and values, were employed to keep children safe and supported them to achieve positive outcomes.

Staff were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and aware of their professional responsibilities and codes of conduct. Staff told us about changes they had made after reading best practice guidance and some were working towards completing further education. This demonstrated staff's commitment to their own professional learning and helped ensure that children were care for by trained, competent and skilled staff.

Children were kept better protected from harm, bullying and exploitation because staff were clear about their responsibilities. This included being alert to the signs of deterioration in a child's health and welling and knowing what to do next. Staff were supported by management to participate in annual child protection training and lead, awareness raising, topics based on children's needs. These had included the 'Pants Rule' and 'Respect Me' anti bullying discussions.

Children were consulted about their play, learning and care experience and parents were utilising the opportunities provided to give feedback. Feedback from parents was meaningfully used to improve practice. For example, staff were trying different approaches to improve communication, including a designated staff member responsible for overseeing children's collection at the end of each day. This meant that children's care and support was stable and consistent because staff and families worked well together.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The number of children attending the club had increased since the last inspection. During this inspection we found that this had been well managed. There was evidence of the service phased the enrolment of new children so staff could monitor and respond to the changes. Minor adjustments had been made to practice that ensured children's safety and continued enjoyment at their club.

The management committee and manager continued to work well together. The management committee had worked on more clearly defining roles and responsibilities. For example, role evaluation had resulted in more leadership responsibility being delegated to the 'senior play worker' and an 'operations manager' had been employed. This provided the club manager with more time for direct management and leadership of staff. Further to this, the management committee had updated 'Governance' training which supported more strategic planning. This had resulted in significant improvements being made to the service since the last inspection.

The manager was very passionate about the service and it was evident this was helping to ensure that staff were kept motivated following recent staffing changes. The manager had prioritised supporting new staff members to ensure that any issues were identified and responded to early. Further to this, all newly recruited staff had been given a robust induction. This resulted in a staff team that were working well together.

A number of areas for improvement had been identified, with some met, within the service improvement plan. For example, further developing children's participation within their club. This resulted in more meaningful 'Children's Council' meetings taking place and children providing the 'annual management update' at the clubs recent Annual General Meeting. Children told us they felt like their opinions were taking seriously and could tell us about changes they had initiated.

The improvement plan was electronically stored and therefore not visible. We discussed this with the manager who agreed to consider ways to make the service improvement plan more visible to everyone that uses the service. This will encourage an inclusive approach to improvement with more transparent processes.

The manager reflected more could be done to continually improve the club's quality assurance processes. We agreed they should continue to develop quality assurance systems, so the club can respond to changes within the childcare sector and maintain recent improvements.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

To ensure that unsuitable individuals do not gain access to children through work, the service provider must update their recruitment and selection policy and procedure to ensure they meet legislative and regulatory requirements in relation to safer recruitment and selection of staff.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'My environment is secure and safe'. (HSCS 5.17).

It is also necessary to comply with regulation, 4 (1)(a) welfare of users, of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland Regulations 2011.

This requirement was made on 12 March 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

The manager and management committee reviewed and further developed the club's policy on 'safely recruiting staff' using Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment. We completed a staff file audit as part of this inspection and found that the three staff files sampled evidenced safer recruitment practice. We were satisfied that all checks were in place prior to staff being employed.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the club improve their personal plans to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'. (HSCS 1.15)

This recommendation was made on 12 March 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation
All children now have a plan in place. We have asked the service to continue to develop the quality of the information recorded within the plans so that they better reflect children's needs and strategies used by staff. The manager is supporting staff to improve the quality of personal plans.

This recommendation is: met.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the club improve their food choices and include children in food planning.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I can choose suitably presented and healthy snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables and participate in menu planning'. (HSCS 1.33)

This recommendation was made on 12 March 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation
A whole service approach to healthy eating has been adopted. Children are more meaningfully involved in food planning. Staff ensure that baking activities are also more balanced. We observed both snack and breakfast during our two-day inspection and found the choices on offer were nutritionally balanced, with less high sugar options.

This recommendation is: met.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the club further develop and streamline quality assurance systems to ensure they can identify strengths and areas for improvement internally.

This could include:

- Developing practice, policies and procedures in line with current best practice guidance,
- Regular involvement of staff, parents and children in evaluating the quality of the service in a spirit of genuine partnership.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 419)

This recommendation was made on 7 February 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The manager has completed the SSSC 'Step Up To Leadership' course. The management committee reviewed roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in more delegated leadership opportunities for the senior play worker. During our inspection visit we found evidence of effective improvement planning, monitoring of staffs practice and better consultation with parents and children. We have asked the manager to continue to develop audit systems that will support them to ensure children are kept safe and staff continue to maintain a high quality service.

This recommendation is: met.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that the club review their child protection policies and procedures to ensure they support staff in keeping children's safe in line with current best practice.

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

This recommendation was made on 12 March 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Policy reviewed and updated in line with national guidance. Recording tools have been developed to support staff to analysis information and plan effective next steps. During the inspection feedback we suggested the manager and senior play worker complete leadership level child protection training.

This recommendation is: met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
6 Feb 2019	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 2 - Weak 3 - Adequate

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