Lanarkshire Childcare Services
Day Care of Children

Hagen Drive
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Motherwell
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Telephone: 07902509643

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 July 2024

Service provided by:
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Service provider number:
SP2024000102

Service no:
CS2024000089

About the service

Lanarkshire Childcare Services is an out of school care service situated in a sports ground, in a residential area of Motherwell. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 children attending primary school and up to the end of S2 at high school at any one time. During the summer holidays children who have registered to start school in August may attend the service.

Children are cared for in the dedicated playroom with easy access to toilet facilities. They also had access to several outdoor spaces which included, a football pitch, forest grounds and grass areas.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 July 2024 between 09:30 and 16:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service and received feedback from 13 of their family members
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled and comfortable in the setting.
- Staff knew children well and had developed positive relationships with them and their families, which helped children feel safe and secure.
- Play materials and experiences met children's interests and stage of development.
- All children had a personal plan, which helped staff meet their needs. The manager had plans in place to develop these further, to include next steps and strategies to support play and learning.
- Children's overall wellbeing was promoted through regular access to outdoor play.
- Improvements should be made to toilets and hand drying facilities, to help minimise the potential risk of spread of infection.

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.

1.1 Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support.

Children were settled, happy and confident in the setting. There was a calm ethos and children were engaged in play activities, supporting their overall wellbeing. Children told us they enjoyed coming to the service. One child told us, "I like this place, I like my friends."

Staff knew children well and they responded to children with caring and kind interactions, helping them to feel valued and safe. For example, checking in with children if they looked disengaged and asking children if they were ok. One child told us, "the leaders are nice they listen to me and what I have to say." A parent commented, "I feel comfortable with staff and can speak to them if my children are maybe having a low day and they go out their way to help".

All children had a personal plan in place, which contained important information to help meet their needs. For example, health, allergies and information about additional needs. One parent told us, "we are encouraged to keep care plans up to date, particularly when there is an additional support need." However, a couple of families were unsure if their child had a plan. We discussed this with the manager and they recognised they now need to develop plans further to include targets and strategies, to support children's play and development. We discussed that these should be reviewed with families and involve children where possible.

Children experienced a relaxing and sociable lunch experience. They sat together and chatted with staff and their peers. Staff ate alongside children, which promoted good role modelling. Children were well supervised to ensure children were safe and supported individual needs. The service provided a selection of healthy snacks and children told us they enjoyed breadsticks, cucumber and fruit. Comments included, "they always give us delicious snacks." We discussed with the manager to review cereal options, to ensure these are healthy. Water was available throughout the day to help ensure children were kept hydrated. Staff encouraged children to take regular drinks and reminded them to take water when going outdoors.

Procedures were in place to help ensure the safe administration of medication. We discussed with the manager to ensure signs and symptoms are clearly recorded on administration paperwork to help staff be aware of when medication is required.

Quality indicator: 1.3 Play and learning.

Children were engaged in a variety of experiences that met their interests. For example, pool and football table, board games and art and crafts. Daily routines provided children with ample opportunities for uninterrupted play, helping to promote a calm atmosphere. Transitions to other activities were relaxed and well organised, which supported children's wellbeing and choices. Favourites included the pool table, playing outside and visiting local attractions. One child told us, "Top golf was amazing!"

Children experienced fun and exciting opportunities to explore the wider community. This included trips to the beach, soft play and parks. This promoted children's physical and social skills. One child told us, 'I like

the daytrips during the holidays. We went to Troon beach yesterday and got ice cream.' Parents were positive about the variety of experiences available during the summer programme. Their comments included, "they are always doing interesting things exploring nature", "recently they have been to some really good parks, as well as the cinema and indoor activity areas, flip out etc" and "there's that many but pamper day, day trips, arts and crafts, pizza making to name just a couple".

To further support children's play and learning, consideration could be given to the inclusion of loose parts. This is open-ended materials that children may use in many ways and combine with other loose parts to help promote children imagination and creativity. Consideration should be given to widening the amount of books and reading materials to support literacy skills.

Children benefitted from regular opportunities for outdoor play which supported their physical development and overall wellbeing. This includes trips to the park, the football pitch and wooded area. Children told us they liked going outdoors. Parents commented, "my child is very outdoorsy and enjoys nothing more than playing outside, most of the time when I've picked them up, weather permitting they have been out playing" and "It's situated on rugby club grounds so plenty of outdoor activities."

Planning systems reflected balanced approaches of child led and adult initiated play experiences. Staff consulted with children to gather ideas and offered interesting activities to support children play and learning. For example, tie-dying t-shirts, bracelet making and baking. Children's experiences and learning were recorded within floor books. Further increasing children's views and voices in floor books would help strengthen their involvement.

Children enjoyed staff joining in with their play, which highlighted the relationships they had. This supported children to have fun, extending their play and learning opportunities. To continue to support children, staff would benefit from learning opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge of play theory and best practice guidance. This would help promote high quality play and learning opportunities.

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 High quality facilities.

Play spaces were bright, welcoming and well ventilated. Spaces were well organised, and children had places to store their personal items. For example, their jackets, shoes and bags. This helped create a sense of belonging and supported children to feel welcomed.

Play materials and spaces had been increased and revamped. Toys were in good condition and were reflective of children's interests and stage of development. These were stored and displayed within easy access for them, which supported their choices and independence. This helped promote an interesting and engaging environment for children.

Whilst children did not have direct access to an outdoor play area, they were supported to have regular access to nearby grass and woodland areas, which promoted their overall wellbeing.

Children could choose to play on their own or with others, supporting their emotional wellbeing. In addition, soft chairs had been added, which created homely spaces for them to relax. We discussed with the manager

to continue to review spaces, to ensure there are a choice of places for children to relax.

A variety of measures were in place to keep children safe. For example, safe storage of hazardous materials and detailed risk assessments. The front entrance was welcoming and staff monitored access. The manager planned to clear out the foyer area of unnecessary items to create more space. We discussed opportunities to improve ventilation in this area and bring in fresh air when it is safe to do so. Plans were in place to replace a faulty lock on the front door. This will help create a secure entrance to keep children safe.

Some measures in place promoted infection prevention and control. For example, regular cleaning of surfaces and ensuring spaces were cleaned after meals. However, improvements were needed to toilets and hand washing facilities to help minimise the potential spread of infection. We observed that there was no liquid soap in one of the toilets, and hand drying materials and toilet rolls needed replenished. The manager agreed to action this (see area for improvement 1).

Children's personal information was stored securely in a locked cabinet in a separate office. Staff could access information when they needed to meet children's needs. For example, reviewing children's personal plans. However, we discussed with the manager on ensuring the office was secured when unoccupied to ensure sensitive information was kept safe. The manager agreed to action this.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, the provider should ensure children have access to suitable toilet and hand washing facilities. This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring hygiene materials are replenished when needed.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

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.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The service had developed their vision, value and aims, to help ensure children experienced a happy, safe and warm environment to play. There was a commitment to listen and respond to parents' views, helping to support improvements within the service. We discussed with the manager on ensuring children and families were involved in reviews of the vision, values and aims. This would contribute to a shared approach, reflecting aspirations of children and families. The manager agreed to take this forward.

Families were informed about information about the service through daily chats, notice boards and social media. This helped ensure families were aware of planned activities and events. We discussed with the manger to develop further opportunities of involving families in a meaningful way to help develop the service. Whilst some families told us they felt involved through sharing suggestions and being asked for ideas, a couple of families did not feel as involved.

The manager and staff had made good progress on areas for improvement. This was supported by a

detailed action plan and commitment from leaders to improve outcomes for children. For example, improving play materials, personal plans and recruitments procedures. As a result, all families that provide feedback were happy with the quality of care their child received. Moving forward, the manager should now develop more formal self-evaluation processes, involving staff children and families. This would support them to identify what is working well and where they need to improve. We signposted the manager to improvement tools available on the Care Inspectorate website.

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.

Staff were warm, friendly and knew children well. This supported positive relationships and helped children feel safe and secure. Staff enjoyed their role in the service which contributed to a positive environment for children. Parents commented positively about the staff team and told us, "they are extremely friendly and approachable with any concerns", "all the staff are lovely and approachable, they listen to any concerns you may have and do their best to help and accommodate if they can" and "I have always found the staff and management at LCS friendly and competent, I haven't had many issues but any that have arisen [managers] and the staff have always been more than helpful."

Staff communicated well together throughout the day to help meet children's needs. This supported the planning of activities and experiences to help ensure smooth transitions, which supported children's wellbeing. One parent told us, "the staff are so good with children, it is a fun, educational and safe environment."

Staff had engaged in a variety of training opportunities to support their skills and abilities. For example, food hygiene, child protection and first aid. The manager planned to refresh child protection training on a yearly cycle. Staff were committed to their development and eager to participate in learning relevant to their role. We discussed that further learning opportunities would help staff develop their skills to support them in their role.

Staff rotas were developed in response to the needs of the service and children benefited from a consistent staff team that were familiar with their needs. For example, shifts were varied, reflecting the number of children attending the service. However, we discussed with the manager on ensuring the staffing model supported staff to take breaks during the day. This would support their wellbeing and ensure they were refreshed to care for children. The manager agreed to review opportunities to address this.

Recent staff recruitment had taken place within the service and we were satisfied that safer recruitment processes had been followed. For example, Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registrations. Induction processes were in place to help staff settle into their role. To further enhance these processes, we signposted the manager to the National Induction Resource to strengthen recruitment and mentoring processes.

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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