

Townhill Out of School Club Day Care of Children

Townhill Primary School
Chisholm Street
Dunfermline
KY12 0EX

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 February 2024

Service provided by:
Fife Council

Service provider number:
SP2004005267

Service no:
CS2012310949

About the service

Townhill Out of School Club is situated in a residential area in the village of Townhill, north of Dunfermline within the local primary school. It is close to local amenities including shops, woodlands, parks and community hall. The service provides care for a maximum of 24 children aged up to 14 years.

The accommodations is provided from the school dining hall. The children also have access to the school toilets, a smaller room, the extensive outdoor area and garden space.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 February 2024 between 15:15 and 17:15. We returned to complete the inspection and provide feedback on 28 February 2024 between 15:00 and 18:00. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with 6 children using the service
- spoke with/gathered feedback from 16 parents/carers
- spoke with management and staff members
- observed practice
- reviewed relevant documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced varied play and learning experiences within the local community, enriching their play and learning.
- Children enjoyed high levels of active play outdoors, supporting their wellbeing.
- Children with additional support needs are supported well, promoting their inclusion and success.
- Children have a voice and are regularly consulted on provision and their views, giving them real ownership of the club.
- Parents highly valued and praised the service, echoing inspection findings.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1; Nurturing care and support.

Strong relationships and effective communication with parents contributed to children's needs being met. Parents told us they received lots of information and that they felt supported by the staff. They told us that staff "go the extra mile" for their child and "staff are lovely and approachable and I know my child feels safe around them".

Children were very happy, settled and secure in the setting. They approached staff comfortably and made requests, which were quickly responded to and supported. Children had ownership of the club as they were able to give their views regularly through different means including a daily comments book, floor book consultations and their own pupil council which met once a term. Staff took positive action to respond to children's requests, which was also captured within these books; for example voting undertaken regarding outdoor play. This empowered children and contributed to them feeling respected and valued.

Children enjoyed healthy snacks and sat together supported by staff. Most chose to eat upon entry to the club, although food and drinks were available for longer. Children were involved in reviewing and shopping for snacks. We asked the service to consider a 'traffic lights' approach to different foods to support children to plan healthy snacks across the week. Although drinking water was available indoors at all times, consideration should be made to providing this outdoors, as many children appeared hot due to their level of activity.

Where children required some additional support, the service worked closely with the family and school, which enabled them to develop a personal plan. This supported consistency in approaches and strategies used, which were kept under review. All staff were able to discuss strategies in place which contributed to continuity of approaches. This enhanced children's experiences and enjoyment whilst in the club. We discussed with the manager how the format of review meetings could be better structured, to ensure that the parent and child's voice are evident in this and to make the strategies clearer to see.

Children had ownership of their 'all about me' folders where they regularly identified their next steps. We saw evidence how staff were supporting with these. For example, one child wanted to visit the local football grounds following a visit from the footballers. Staff were supporting them to send a follow up email, as no response had been received from the first request. We asked the senior to develop a system for tracking next steps and actions taken to evidence these were all being progressed.

Quality indicator 1.3; Play and learning.

We found outcomes for children under this quality indicator to be very good.

Children were experiencing positive outdoor play opportunities as the service were committed to developing this. Children were regularly active in the playground and local park. The fixed equipment and other outdoor resources accessible to them contributed to them developing coordination, strength and agility.

Gardening opportunities allowed them to plant and grow their own food, which included raspberries, tomatoes and green beans. Risky play experiences were available through sessions in the woodland to the rear of the building and loose parts play resources were developing. The service used links with parents to help them gather a range of these, some of which were delivered during the inspection. The service should continue with their own plans to further enhance outdoor learning and really embed loose parts play.

Parental engagement in the service was strong, enhancing outcomes for children. Floor books evidenced parents' involvement; for example, a parent making Christmas wreaths with children and some parents decorating the Christmas tree with children. Parents also came in and spoke to children about their roles, such as a parent who was a police officer.

Children enjoyed lots varied learning experiences through the links and use of the local environment, particularly the elderly community. For example, they visited the local bowling group where they were learning how to play bowls. They also visited the elderly in the community centre to play board games and chat. This intergenerational link promoted respect across generations and extended learning. One parent told us "My child is incredibly stimulated by the learning on offer, including the opportunity to leave the setting and use the facilities around the vicinity of the school".

An appropriate range of resources inside and out provided children with appropriate levels of interest, fun and challenge suited to their age and stage. One parent told us "they listen and involve the children in the planning of the week's activities". We saw that planning was carried out and evaluated, which made reference to the 'play types'. We asked the service to begin reviewing planning to ensure a breadth of play types is identified across a period of time.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2; Children experience high quality facilities.

The indoor environment was spacious, providing children with places to play and relax at different levels. Cushions and bean bags in one corner provided a cosy space. The addition of temporary dividers would provide more privacy and cosiness. Older children were able to access the 'blue room' nearby allowing them additional opportunities to rest, relax, read and chat. Wall displays throughout the hall enhanced children's sense of belonging and ownership of the club. Toilets were some distance from the play area but this was managed well by staff. The outdoor play space invited active play through fixed climbing equipment and large spaces to run, promoting children's physical wellbeing.

Written risk assessments were in place which were contributing to children's continued safety and wellbeing. We asked the service to consider some further personalisation with risk assessments for activities specific to the setting. We discussed the management of coats and bags which were scattered around the room during our first visit, which had the potential to act as tripping hazards. However, the senior had addressed this by the second visit and was looking at how to develop a more permanent solution. This enhanced the environment and reduced risk for children.

A very good range of toys and games were set up for children and they were able to make requests for other resources. Storage of resources within the cupboard in the hall and the new outdoor shed enabled children to see what was available and make decisions. One parent told us "My child is incredibly stimulated by the learning on offer, including the opportunity to leave the settings and use the facilities around the vicinity of the school". The service informed us of funding recently made available for purchasing more resources and ongoing consultation with children on how to spend this. This will enhance children's choice and their enjoyment.

Information held on children was stored securely, limiting unauthorised access and maintaining children and families' confidentiality.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1; Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Parents were given regular information on the service and their child through newsletters and face to face chats. Staff took the time to have discussions with parents upon collection, which were relaxed and unhurried. This supported sharing of information to meet children's needs.

Children's views were regularly gathered, supporting planned improvements based on their needs and wants. A children's committee, comments book and 'you said, we did' board supported their inclusion. Staff valued children's voices and ensured they provided feedback within the board and the comments book. In addition, parents were actively encouraged to write in their comments book and an annual questionnaire was issued, the results of which were displayed. The senior advised of plans to re-establish the 'you said, we did' board in response to parental feedback. We asked the service to consider how they could bring the voices of parents and children together and reflect this within the self evaluation and improvement plan. This would support a 360 degree approach to feedback.

Weekly visits from the manager were carried out and staff told us they felt supported by him. Children knew the manager well and the manager knew and spoke about the individual children and actively deployed himself to support the play experiences and supervision of children during the visit. This enabled them to have an overview of the service and identify any areas for improvement.

The manager had a system of monitoring in place which included; staff training, accidents, medication, care plans, cleanliness, allergies and displays. A new monitoring record for health and safety was currently being developed and was still to be used. Monitoring could now be further developed to capture staff practice and interactions which could be used to support staff appraisals.

The manager and staff were using the quality assurance document 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to assess themselves. They gathered photographic evidence of progress made within floor books and made links to relevant quality indicators. A new quality assurance calendar was in place which the staff advised supported them better. An improvement plan was held with clear action points supporting continued improvement and positive outcomes for children.

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3; Staff deployment

Staff positioned themselves well during outdoor play to cover the large area accessible to them. They communicated well with each other throughout the session to support children's play and ensure accountability of all children at all times. Walkie talkies were used to manage the movement of children between indoor and out and a register was taken outside, supporting management of children during collection. This contributed to children's continued safety.

The collection of children from school was managed well as children were all collected from a central location. Staff maintained up to date records of other clubs accessed by children to ensure they were fully aware of expected numbers. This enabled them to act quickly in the event of an expected child not being present.

There was good mix of skills and experience in the team. One staff member had been in post for a few years and a temporary member of staff was consistently covering a vacant post, supporting continuity for children. Staff spoke passionately about their work and were enthusiastic and reflective about their roles.

Staffing met minimum ratios and staff worked well with children to ensure they met their needs fairly. For example, taking votes regarding indoor and outdoor play to ensure this was managed safely when the majority wished to be outside. Although managed well during inspection, we discussed the number of children with additional support needs. Staff levels should continue to be monitored to ensure that ratios maintained continue to meet children's needs.

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 ensures that all staff have the opportunity to meet together to discuss the provision and be able to have input in the ongoing improvement. An improvement plan should be in place to identify improvements and persons responsible for taking these forward. This would have the benefit of all staff taking ownership of the quality of service given to service users.

This area for improvement was made on 22 March 2016.

Action taken since then

An improvement plan was in place and staff regularly met to discuss provision both at service and cluster group level. All staff were able to have input into ongoing improvement. This area for improvement is therefore 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?	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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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