

Towerbank After School Club Day Care of Children

Towerbank Primary School
Figgate Bank
Portobello
Edinburgh
EH15 1HX

Telephone: 07796 597 976

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 March 2024

Service provided by:
Towerbank After School Club Limited

Service provider number:
SP2011011392

Service no:
CS2011280480

About the service

Towerbank After School Club is provided by Towerbank After School Club (TASC) Limited. The service is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 80 children at any one time of primary school age.

The service is located within Towerbank Primary School in the Portobello area of Edinburgh. The accommodation they have access to includes the lower hall, main hall, middle upper hall, TASC office/ kitchen and identified toilets with occasional use of the gym hall and music room within the address. Children also use the school playground for outdoor play. There are local amenities, transport links and outdoor spaces to use nearby.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 March 2024 between the hours of 15:15 and 17:45. We also returned on 15 March 2024 between the hours of 12 noon and 15:45 to continue with the inspection.

The inspection was carried out by one 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 to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with staff and the manager
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents in the service
- reviewed responses to feedback questionnaires from eight parents

Key messages

- Most children were relaxed and happy during the service and confidently approached staff.
- Children's experiences should continue to be developed to enrich their play and learning.
- Children had daily free flow access to the outdoors.
- There were some opportunities for children and families to participate in the service.
- Quality assurance and self-evaluation processes should be developed to effectively promote improvement.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 quality indicator 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 were relaxed and happy during the service and confidently approached staff, demonstrating they felt safe and secure. They had developed positive relationships with their peers and staff.

Staff knew the children well. Personal plans were in place which provided information about children's likes and dislikes. When discussing individual children, staff were aware of strategies that had been agreed to support them. There was sufficient information in individual plans to promote staff's knowledge and understanding of children's support needs, likes, dislikes and interests. Staff should review the strategies that have been identified and record the impact and if changes are needed. This would support how children's individual needs were met whilst providing a consistent approach. A parent commented "The staff are caring and attentive to the needs of the children. They get to know my child well and create activities and opportunities based on his interests".

Staff members did not always sit with children while they ate their snacks or packed lunches. This was a missed opportunity to build trusting relationships with the children and ensure their safety. We have advised the service to review their snack routine. We suggested that they allow children to prepare and serve their own snacks. This would help children become more confident and independent. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it is not met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Children were kept safe because improvements had been made to the storage and recording of medication. The medication was clearly marked with the child's photo, information including dosage and what to do if an emergency. A clear medication audit including expiry dates was in place, this meant children's wellbeing was a priority for staff.

Most staff had received professional learning in safeguarding and understood the indicators that may suggest a child is at risk of suffering harm. The manager should provide opportunities for the staff to discuss safeguarding during team meetings. Accidents and incidents were clearly recorded and audited by the service.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were able to make some choices about their play. Some resources and toys were set up when they arrived and they could access further toys and equipment throughout the session. We have commented further on resources and activities under quality indicator 2.2.

Staff planned activities to reflect festivals and events, this included trips to parks, beach and museums during the school holidays. Children were asked to provide suggestions about toys and games they wanted to play with. However, this could be further developed through regular consultation with them to help identify, plan and support their interests and curiosities. A parent commented "The play is mostly free play and the environment is safe. The children are also familiar with the environment as it is the school building". Another commented "there seems to be little forward planning of activities, especially outside to

suit a variety of interests and needs of the children attending". We identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, it has not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1 under quality indicator 2.2).

At the previous inspection we asked the provider to ensure that children's individual needs and cues were effectively supported and responded to by staff. We found at this inspection the interactions between children and staff were in general positive. Most children were observed to be having fun whilst engaged in their play and learning which consisted of accessing the outdoors, or exploring their creativity through drawing or playing with hamma beads. Staff knew children well as individuals and told us about their interests, likes and dislikes. A parent commented "more engaging/active staff". Another added "I think there could be more interaction between staff and children through more facilitated play e.g. Setting up games etc both indoors and outdoors". We have asked the manager to continue to observe staff's practice to ensure children's individual needs were effectively supported and responded to by staff.

The team had worked hard to create cosier areas within the play area, that included a den and a story area. Children accessed these area's throughout the sessions and enjoyed some quieter times away from the busier main room.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and choice, the provider should improve the snack experience. This should include supporting children's independence to serve themselves and also a choice of when to have snack.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My meals and snacks meet my cultural and dietary needs, beliefs and preferences' (HSCS 1.37).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefitted from a welcoming environment which had natural light and was appropriately ventilated. As previously mentioned staff had created some cosy spaces with the addition of a den and story area. Children were seen to be enjoying these areas and using them to relax, read a book or play a game. However, the books in the story area needed to be tidied and displayed attractively to encourage children to read them. Free-flow access between the in and outdoors provided children with opportunities to be active and healthy. A parent commented "The club tries hard and succeeds in providing great opportunities" and another stated "Ideal location for parents as not having to go to another place as well as the school. Use of the extra hall upstairs had made a big difference, and my child likes using the music and PE facilities, but given the choice will always choose to go outside".

Most children were provided with developmentally appropriate resources which were stored in large cupboards and storage units. The room was set up with some resources before the children arrived. The manager should continue to review the areas used by the children to ensure they are well presented and attractively set up. This would mean children experience exciting and stimulating play spaces that reflected their interests. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it is not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Children were asked to wash their hands throughout the inspection but it was not clear how staff monitored this. Risk assessments and daily prompts had been updated and shared with staff. However, on the first day of inspection we found the kitchen area had not been cleaned appropriately after the preparation of snack. Some opened food items had not been sealed or labelled. This meant that staff did not always adhere to food hygiene routines or the safe storage of food stuffs. Improvements had been made to these areas on our return visit. The provider must ensure that daily check lists are effective and used appropriately by staff. The procedure for snack preparation and food storage needed to be improved and monitored as part of quality assurance. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it is not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to be meaningfully engaged and involved in leading their play, the service should continue to review the areas used by the children to ensure they are well presented and attractively set up. This would mean children experience exciting and stimulating play spaces that reflected their interests. Staff should provide children with opportunities to help identify, plan and support their interests and curiosities.

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

'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27)

2. To ensure children are cared for in a clean and tidy environment the service should ensure the snack preparation areas are clean, tidy and free from clutter. The provider must ensure that daily check lists are effective and used appropriately by staff and the procedure for snack preparation and food storage must be reviewed and staff should adhere to food safety standards.

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, furnishing and equipment' (HSCS 5.22)

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Parents were welcomed into the setting. The service was run by a parent led board and all parents were welcome to attend the annual general meeting so that they could participate in the decision making process.

Information was shared with families through an informative website, newsletters, emails and social media platforms. Management and the board should review existing methods of gaining meaningful feedback from families. We suggested staff could develop further methods of gathering children's views, such as, involving

them in planning for play and improvements to the setting. This could be used to support improvement planning and influencing change within the setting. A parent commented "Lots of communication from the manager and what is going on in the club in the form of newsletters and emails. Always trying to engage parents in discussion regarding food and activities".

The manager and staff were able to discuss identified areas for development and told us about improvements they had made. This was documented and included the creation of a cosy book area and den, along with free flow access to the outdoor area. Other positive changes included the development of personal plans, improvements to the medication systems and the auditing of accidents and incidents. This helped ensure children were provided with high quality experiences

To further develop the service and continue to build on the improvements already made a quality assurance calendar should be put in place for the day-to-day running of the club. This should be formalised with any actions identified, who is responsible, when this was actioned and what the outcome was. We suggested this could be broken down into monthly tasks for the manager to complete. This would include regular audits of personal plans and medication amongst others to support with improvements. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it is not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Management should begin to introduce some methods of self-evaluation to assess the quality of the service and support improvement planning. For example, staff should begin to evaluate the play room, toys and resources on offer to children. This would allow staff to consider what was working well and what could be improved. To complete this process fully, staff and management should ensure that any identified improvement is acted upon and thereafter consider the impact of these on children's experiences. This should help to bring about positive change within the setting and continue to improve outcomes for children and families. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it is not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Staff told us they felt supported by the manager and were confident to share ideas and make suggestions for improvements. Regular discussion with the manager provided opportunities for staff to reflect and discuss their practice. One to one meetings between management and staff were in place and this helped staff feel valued and respected. These meetings should be used to highlight and praise good practice and discuss areas for development. Monitoring of staff practice would also be beneficial to support consistent ongoing professional development/training and improvement within the service.

Parents were all positive about the changes to the club since the new manager had been employed and some comments included: "Overall, I think Towerbank after-school club is a brilliant organisation. They provide vital, affordable childcare in Portobello". Another commented "Since the new manager, has been in post we have seen huge improvements. There is a lovely ethos and I am very happy to send my children to after school club and holiday club and it is actually sometimes hard to get them to leave to come home as they are having so much fun!". A third told us "the manager has been making strong improvements throughout her time at TASC and I personally have felt her appointment was a game changer to the club. I hope she continues and helps to make this club thrive in future years as much as it is currently doing. The fact we again have a waiting list is testament to the services provided".

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children and parents experience a service which promotes high quality care, play and learning experiences, the provider should ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement. To

support this, quality assurance processes should be developed to help assess and highlight areas for improvement in line with best practice and national guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Staff mostly communicated well with each other throughout the session. Through discussions, they demonstrated a commitment to supporting children and families by promoting positive interactions and building relationships. We observed some staff interacting respectfully with children and parents, so families felt valued. Parents views about the staff team were mixed with one commenting that "The staff team are a great bunch of people. There is a mix of skills, ages and ethnicities, which I think is very healthy".

Children were well supervised most of the time. Some staff positioned themselves across the playroom and outside, to help ensure children were safe and well supported. However, at times throughout the session, staff were sitting with the register and did not interact with the children or families arriving for pick up. Some parents also commented on the lack of supervision by some staff and one commented "Staff are often huddled together when you go to pick up your child instead, especially when outside, and would like some of them to interact a bit more. I appreciate that it is a balance between giving kids some free play time and doing activities with them, but certain members of staff never seem to interact". The manager has agreed to monitor staff interaction and supervision to ensure children are appropriately supervised.

Since the last inspection an additional room had been included in the registered spaces for children to play. However, on the first day of inspection the room was not available due to school demands. Whilst the minimum staffing levels were met during the inspection, staffing levels and the deployment of staff should be improved to support the effective use of the environment and enhance children's choices and experiences. For example, allowing children free flow access to the play spaces. This would help ensure that children always get the support they need at the right time and their interests and choices would not be limited. We identified this as an area for improvement during the last inspection, it has not been met and remains in place (see area for improvement 1).

Staff told us they felt supported by colleagues and the leadership team. They felt comfortable to raise concerns or ask for support if required. Some staff development had been identified from support sessions and appraisals, however, it was difficult to evidence how that had led to improvements in children's experiences. The manager should monitor staff practice to identify training needs. Staff development should be relevant to their role and continue to increase their knowledge of best practice documents to support ongoing improvement of children's experiences. Staff training should be evaluated to evidence the impact on staff practice and positive outcomes for children. This would help to identify further training needs (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should support children's safety, needs, interests and choices by ensuring there are appropriate staffing levels at all times. Staff should be suitably trained, qualified and deployed effectively to secure positive outcomes for all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15) and 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well' (HSCS 3.19)

2. To support professional development and improve play experiences and outcomes for children. The provider should implement a targeted training plan which includes current best practice documents and supports staff to evaluate the impact of their training.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14)

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

To support the wellbeing and nurture of children, the provider should ensure that children's individual needs and cues are effectively supported and responded to by staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I know who provides my care and support on a day to day basis and what they are expected to do. If possible, I can have a say on who provides my care and support' (HSCS 3.11) and 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Most staff were aware of the children and picked up on their cues. This meant that most children were supported and enjoyed attending the club.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing and choice, the provider should ensure that the snack time experience is improved. This should include supporting children's independence to serve themselves and also a choice of when to have snack.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My meals and snacks meet my cultural and dietary needs, beliefs and preferences' (HSCS 1.37).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Snack procedures still needed to be improved, staff did not sit with the children this was a missed opportunity to build trusting relationships with the children and ensure their safety. We have advised the service to review their snack routine. We suggested that they allow children to prepare and serve their own snacks.

We identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, it has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support the wellbeing and nurture of children, the provider should ensure that personal plans clearly outline the strategies of support for children with any individual support needs. This should include how these will be effectively planned for and met by staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care 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) and 'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23) .

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

The management team had worked hard to create personal plans that were up to date and held all relevant information on each child. This included strategies to support children when required. The plans were regularly updated.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support children to be meaningfully engaged and involved in leading their play, the provider should ensure that there is a choice of indoor and outdoor play and experiences that are reflective of children's choices and interests.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27) and 'People have time to support and care for me and to speak with me' (HSCS 3.16).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Children were provided with the choice to play indoors or outside. They had free flow between the areas and they had access to activities and resources when outside.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To support a safe environment for children, the provider should ensure that the risk assessment and prompt information is effective and consistently used by staff. This would support staff to identify and document any issues or potential risks and the necessary action taken.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is safe and secure' (HSCS 5.17) and 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Risk assessments and daily prompts had been updated and shared with staff.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 6

To support children's interests and choices, the provider should ensure that both indoor and outdoor play options are provided. Children's play experiences and resources should also be well presented throughout the session and offer cosy, comfortable areas for children to enjoy a quiet space.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors' (HSCS 1.25) and 'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices'. (HSCS 5.21).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Improvements had been made to the range of resources and activities on offer to the children. However, we have asked the service to continue to develop this to ensure children are being cared for in a welcoming environment with age-appropriate toys and resources. We have also asked the service to improve their planning and consulting with children.

We identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, it has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 7

To support children's health and safety, the provider should take further action to ensure that appropriate hand hygiene routines for children are consistently carried out in line with national guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Children were asked to wash their hands at appropriate times and was this was carried out in line with national guidance.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 8

To ensure that children and parents experience a service which promotes high quality care, play and learning experiences, the provider should ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement. To support this, quality assurance processes should be developed to help assess and highlight areas for improvement in line with best practice and national guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11) and '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 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

The manager and staff were able to discuss identified areas for development and told us about improvements made. This was documented and included the creation of a cosy book area and den, along with free flow access to the outdoor area. Other positive changes included the development of personal plans, improvements to the medication systems and the auditing of accidents and incidents.

The service should continue to introduce further methods of self-evaluation to assess the quality of the service and support improvement planning. This should include evaluating the play room, toys and resources on offer to the children.

We identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, it has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 9

The provider should support children's safety, needs, interests and choices by ensuring there are appropriate staffing levels at all times. Staff should be suitably trained, qualified and deployed effectively to secure positive outcomes for all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15) and 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well' (HSCS 3.19)

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2022.

Action taken since then

Whilst the minimum staffing levels were met during the inspection, staffing levels and the deployment of staff should be improved to support the effective use of the environment and enhance children's choices and experiences. For example, allowing children free flow access to the play spaces. This would help ensure that children always get the support they need at the right time and their interests and choices would not be limited.

We identified this as an area for improvement at the last inspection, it is not met and remains in place.

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?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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