

COSMOS After School Club

Day Care of Children

Cosmos Community Centre
Abbey Walk
St. Andrews
KY16 9LB

Telephone: 01334 474 140

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 August 2024

Service provided by:
COSMOS After School Club

Service provider number:
SP2003003435

Service no:
CS2003015112

About the service

COSMOS After School Club is a daycare of children service and is committee led. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 56 children from school age up to 14 years. Other registration conditions include; when using the coffee bar area, a care service may be provided to a maximum of 70 children from school age up to 14 years.

The service operates from COSMOS community centre, St Andrews, Fife. During operational hours of the service, children have exclusive use of a sports hall and function hall, with access to an enclosed courtyard and toileting facilities. There are a number of local amenities close by such as parks, beach and shops.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 August 2024 between 09:30 and 16:00 and 20 August 2024 between 09:30 and 15:45. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from 14 families from our online questionnaire
- spoke with the staff and management team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children experienced kind and caring interactions which helped them feel cared for and valued.
- Children benefited from clean, large play spaces with free flow access to outdoors.
- Children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at COSMOS After School Club
- Play experiences did not always offer sufficient challenge and curiosity for some older children.
- There were insufficient safety measures in place, which meant members of the public could access spaces used by children.
- Effective staff deployment across the service meant staff were meeting children's individual needs.
- The manager and staff were passionate and committed to drive forward 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?	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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, settled and enjoyed their time at COSMOS After School Club (the club). They experienced kind, caring and nurturing approaches to their personal care. Staff recognised children as individuals and responded effectively to their needs and wishes which provided them with responsive care throughout the day. They communicated with children at their level in an appropriate and sensitive way. These supportive interactions meant children had developed close bonds with staff, contributing to them feeling safe and secure.

Children's individual wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning. These were currently being reviewed and included children's ideas and suggestions. Staff knew children well and spoke knowledgeably about their differing needs. Overall, information recorded in children's personal plans reflected the care and support staff provided which contributed to continuity and consistency in care. We highlighted the importance of support strategies for individual children being accessible and detailed to support relief staff members.

Children experienced a calm and sociable lunch time. There were opportunities for independence as children poured their own drinks and got their own packed lunches. Staff recognised the opportunity to build on relationships and joined children eating which promoted good eating habits, manners and supported the sociable experience. Children had access to fresh water throughout the session which supported them to stay hydrated and fresh fruit was available also.

1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun as they played with their friends. They were happy and most were engaged in their play on the day of inspection. Toys and resources had been selected for the day on children's request, this supported children to make choices and lead some of their play. Staff were responsive to children's suggestions and facilitated these play experiences.

Staff were playful in their interactions with children and there was lots of chatter and laughter. They took time to listen to children. Staff knew the children's interests well. Children benefited from this knowledge as staff were able to offer activities and resources which they knew children enjoyed. For example, one child had taken an interest in knitting, resources for this had been offered. However, play experiences did not always offer sufficient challenge and curiosity for some older children. As a result, not all children were engaged in their play experiences.

Although children had the opportunity to share ideas about resources and experiences, staff planned the activities on offer. Floorbooks were in the early stages and there was scope for these to be developed to meaningfully and actively involve children in shaping their play experiences.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their community. Children made regular visits to the local shops, library, parks and beach. This helped children feel included and connected to their wider community.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children to build on their own play and current interests the staff team should ensure children have access to a range of resources that provide challenge and curiosity for all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I chose, 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).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

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

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The centre provided ample space for children to play and have fun. The main hall was resourced with tabletop activities such as board games and crafts, with areas for children to explore imaginative play. The sports hall provided good opportunities for physical play. Children enjoyed a range of experiences such as ball games, and active play experiences. The service had created a small cosy area for children to rest and relax, with books and beanbags. This supported children's emotional wellbeing. However, we identified scope to further develop cosy spaces within the setting.

The club had direct access to a small, enclosed outdoor area. This had been developed since the previous inspection to include some loose parts and play kitchen. Children would benefit from having access to the garden throughout the session at the club.

Children were supported to be healthy and safe through infection, prevention and control practices. The environment was well ventilated, hand washing was embedded in practice. Staff were being respectful and protecting children by maintaining a clean and hygienic environment.

Children's information was stored securely, and confidentiality was respected. This demonstrated the service's commitment to understanding and following guidelines on data protection.

Access to the club was gained via the community centre. There were no appropriate safety measures in place to ensure children were protected. For example, members of the public could freely access the spaces children used whilst attending the club. The manager had identified this risk and was in the early stages of exploring remedial actions to be taken (**see requirement one**).

Requirements

1. By 27 September 2024, the provider must ensure children are safe and protected. As a minimum, they must ensure appropriate security and safety measures are in place.

This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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

How good is our leadership?**4 - Good**

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The manager and staff had a clear vision about the development of the service and were passionate and committed to drive forward improvement. Families were very positive about the service. Comments included, 'Friendly, welcoming, fun and safe service which is local and affordable. My child my is listened to and is treated individually and developing so many key skills, strengths and qualities while in their care,' and 'Well done to all at cosmos keep doing what you're doing our community and families, children value your hard work and great service'.

Children and families were involved in developing the service and their views were actively sought. Families were encouraged to give feedback for example, through regular questionnaires or a suggestion box. Their feedback was responded to through a newsletter and used as a starting point for future improvements. One parent commented, 'I provide feedback regularly and know my thoughts, views and opinions and those of my child are acknowledged and respected'. As a result, children and families' views were valued, listened to and respected.

An improvement plan had been developed which focussed on areas for improvements from previous inspection. We could see points had been actioned, and staff were fully involved in development of these areas. To support meaningful reflective practice, the service should make further use of best practice documents to support this process. We suggested the service referred to the Care Inspectorate 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare' to enhance and evidence their self-evaluation journey. This will support them to identify their strengths and areas of development in the service, by considering the views and comments of children and their families. This will allow them to develop plans for improvement that meets the needs of children and their families.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

4.3 Staff deployment

Children were cared for by staff who were kind and nurturing. Staff provided individualised support by effectively engaging with children throughout the inspection. Parents were very complimentary of the staff team, comments included, 'Staff are always very friendly and professional; they show genuine care and affection for my child' and 'Staff are very visible and approachable, they communicate formally and informally very well me, and my family have built a good rapport with staff, they are clearly invested in reflecting on the service and developing the service further'.

Effective staff deployment across the service meant staff were meeting children's individual needs, throughout the session. Staff were proactive in recognising any gaps and ensuring effective supervision and quality engagement with children. Staff communicated well and in a respectful manner to ensure children's needs were met consistently across the session. The use of walkie talkies allowed staff to communicate directly across the different areas. This supported children to move around the spaces freely and safely.

Staff were safely recruited and there was a detailed and supportive induction in place to help new staff learn about children's needs. Not all inductions had been fully completed. We discussed with the manager, the importance of ensuring these were complete to ensure appropriate support can be identified and actioned.

Staff were enthusiastic and committed to the service and the children. There were positive relationships between staff and children, that supported the development of trusting relationships.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

With immediate effect, the provider must ensure staff are deployed effectively to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. The manager and staff should take responsibility to identify gaps in staffing to ensure consistent opportunities and adequate supervision and support is available throughout the day.

This is to comply with Regulations 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event' (HSCS 4.14).

This requirement was made on 4 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Children were supported by staff who were deployed effectively to ensure their well being needs were met.

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 31 May 2023, the provider should review and implement appropriate recruitment procedures. This is to ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. The provider must take account of relevant legislation and guidance including the document 'Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment' and ensure that safe and effective recruitment checks are carried out in line with current guidance.

This is to comply with Regulations 9(2)(2) (Fitness of Employees) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

This requirement was made on 4 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Children were safe and protected by harm as appropriate recruitment procedures were in place. Recruitment checks were carried out in line with current guidance.

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

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 promote children and staff's health, safety and wellbeing, the provider should ensure all staff and children in the service are supported to understand and review the risk assessments.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 4 April 2023.

Action taken since then

Risk assessments were in place and had been reviewed. Staff spoke confidently about measures in place to ensure children's safety and supported them to understand risks before their outing. This helped children to keep themselves and others safe.

This area for improvement has been 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?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate

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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