

Alyth Out of School Care Group Day Care of Children

Alyth Primary School
Albert Street
Alyth
Blairgowrie
PH11 8AX

Telephone: 07718 573 511

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 September 2024

Service provided by:
Alyth Out Of School Care Group

Service provider number:
SP2003002143

Service no:
CS2003010086

About the service

Alyth Out of School Care Group is registered to provide care to a maximum of 32 school aged children. They provide a breakfast club and after school sessions.

The service operates from the dining hall within Alyth Primary school. Children have sole use of the hall and can access an enclosed courtyard and toilet facilities. They also have use of the playground. Alyth Primary school is located close to local amenities within the village.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 and 26 September 2024. 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 the children at play
- received questionnaire feedback from 10 families and two staff
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were cared for by staff who were warm and supportive.
- Children were engaged in various play experiences and activities. They were effectively supported by responsive staff when appropriate.
- Staff provided individualised support by effectively engaging with children, contributing to children's overall wellbeing.
- Children experienced fun and interesting play opportunities which promoted curiosity, imagination and collaborative play both indoors and outdoors.
- Quality assurance processes were now leading to improved outcomes for children and families.

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/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children benefitted from warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff. This resulted in children being happy and relaxed. Positive attachments were evident between children and staff. Families shared with us, "Friendly staff make my child feel welcome" and "My child loves it. It is the best way to get them to go to school and they look forward to going every day".

Children's health and wellbeing was supported by the use of personal planning documents. Information gathered helped staff provide individualised care. Children had been involved in the creation and completion of 'All about Me's' which supported children to feel respected and valued. Children's information was reviewed every six months with families. This supported staff to have the most current information to meet children's needs. The manager should ensure that where children require support plans, these should clearly identify what strategies are in place to support children. These should also be regularly reviewed with families and all staff. This will help inform assessment or next steps to support children to progress.

Children benefitted from opportunities to be independent at snack time through self-serving and pouring their own drinks. Snack options were chosen by the children and were healthy. Children were encouraged to drink water or milk to ensure they stay hydrated. On the whole, children's safety was supported by staff knowledge of allergies and dietary requirements and processes were in place to support this. Snack time was a very sociable experience where children sat with their peers. One member of staff was always available to sit with children to promote children's safety and support a relaxed, sociable experience.

Staff were clear on their role and responsibility around safeguarding and child protection. Chronologies were in place, however, were not always used effectively to record significant events in a child's life that may impact on their health and wellbeing. The manager agreed to address this.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy and having fun. The majority of children were meaningfully engaged in their play. Children shared with us what they liked about the club, "It's fun. I see my friends. We do fun things. I like the snacks", "We get to play a lot" and "I like playing with the toys".

Staff valued children's interests and preferences and these were taken account of in planning. A balance of spontaneous and planned activities were available for children during sessions. Staff shared with us, "We have a mix of activities that the children can play with that have been prepared by staff and children can access the resources in our cupboard, so that they can select what they want to play with. Staff will follow the interests of the children and discuss with them any ideas and find out what they would like to do".

Children explored a variety of open-ended, loose parts which supported their developing curiosity and problem-solving skills. For example, children used corks and sticks to make boats which they then tested to see if they would float or sink. Families shared with us, "They have a range of development appropriate toys and activities on offer daily". **(See area for improvement 1 under 'What the service has done to meet**

any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Children benefitted from being able to access a secure courtyard area throughout the afterschool session. This gave children the opportunity to have fun and engage in imaginative play. This encouraged children to develop positive relationships as they played together, shared and took turns.

Some use was made of the local community. Links had been made with the charity shop and library. The service should build on these links to support children to develop a strong connection with their local community.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The large hall offered plenty of natural light and ventilation. It was a clean, tidy and well-maintained space where children had ample room to play and have fun. Quiet areas had been created which supported children's emotional wellbeing. There were cosy areas for children to relax and fabrics had been used to soften spaces.

Risk assessments were in place and had been reviewed regularly to support a safe environment for children. Arrangements were in place for maintenance and repairs within the service. Children had been involved in fire drills and discussions around keeping safe. Staff shared, "Daily risk assessments are carried out and regular checks within the school ensure the building is well-maintained. We ensure the setting is secure with security doors throughout the building and staff only opening the door to parents arriving".

A noticeboard had been created and was displayed for parents to share important information. Staff names and photos were now added to this to support new families to identify staff. The service had limited access to displays or spaces to showcase play and learning experiences, however, had worked together with children to ensure children chose what was relevant to them to display. This supported children to feel proud, involved and included in their club.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The service was led by a reflective and committed manager. They engaged very well in the inspection process and were open to feedback to improve experiences for children. This demonstrated an ethos of commitment and willingness for continuous improvement.

The vision, values and aims of the service were clear and put children and families at the heart of the service. These had recently been reviewed with families, children and staff. This ensured that these reflected the aspirations of all.

A welcoming ethos had been developed and maintained within the service. Families were welcomed into the service daily at collection times. Families shared they were happy with service. Regular fundraising coffee mornings helped ensure families felt involved in the service. Families shared, "The door is always open and I am welcome to come in when collecting or dropping off my child".

Quality assurance systems were in place and ensured children continued to experience good quality care and support. Audits of the snack experience highlighted key areas of strengths and areas to further develop. This showed that quality assurance was now beginning to improve outcomes for children.

Ongoing self-evaluation using best practice documents supported the manager and staff to deliver good quality care and support for children and families. An improvement plan identified relevant areas for development. We spoke about how clearer actions with timescales should be developed. This would support timely, ongoing improvements. **(See area for improvement 2 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection')**.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

There had been some staff changes since the last inspection due to maternity leave and long-term illness, however, the staff team were now consistent and working well together as a team. There was a good range of staff skills and experience within the team to support children. All staff had several years of experience of working with children. Some staff required to undertake core training which included first aid and child protection. The manager had already identified this and had sourced appropriate training.

Appropriate staffing levels were in place and adult to children's ratios were maintained at all times. Overall, the deployment of staff supported the supervision and care of children. Rotas were well organised with two staff always on site. The manager should ensure that staff communicate with each other to ensure appropriate supervision promotes children's safety and engagement. Further consideration should be given to ensure that staff are not task orientated after the snack process. This will ensure staff are deployed effectively indoors and outdoors.

Staff morale was high contributing to the positive ethos. Staff were confident and committed to meeting children's needs. Staff were always available to chat with parents. Staff interacted positively, sharing information with families which demonstrated positive relationships had been formed. Staff shared with us, "I like to welcome parents into the setting, chat to them about what their child has been doing that day and over time get to know the families a little better".

Safer recruitment had been followed for newly employed staff. Staff felt well supported when starting their role. The manager should improve the induction process further to support a more in-depth induction with a focus on learning conversations and reflection.

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 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).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2023.

Action taken since then

A variety of loose parts had been gathered and were now available at every session. Adult planned activities were also available at every session which children were interested in. Children were busy and engaged with the resources and activities available to them. The manager should keep developing resources and activities to ensure children are consistently challenged.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure high quality care and experiences for children, quality assurance and self-evaluation should be embedded into practice.

This should include, but not limited to ensuring:

- a) children and families are meaningfully involved and influence change within the service
- b) quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement planning lead to high quality care and support.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisations having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 5 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Children and families were now involved to meaningfully influence change within the service.

Quality assurance systems were in place and beginning to improve outcomes for children.

Clearer actions and timescales should be developed throughout the services improvement plan. This would support timely, ongoing improvements.

This area for improvement has not been fully 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?	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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