

Edinburgh Holiday Hub Day Care of Children

Rowanfield Special School
67c Groathill Road North
Edinburgh
EH4 2SA

Telephone: 0131 285 5207

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 April 2025

Service provided by:
The Action Group

Service provider number:
SP2003002593

Service no:
CS2023000335

About the service

Edinburgh Holiday Hub, provided by The Action Group, can provide a day care of children service during school holidays to a maximum of 30 school aged children at any one time. The manager will be 100% supernumerary and adult to child ratios will be assessed on an individual need basis.

The service may be provided from the following premises: Rowanfield School, 67C Groathill Road North, Edinburgh, EH24 2SA or Woodlands School, 36 Dolphin Ave, Currie, EH14 5RD. Both premises have parking available and are close to local amenities and bus routes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 09 April 2025 between the hours of 10:10 and 14:40 in Woodlands School. The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included the registration report, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke to and interacted with children using the service
- spoke with the staff and manager
- observed practice, daily routines and children's experiences
- reviewed documents in the service relating to children's care, play and learning
- took into account online feedback we received from five families and spoke with one parent.

As part of this inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

We provided feedback to the manager and a local authority representation by videocall on 10 April 2025.

Key messages

Children were empowered to make independent choices through individualised care and support.

The short-term service provided a safe, fun and responsive place for children to be.

The service was further considering how to better inform parents about where their children were being cared for and what was available for them to do each day.

Children would benefit from staff feeling empowered to have high expectations of each other's practice.

Actions should now be planned to aid improvements to children's outcomes. For example, the further development of high quality play experiences.

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?	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?

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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were nurtured throughout their daily experiences. Interactions were warm and compassionate, with children's dignity being prioritised. For example, when interventions were necessary, they were discreet and respectful. As a result, children looked relaxed and comfortable.

Various communication methods were used to give children a voice in the service and lead their day-to-day routines and activities. Staff were reading and responding to non-verbal cues from children which was respectful and inclusive. Visual planning cards were used to help children to choose their activities and the order to do them in. As a result, the flow of the day was relaxed and responsive to each child, as they decided when and where to eat, play and rest.

Children's individual wellbeing benefitted from the effective use of personal planning. Parents completed personal plan forms prior to the child starting, which was often followed up for additional information. A parent said, "The staff are great at reaching out beforehand to ensure they can meet my child's needs. They are all welcoming and caring and I can tell that my child feels comfortable and safe with them". Staff were knowledgeable about children's needs and preferences and how to support them. They had access to the personal plans at all times for reference. The information was up to date and relevant as personal plans were reviewed and updated with parents prior to each holiday hub. Overall, children received consistency in their care by staff who were informed and committed to getting it right for them. However, the provider should ensure children's care is consistently relayed to parents each day so parents can respond appropriately.

Children were supported to reach their full potential through staff working alongside them, their parents and other professionals involved in their care. They took time to understand what worked for each child and how to enable them to have the best time possible. Ongoing communication with referring agencies meant relevant information was shared to support the families.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had fun as they experienced a range of planned and spontaneous play and learning opportunities. This included sensory experiences, free play, exploration, outdoor play, crafts, self-care and social skills. A parent said, "Always opportunities for lots of outdoor play and then different events each day which they can take or leave such as water play and discos". Time was taken to chat with children and observe them, getting to know what they were interested in and liked to do. In addition, outings were planned around interests such as local parks and swimming. Socialising and being around other children was a learning experience in itself and they were supported in ways which worked for them. A parent said, "Staff are so caring and make a big effort to get to know the needs of the child".

Children could mostly lead their own learning through the interactions and actions of staff. Staff were joining in, modelling and inviting children to play. Commentaries of activities were provided for children which modelled vocabulary and helped them make connections in learning.

Children approached play and learning in varying ways which were promoted by staff and facilitated sensitively. For example, the activity moved at the child's pace and interest rather than the adult's agenda. This meant children got what they needed from the experience. However, there were times when children were stopped in their play or redirected away from their interest. Children would benefit from staff planning the setting and experiences to ensure children's engagement is supported. For example, children wanting to experience sensory materials on different surfaces.

Overall, play and learning could be enhanced through a wider range of well-considered resources which could be accessed in different ways at varying developmental stages. While there was a range of resources, they were random, with a single purpose and did not link to children's interests. Due to the short timeframe children are involved in the service each time, opportunities should offer greater choice for all children to engage.

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: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a pleasant, welcoming environment which was comfortable and spacious. It was well-ventilated with natural light and a variety of areas to use. Children had space to store their belongings and could access them easily. It was a shared space and signs were used to inform children of which rooms they could use.

The setting was safe, secure and well-maintained. Secure boundaries and doors gave children freedom to move around safely. A parent said, "Staff are extremely vigilant about (safety), which is reassuring". Maintenance and repairs were addressed quickly. A setting risk assessment guided staff in actions to minimise risks. For example, resetting the spaces to avoid trip hazards and supervising children at all times. Children were supported sensitively to consider risk in play, while staff intervened when needed.

Some infection prevention and control measures were in place such as PPE (personal protection equipment) during personal care and handwashing after the toilet use. This should be extended to include handwashing before and after food, with staff modelling this practice. This would further reduce the risk of infection spread.

The environment was suitable for the children attending. Having a choice of spaces, meant that children could move themselves away from noise and people. This enabled them to meet their own needs and preferences. A selection of toys were available to choose from, such as fidgets, cause and effect toys, tents and books. Comfortable and relaxing places to rest were available for children to retreat to. Two outside spaces were freely accessible for children. These consisted of a concreted area with picnic benches; and an enclosed area with a sand tray and some outdoor toys.

To further enhance children's play and learning experiences the service should consider the range of developmental stages and play needs demonstrated by the children in attendance. Open-ended materials offer endless opportunities for exploration and creativity. The 'Loose Parts Toolkit' (Play Scotland 2019) could be used for inspiration. While the local and wider community was used to offer variety, the outdoor space at the setting should be developed to provide more opportunities to play outdoors and connect with the

natural environment. Overall, the indoor and outdoor spaces should be inviting, intriguing and engaging for children.

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A shared vision and set of values positively informed practice. All staff present were committed to ensuring children's autonomy and right to exciting and interesting opportunities. Staff worked hard to promote children's involvement so their preferences were known and used for future planning. For example, an evaluation board was being trialled at the end of each day to gather children's feedback. However, the team would benefit from further guidance about high quality opportunities across various play types for different developmental stages. This would further embed the vision of supporting people to enrich their opportunities.

Parents and children were given information of what to expect from each holiday hub prior to attending. This helped to prepare children for their time there. Parents also completed a questionnaire after each holiday hub which the service used to make improvements. As parents did not come into the service, the provider should consider how they can see and be involved in where their children are cared for. A parent confirmed this, saying, "I have never been inside to see the surroundings in which (my child) spends each day". During inspection, the manager was starting to consider how this could be improved.

A range of processes were in place to support quality assurance of the service. For example, staff complete contact sheets and have daily debriefs to reflect on each day and plan ahead; the manager was present to identify staff training needs and support, addressing issues instantly. The manager had used 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' (Care Inspectorate 2022) to reflect on the service. Moving forward with this, actions to aid improvement should now be identified and planned for. This will ensure outcomes for children continue to improve.

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, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

Most children were supported on a 1:1 basis which was supportive of their inclusion and empowerment. Attempts were made to keep staff consistent for children each day, however staff ensured they were interacting and connecting with all children so relationships could be established. Daily briefing meetings kept staff informed of each child's needs and preferences so continuity of care could be assured. A parent said, "After the first day they all know my child and are all saying good morning the next day. It is lovely to see". Management understood the importance of effective staffing and so absences were planned for quickly.

Children benefited from well-supported staff. The team was a mix of new and returning staff to the holiday hub. Induction to the service was given alongside training to aid their role. More experienced staff were

guiding and supporting new staff with the more complex aspects to their role. In addition, the manager was accessible around the service to offer breaks when needed. It also allowed them to assess the pairings between children and staff, and plan for future days based on strengths and connections. When needed, staff had spaces to go for breaks to refresh their energy.

Staff moved around the setting, ensuring children were making their own choices. When in a room together, staff supported each other. Staff often went out in the community with children together, again providing support and reassurance in numbers. To further develop the staff, they should be empowered to hold high expectations for each other in their practice. This would contribute to children fully benefiting from their short time in the service.

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	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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