

Tarbert After School Care Day Care of Children

Tarbert Village Hall
Campbeltown Road
Tarbert
PA29 6SX

Telephone: 01880 820 359

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
12 June 2025

Service provided by:
Tarbert After School Care Committee,
an Association

Service provider number:
SP2011011746

Service no:
CS2011305196

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 12 May 2012. The service provider is Tarbert After School Care Committee, an Association.

Tarbert After School Care is a daycare of children service. It is registered to provide care to a maximum of 16 primary school age children at anyone time, with no more than 7 aged 3 to not yet attending primary school full time. They operate from a designated space and enclosed outdoor area within the local village hall, located in Tarbert. The service operates during school term times and at specific times throughout the school holidays.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 10 June 2025. The service has 34 children currently registered, during the inspection 13 children were present aged 4-11 years. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with management and staff.
- Sent online questionnaires to parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

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.

Key messages

Children were experiencing warm nurturing care and support.

Staff engaged skilfully with children to reassure and support their play.

Children were having fun and relished playing outside, seeking out resources that captured their interest, imagination and natural curiosity both indoors and outside.

The service communicated and engaged very well with families.

The manager and staff were committed to the ongoing improvement and development of the service and recognised children's personal plans needed to be further developed, to achieve the best outcomes they could, for children and their families.

The service had a dedicated staff team who communicated and deployed themselves very effectively to support transitions, supervise play experiences, and respond to children's needs, contributing to very positive outcomes for the children and their 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?	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 experiencing warm, nurturing care and support. Staff knew children very well and had developed trusted, respectful and loving relationships with them to nurture, support their wellbeing and help them feel valued, safe and secure. Children were happy, active and confident about approaching staff for help. Staff engaged skilfully with them to reassure and support their play, encouraging them to make choices, share, follow their own interests and promote friendships. Children told us; "I love going to TASC with my friends" and "I love going to [the service], I always feel safe and included."

Children had access to quiet areas suitable for them to sleep or rest if needed. The manager explained how sleep routines would be tailored to children's individual needs and follow current best practice, to ensure their wellbeing and emotional security was protected.

Children enjoyed a positive, nurturing snack time experience which was nicely presented and took account of children's individual dietary needs. Snack time was an opportunity for children to develop self-help skills and independence. For example, pouring their own drinks and helping with the preparation of their snack. Staff were supportive, considerate of children's needs and sat alongside them during snack, encouraging friendly social interactions, developing conversations and supporting children well when they needed help. Parents told us; "There is always a range of healthy snacks available and milk/water. The children are encouraged to be independent with food preparation", "My [child] loves the snacks at TASC even asking me to make some of them at home" and "My [child] has tried lots of new foods at TASC".

Children's personal plans contained relevant core information about children's individual needs, promoting independence and gathering information on children's preferences in partnership with parents and working alongside other professionals. Staff were recording information to support children's health, welfare and safety needs. A parent commented; "I find all the staff friendly and approachable and they cater for my child's needs." To ensure a more consistent approach to documenting how children's needs will be met, management and staff recognised children's plans would benefit from being further streamlined and consolidated with individual risk assessments and support strategies linked to more detailed next steps and clearer progression pathways. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The service was communicating effectively with parents through regular conversations, meetings with staff and other professionals who may be involved in a child's care and support. Parents told us; "Staff go over my child's plan regularly with both my child and myself" and "The staff always update me on my child's day, what they have been doing and how they have been at every collection."

We sampled the arrangements in place to support children with their medication and found these needed to be updated in line with current best practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services'. The manager agreed this should be included as part of the ongoing monitoring of the service. (See Area for Improvement 1 under Quality Indicator 3.1).

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy, having fun and enjoyed seeking out resources that captured their interest, imagination and natural curiosity. They were eager to play and engaged well with the learning experiences on offer. For example, nurturing their tadpoles and preparing a pond for them to grow and thrive in. Staff were supporting children well to explore their ideas, build on their interests and lead on their play. For example, by responding and extending their play through constructing a jungle with animals outside, turning a house into a doctor's surgery and creating a dinosaur land. Children told us; "It's fun. We do lots of things. Make crafts and [are] always laughing. I like snacks and getting my hair in plaits. I really like the ladies" and "[I like] drawing, gardening, games and baking."

Staff were using their skills, knowledge and expertise very effectively to support children's play and learning through high quality observations and interactions, to help extend children's thinking, widen their skills and develop their curiosity and creativity. Parents commented; "The service is great fun, the staff are engaging and interact with all the children. Continually thinking of different activities for little minds as well as creating a fun environment" and "They get access to a lot of play based learning. My child particularly enjoys the outdoor area, imaginative play area and crafts that they get to take part in."

Children engaged with their community through hands on experiences. They explored local events and activities in the local community. These experiences strengthened their connection to both their local and wider community, fostering practical life skills, friendships, and promoted their curiosity.

Planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's needs. For example, mind maps and floor books were gathering children's ideas and interests offering them choice and challenge, promoting numeracy, literacy, and health and wellbeing throughout. There was a good balance between spontaneous, structured and free flow activities. We discussed how children's learning journals could be strengthened further by recording their developing skills and progress, and next steps in more detail.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, development needs and progress, personal plans should be further developed and streamlined with more detailed next steps linked to clearer progression pathways.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a 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 care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

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

The setting had a secure door entry system and a signing in and out procedure. The environment was clean, well ventilated and was being regularly maintained, with a range of suitable resources that were accessible to children. Parents told us; "The building is secure and I have no concerns", "[The environment is] always very clean and secure" and "In the building there is good safe and secure outdoor space with climbing frames and a range of toys." Good use was also being made of community resources, for example, a visit to the well equipped local playpark, on their route from school to the club being a particular favourite.

Furniture was child sized and there were some areas with soft furnishings for relaxation and comfort. Parents commented; "[The] setting has chill out bean bags which I have seen my children using" and "There is a comfy corner where I have sometimes found my child relaxing/reading after a long school day." Children had space to play in small groups and by themselves. There were sufficient chairs for children to all be seated during snack.

Staff were involving children in the development of their outdoor space encouraging them to develop risk assessments for the outdoor environment. A parent commented; "The outdoor area is brilliant and lots of chances for imaginative play. They use the boat to play in and also the hammock and swing, the staff make best use of our amazing natural environment."

Children had free flow access to outdoors and relished being outside where they could enjoy risky play through climbing, balancing and building with natural materials and loose parts play resources. This was supporting children's independence, awareness of risk and sense of responsibility. A parent told us on their child's behalf; "Outside is really fun because they let us climb a tree." Another parent commented; "My child enjoys being outdoors, playing in the mud kitchen, planting flowers and most recently water play in the sunshine."

As identified in their improvement plan, management and staff had made good progress on the development of their outdoor play spaces. Going forward they agreed they should continue to review and evaluate children's play spaces both indoors and outside.

We sampled a range of risk assessments covering the outdoor and indoor environments and outings. Although we found that risk assessments were specific to the setting, there were no dates recorded to indicate that they were being regularly reviewed or updated. The manager agreed that as live, working documents they should be regularly reviewed and audited as part of the ongoing monitoring of the service. This is to ensure they remain relevant and in line with current guidance. (See Area for Improvement 1 under Quality Indicator 3.1).

Staff demonstrated good practice in infection prevention and control. For example, they modelled good hand hygiene and children were regularly reminded to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before and after eating and when coming in from outdoors, which encouraged them to develop healthy habits.

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 well led

Management and staff were committed to the ongoing improvement and development of the service to achieve the best outcomes they could for children and their families. They had an aims and objective statement that set out a clear vision for the setting and an improvement plan in place that focused on children's rights to play, be safe and healthy. The manager and staff team engaged well during the inspection process, participating in discussions and demonstrating their knowledge and skillset. They understood the importance of maintaining standards and being outcome focussed, demonstrating a strong capacity for improvement.

The staff team were committed to their continued professional development. Training and good practice guidance was helping them develop in their roles.

Management and staff were embedding processes for self-evaluation using the Care Inspectorate: 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding, and school aged childcare' as a tool to critically reflect on their work, through staff meetings, day to day discussions and reflecting within floor books. Placing high quality play at the heart of their improvement planning was having a positive impact on outcomes for children and families, with staff considering the child's voice through planning and the development of the service. A parent told us; "[Our child has] had the enjoyment for years of attending [the service], it's [enabled our child] to grow socially, he/she's enjoyed activities with others that he/she wouldn't get at home."

The manager was implementing systematic procedures to monitor and evaluate the service. For example, accident and incidents were being recorded and shared with parents with a monthly audit to track any recurring incidents and identify any areas for action. Along with surveys for parents and a monitoring calendar. A parent told us; "Every month I get emails to review policies and the children's activities." To further support and sustain continuous improvement throughout the service, the manager should continue to develop and embed robust quality assurance processes and procedures. This is with particular reference to the management and storage of medication and the auditing and review of risk assessments. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The manager and staff communicated and engaged well with families. Parents were given regular updates on their child's progress through daily conversations, planned consultations and telephone calls. One parent commented; "The staff go above and beyond to care for our [child]. They provide a safe but engaging environment each day. I can contact them at any time, and get a swift response."

The manager was in full agreement that they must ensure all children are registered with them regardless of the shortness of time. This is with particular reference to any pick up and/or changeover arrangements that may take place within the school grounds.

Areas for improvement

1. To further support and sustain continuous improvement throughout the service, the manager should embed robust systems that include the management and storage of medication and the auditing and review of risk assessments, to monitor and evaluate all aspects of their service delivery.

This is to ensure management and leadership is consistent with the 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?

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

The setting was appropriately staffed to meet the needs of the children throughout the session. We observed staff deploying themselves very effectively to support transitions, supervise play experiences, and respond to children's needs, contributing to very positive outcomes for the children and their families. Children were benefitting from a nurturing, dedicated, and responsive staff team. A parent told us; "Tarbert after school care is a fantastic service run by a very dedicated team, we are lucky to have this offered to our children." Staff consistently demonstrated warmth and care in their interactions, fostering a positive and supportive environment. They spoke positively of teamwork, highlighting very good relationships within the team. Staff leadership roles and responsibilities were clearly defined with the manager giving careful consideration to recent staff recruitment to support and develop a good skills mix within the staff team. Another parent commented; "A truly brilliant service that is offered and given to our children."

Staff were flexible and responsive to children's needs and felt very well supported by the manager. A positive atmosphere of mutual trust and respect was promoting a happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families. A parent commented; "The staff are so welcoming and friendly and have built strong professional and trusting relationships with my child."

Staff engaged well in the inspection process and were open and honest. They were all registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and committed to their ongoing professional development. A parent commented; "They are very friendly and approachable. They always keep us up to date with their CPD [Continued Professional Development]."

Regular team meetings were established to enable staff to talk about their work, practice issues and discuss children's learning and progress. These meetings provided valuable opportunities for staff to reflect on practice, share ideas, and drive improvements.

There was a strong focus on staff wellbeing with 'Wellbeing Wednesday' an integral part of their working week. A positive ethos of attendance was resulting in good continuity of care, transitions and communication with families.

The manager was further developing staff skills and knowledge through the implementation of the 'National Induction Resource'. Annual appraisals provided an opportunity for staff to reflect on their role and discuss plans for future learning. To support staff further, the introduction of regular one to one support and supervision sessions was also being considered.

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	5 - Very 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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.