

Auchinairn After School Care Day Care of Children

Unit 2
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 November 2022

Service provided by:
Auchinairn After School Care Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003000738

Service no:
CS2003003655

About the service

Auchinairn After School Care operates from Auchinairn Community Education Centre in Bishopbriggs, Glasgow. A designated forest area nearby is used to provide forest school activities. The service is provided by Auchinairn After School Care Limited.

The service is registered to provide a fully outdoor care service to a maximum of 80 children. The service may be offered to children attending primary 1 up to their 14th birthday. The service may also be offered to a maximum of 3 young people up to their 16th birthday with additional needs and a maximum of 3 children in their pre school year.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 November 2022 and 22 November 2022. 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 with 6 people using the service and 15 of their family
- spoke with 8 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them very well.
- Staff worked effectively as a team to meet children's individual needs.
- Children of all ages and abilities were developing their curiosity, imagination and problem solving skills through high quality play experiences.
- Children benefitted from a nurturing, inspiring environment.
- Children were empowered to be fully involved in their play and learning through the skilled interactions and actions of staff.

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?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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?

6 - Excellent

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 excellent.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches from staff to support their wellbeing. They were cared for by kind and caring staff who knew them very well. Staff demonstrated a genuine interest when interacting with children. They engaged very effectively with children to extend discussion and facilitate learning. Staff supported children very well, allowing children to plan, lead their play and make choices at their own pace. This helped children to feel secure and settled.

Staff had gathered lots of information about children which was contained in personal care plans. Staff were very skilled at involving children and families in making decisions about care and development. They were proactive at securing information to support children and tailoring settling in and transitions to the needs of individual children and families. Transitions into the service were very well co-ordinated for all children, particularly for children who required additional support. Staff worked closely with families and other agencies to gather key information, and care plans were reviewed regularly to ensure they reflected children's individual preferences, likes and dislikes. Staff used information contained in care plans to promote consistency and continuity of care.

On line learning journals (Tapestry) were completed with individualised next steps identified. Children's wellbeing was supported through effective use of personal planning, taking account of wellbeing indicators from best practice guidance, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). Children and families were central to this process, ensuring effective communication sharing.

The management team ensured that staff were up to date with best practice and current approaches to support children to reach their full potential.

Parents' comments included;

"They are excellent at trying to expand the experiences of young people. They promote good manners, respecting each other, being responsible for consequences of your actions, team work, emotional intelligence".

"My son also attended and really benefitted from having staff promote his independence and take on responsibility. Daughter has been here since primary one and now in primary 6 and is fully involved in all activities".

"They send a document at the start of every year to complete about children's needs. They actively check and update medication. They invite us to all information sessions".

"I think they know my child well. Staff (staff name provided) supported my child through a challenging spell. She understood how to pitch the support whilst empowering my child and building their confidence. They empower children. They encourage independence and confidence. They teach good values in respect and responsibility".

"I am absolutely blown away at the service they provide and the knowledge and experience of staff".

"Straight away they asked to have permission to be involved of my sons school care plan. They spoke with the school and information was shared appropriately. Parents have been offered along to different events".

"My son has suspected autism and struggles with transitions. They have worked hard to support his transition from school. His key worker was able to use her knowledge of our son and find techniques that worked for him including giving him responsibility to help engage him".

"My child went through a period when he was in P1 where he struggled with the length of his day (school then ASC). Although he always coped well when at ASC, he struggled to get to sleep at night and was reluctant to go into school in the mornings. The ASC worked with me and his class teacher to plan around this and provide him with additional support".

"Our son has autism and has had a difficult time in his previous school and after school care facility, AASC met with me prior to him joining and were very open about what they could offer and the structures they could and have put in place for him. They also provide updates on collection when needed and on Tapestry and have been supportive, inclusive and non-judgemental of his previous struggles".

1.3 Play and learning

High quality play, learning and development opportunities were provided for children. Children were empowered to be fully involved in their play and learning through the skilled interactions of staff. Staff provided an inspiring, creative setting in the forest school with stimulating, challenging activities. There was a strong focus on children's rights, promoting the safety and protection of children.

Outdoor play and learning was fully embedded in the service. Children accessed forest school in a designated woodland area every day, weather permitting. They learned about nature, risk and safety. This allowed children to develop self confidence, independence and self esteem. Children also enjoyed the well resourced indoor area at the centre with a wide range of natural, open ended and loose parts play materials.

Children were fully engaged in self-directed play. They were playing independently and in small groups. We saw children playing 'beat the goalie' and 'hide and seek' in the forest school. Staff were very responsive, checking if children needed help or support. Planning approaches to play and learning were child centred. 'Provocations' (resources or activities that promote thoughts, creativity, and learning) were used to capture children's interests and support high quality play and learning experiences. Children were supported to reach their full potential through carefully planned activities and targeted interventions by skilled staff. Staff had a very good understanding of child development and supported children very well.

Parents' comments included:

"Both my children thoroughly enjoy the inclusive ethos fostered by the staff and the range of activities".

"I'm amazed at how well they know and understand him. They know his strengths and weaknesses and continue to notice his overall wellbeing and can predict what kind of mood he is in and can tailor the appropriate support for each session. I think it's amazing and a great opportunity for kids to learn and develop".

"They put the kids learning and development first, their days are well planned and I know my son is happy and safe when with ASC".

"The forest school is excellent, the life skills they furnish children with is fantastic. Being outside with nature, building their immune system is priceless. The inclusive, friendly, playful, solution focussed environment they create is wonderful for children. The conflict resolution methods they employ strengthens children's resilience and emotional maturity".

"The physical part is amazing, all while learning real life skills which will help him in later life. My son has grown in confidence and has just blossomed in every aspect. I cannot thank the team enough".

"They're real, empathic, motivators, caring, full of knowledge and experience, open to listening to any concerns etc, always on the go, keep kids well entertained and busy in a practical way, keep them thinking. Help them to grow along the way, very inclusive, work as a team with child and family. They just go above and beyond and I can't thank each and every one of them enough. Over all I'm very happy with it. They are doing great stuff with the kids".

"They are essentially like a family who provide an invaluable and diverse learning environment for the children to explore, grow and develop in a way other after care organisations don't".

One child commented:

"I prefer the outdoor days. I like being responsible and being allowed go to the climbing tree. I like the Boom Box (music and dancing activity they do in the woods)".

How good is our setting?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent, where significant strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The service was a recognised Forest School Provider by the Forest School Association. This is the professional body and UK wide voice for Forest School, promoting and supporting best practice, cohesion and quality Forest School for all. As part of their membership of this group the service was required to submit an annual woodland management plan with supporting photographic evidence. This was assessed to ensure the woodland area was well maintained, safe and secure.

Both indoor and outdoor environments at the service fully took account of children's stages of development and learning. The environments were very safe and secure. Spaces promoted curiosity, investigation and imagination and inspired children to explore and build their own learning. Children were fully involved in understanding and managing risk. They were supported to think about safety and adhere to children's rules. There were very strong quality assurance processes in place to promote the safety and security of children.

Robust infection prevention and control practices also ensured that children were kept safe. Daily cleaning was undertaken. Outdoor toilet facilities and handwashing were well managed. Appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear was provided by the service to all children to ensure that children were kept warm, dry and comfortable. Children were protected through clear policies and procedures which were understood and

implemented by all staff. Drop off and collection of children to and from school was carefully structured and very well organised.

The indoor setting at the centre was of high quality. It had recently been fully refurbished with the service now having sole use of all facilities. Children benefitted from a bright, welcoming environment where they could enjoy a range of play and learning opportunities, relax and engage with friends.

Parents' comments included:

"Challenging, stimulating and safe for children".

"They appear to be very well organised. My child enjoys his time there. He feels safe and happy and there is clearly a very positive ethos. It provides different learning opportunities from school or most other ASC environments. I think the environment is fun, well thought out, every activity promotes development, interaction between the children and building resilience as well as problem solving and having a great time".

"We love the outdoor set up which is the key reason we chose the service. It is very well set up and our children love it. The indoor set up is great too. Children are always busy whether indoors or out and we love hearing what they've been up to".

"Brilliant, it's a great set up at the forest and they are very strict with rules because of safety. They have lots of activities to occupy the kids too, including at the base when weather prohibits being in the forest".

"Wholesome, inclusive, caring. They always put a child's well-being first".

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

3.1 Quality Assurance and improvement are led well

Management and staff worked well together to create a culture of shared responsibility and continuous improvement. Quality assurance and continuous improvement arrangements were in place and supported the delivery of the service, ensuring very good experiences for children.

We could see, and staff told us, that there was a strong sense of teamwork within the staff team and an open and honest ethos in the service. Clear leadership from the senior leadership team supported staff to deliver a shared vision, values and aims.

Children and parents were meaningfully involved in the service through regular consultation for their views and inputs into service development. Recently a parents' action group was set up to meet with and lobby councillors and the local authority about the refurbishment and development of the community centre for after school care use. This was very successful with the service obtaining sole use of the new facilities.

Regular staff meetings ensured that all staff were involved in planning for and tracking children's learning and self-evaluation of the service. Staff had begun to use the new care inspectorate quality framework document (A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare) to consider good practice and promote professional dialogue. They planned to incorporate child and parent feedback

into this process and continue to use activities such as 'stay and play' sessions to provide opportunities for parents to share successes/developments and suggest improvements.

Various national frameworks including; Realising the Ambition, Health and Social Care Standards, My World Outdoors and Space to Grow were used to reference best practice. Self-evaluation outcomes influenced the improvement plan and direction of the early years setting.

Parents' comments included:

"The manager and the team are fantastic at organisation and communication. They address any query in a timely, sensitive and personable way. They are very accommodating too.

"In practice the day to day things run well and the team all seem to know what they are doing and things seem well structured".

"Nothing is ever a hassle or bother. Staff always have mobiles with them in case calls are made to them".

"I've never had any issues but the level of reassurance I received when my child started was great, receptive and accommodating".

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

4.3 Staff Deployment

Staff were appropriately deployed throughout the session which ensured they met all children's needs at the right time. Effective use was made of the differing experience, knowledge and skills of the staff group to ensure children's experiences were positive and they were safe. Transitions were seamless and well planned with children being comfortable about what was happening next.

Staff were effectively supported by the senior leadership team. This helped to build positive working relationships and allowed time for professional discussion. Staff were happy, engaging and sharing tasks through working as a team.

Arrangements were in place to promote continuity of care and ensure positive transitions and communication with families. Keyworker staff were available to chat and exchange information with parents. Parents could contribute to children's learning journals and easily follow play and learning activities on the service facebook page.

There was a very respectful ethos in the service with staff treating children as individuals. Staff communicated well with each other and worked together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children.

Staff had time each day to discuss children individually and, as a team, plan for the following day. This gave staff the opportunity to reflect and use these reflections to bring about positive change to outcomes for children.

All staff had a clear understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe and protected. Child protection training had been completed, supporting staff to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff were clear on reporting and recording procedures.

Staff had participated in a range of training. Most staff had forest school SQA (Scottish Qualification Authority) level 3 training with other staff currently completing this. Staff completed outdoor risk assessment training and risk benefit training. Staff with fire and tool training delivered higher risk forest school activities to children. Staff training achievements were shared on the service facebook page.

Parents' comments included:

"I always meet carer on collection. I'm very happy with it .they are doing great stuff with the kids".

"Really good at personalised care and forest school, open ended activities. They appear to be very well organised".

"The staff and facilities are amazing".

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?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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