

SOSCN Children's Guide to Out of School Care your 20 questions play book



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About this little book

This book is just like one we have made for parents or other people who care for you.

We wrote it to help you choose your out of school care.

We are the Scottish Out of School Care Network, a charity which helps out of school care services in Scotland.

We believe children should have a say in out of school care.

We suggest 20 questions to ask the service when you visit them with your parent or carer.

If you are not able to read this booklet, your parent or helper can help you by reading this out or signing to you. You can tell them which box to tick for your answers.

What is out of school or holiday care?

They are places where you go to play and relax before and after school, and all day during school holidays. You might only go to one kind, or all three!

We understand that children often might really want to be at home with their parents, but often Mum or Dad have to work or do other important things while you are safe at the service.

Services tell us children really enjoy themselves and enjoy making friends.



The services try to be as fun and caring as they can for you, they understand that you need to relax and enjoy yourself with other children. It is not "more school work".

A service you go to in the morning for breakfast before school is a breakfast club. Sometimes there are games and other things to do at the club. Mostly they run for one hour or less.

An After School Service or Club is at the end of the school day. The friendly workers pick you up from school and take you and other children to the service. You can then play, choose from lots of things to do, and have a healthy snack before home time.

Even if you are older (10 - 12) services should have interesting activities to suit your age group.

This service usually runs for around two and a half hours after each school day.

Holiday care - sometimes called Holiday Playschemes during school holidays is whole or half days which provide spaces for you to play inside and outside with other children.

You can have lots of holiday fun activities with other children, including trips out to new places. The great thing about going to out of school care is a chance to play, relax, run around and have fun with other children. You get to make pals with both bigger and smaller kids from your school too.

It is about doing different things from school or home

Services want children to get a chance to do different things. Even if the service is in part of the school, it should look much more like a play area.

Children will not have to be sitting quietly a lot of the time. You can, if you want to, for a rest or to think or a quiet chat with a pal.

Children will be moving around, playing and doing different things together, or playing or reading on their own.



They may be doing projects like the children below.

What do you think the children are doing here?



Some services will have space and give help with homework. Other services, or your parent, might ask you wait to do this at home.

On trips out, you might do things like playing in the dirt and mud, play with water, explore woods, climb or scramble on rocks.

It's best to have old clothes or use protective clothes for this kind of play.

You might make toast at a fire, using fire bowls, play at camping and build dens. Sometimes you might go out to visit adventure playgrounds.

The workers should tell you about all the different things to do at the service. But you can be a detective yourself and find out what is on offer for children at your club by asking the 20 questions below!

A. Things a service might do to show they listen to children.	Tick Box if YES
1. Do they have a Children's Charter? This is a promise to listen to you and take you seriously. There should be a promise to take good care of you and help you if you need it.	
2. Do children have a say about what food they like?	
3. Do children help choose play materials and play space?	
4. Do children help make the rules?	
5. Do children help choose trips out?	
6. Do children help make the programme of play activities?	
7. Do the workers listen to children?	
8. Do the workers tell children what is happening and why?	
9. Is there an anti-bullying carter and do children know who to go to if they have a worry?	
10. Does everyone treat each other with respect?	

B. Check list for visit	Tick Box if YES
11. Did you get a friendly welcome from the workers and other children?	
12. Are there balls, bats, hoops, ropes for sports and outdoor games?	
13. Do they have crafts, paints and scrap materials to make things with?	
14. Are there nature projects, growing things and experiments?	
15. Are there books, films, and a quiet space to rest and relax?	
16. Are there old clothes and materials for dressing up?	
17. Do they have trips away and walks out to local places?	
18. Are there musical instruments?	
19. Are the children relaxing and chatting?	
20. Do they have construction stuff, old boxes, Lego, bits of wood?	

Count how many yes ticks altogether out of 20 and put the number in the box – you can ask an adult to help here.

A high score means it is a service right for you.