

Childminder inspection report

Dempster, Susan
Airdrie

Service provided by: Susan Dempster

Service provider number: SP2003902561

Care service number: CS2003004539

Inspection Type: Unannounced

Care services in Scotland, including childminders, cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and take action when things aren't good enough.

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1 Introduction

The Care Inspectorate (CI) regulates care services in Scotland. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Susan Dempster operates this childminding service on her own from the family home which is a detached bungalow in Airdrie area of North Lanarkshire. Minded children have access to the sitting room, study, kitchen and hall. There is a large well planned garden which offers children opportunities for outdoor play and environmental projects. The service is close to schools, nurseries and parks. Public transport and motorway links are nearby.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children under 16 years, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

We have received a variation application to remove a time limited condition from the Certificate of Registration. Changes to the certificate of registration will be made in due course.

There were five children aged between five months and ten years registered with the childminder at the time of this inspection. The children had various patterns of attendance over the week to meet the individual needs of the families.

The childminder's aims include: "To provide a childminding service that offers children a range of experiences suited to their individual needs in a safe, nurturing and caring environment."

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced and an announced inspection of this service. The unannounced inspection took place on Tuesday, 12 April 2016 between the hours of 10:25 am and 12:55 pm. As no children were present, we arranged to conclude the inspection on Tuesday, 19 April 2016 after observing how the childminder cared for and interacted with minded children.

We sent four Care Standards Questionnaires to the childminder to distribute to the parents/carers of children using the service.

As requested by us, the childminder had completed and submitted an annual return and self-assessment to us. We looked at the information shared within these documents prior to the inspection.

During the inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources including the following:

We spoke with:

- the childminder
- two pre-school aged children.

We discussed with the childminder how the following were managed within the service:

- meeting children's individual needs
- parents and children's participation in the service
- children's personal records and plans
- training
- medication
- child protection
- risk assessments
- accident and incident reporting
- infection control arrangements.

We looked at:

- self-assessment and annual return documents, the questionnaires parents had completed and returned to us
- two children's personal plans
- certificate of registration
- public liability and car insurance document which included business
- training records for the childminder
- the environment and the equipment
- risk assessments for inside and outdoors
- accident records.

We observed how the childminder cared for and interacted with the minded children. We also referred to responses within the Care Inspectorate's care standards questionnaires which were distributed to parents and returned to us before the inspection.

Views of people using the service

The two minded children, who were under school age, were observed to be happy and settled in the childminders care. The interaction between the children and the childminder was caring and nurturing. The children enjoyed the range of play equipment provided both within the home and garden and made choices about what they wanted to play with.

Self assessment

Every year all care services complete a 'self assessment' telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this is accurate.

We received a fully completed self-assessment document from the provider before the inspection. We were satisfied with the way the provider had completed this and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under.

The provider identified what they thought the service did well, some areas for improvement and any changes they had planned.

What the service did well

The childminder offered a child-centred, nurturing and welcoming environment for children and their families. She told us how she continues to foster positive relationships with the children and their family. The childminder offered a range of activities and outings which were age and stage appropriate for the children she currently minded.

Feedback from the families who use this childminding provision confirmed that they value the service.

What the service could do better

The childminder discussed a positive approach towards the continued development of her service through personal development, keeping up to date with good practice guidance and feedback from service users.

We discussed with the childminder a few different ways to continue to involve parents and children in the development of the service. She was open to the suggestions made and planned to take them forward.

2 The grades we awarded

We grade the quality of care and support, the quality of the environment and the quality of management and leadership. If the childminder employs an assistant, we also grade the quality of staffing. In each case, we award a grade on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent.

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

3 Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder told us of the different opportunities, both formally and informally that children and parents had to assess and develop the service. This included conversations to share day-to-day information, text messages, questionnaires emails, a mobile phone application, and two way daily dairies for young children and big books for older children. This ensured that parents were kept informed and included in the child's care and routines regularly, using methods they preferred. In our questionnaire all three parents 'strongly agreed' that the childminder asked for their views about how they wanted their child to be cared for. Parent's comments included:

"Susan seeks an update of my child each morning."

"Susan regularly shows me progress that my child has made such as his floor book."

"Example of change was how Susan communicated with me regarding updating of my child's day from paper diary to electronic. She discussed this and I agreed that emails are my preferred option. I enjoy receiving updates whilst at work which most of the time includes photographs."

It was clear from our observations, that the childminder and children present had fostered confident, nurturing relationships with the each other. The childminder was attentive and responsive to their needs and interests providing warmth and affection. We observed positive interactions between the childminder and the children that encouraged and supported them to give their views and make decisions about what they wanted to play with. This demonstrated that the children were treated with respect and dignity.

The childminder discussed the personal plans that she had for the children. Information recorded resulted in the childminder having an overview of specific information about individual children which enabled her to meet their particular needs. The childminder told us of her plans to reflect the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), within the children's plans. We discussed the benefits of this practice and how this would support the childminder in recording specific goals; or areas for development that both she and the parents had identified. The childminder confirmed that this information was updated and or reviewed every six months with parents and children where appropriate. In our questionnaire all the parents 'strongly agreed' that the childminder regularly involved them in reviewing information about their child. Parent's comments included:

"All paperwork is regularly updated jointly."

The childminder gave some examples of when she had worked in partnership with parents to support their child through transitions in their life. This demonstrated a respectful and sensitive manner towards working in partnership with parents.

The childminder demonstrated a clear understanding of child protection. She gave an instance of what would give her cause for concern and how she would report any concerns. As part of the childminders on-going personal development she told us of her intention to participate in training on this matter, to keep her knowledge up to date with current legislation and to support the safety and wellbeing of children in her care. We discussed with the childminder the option of accessing online child protection training or information while she is awaiting a formal course.

At times, the childminder used her car for business purposes. We evidenced suitable insurance and associated documents. This information was shared with parents. Parents had signed consent forms allowing the childminder to transport their children on outings. This resulted in parents being kept informed of the procedures the childminder had in place and contributed towards the health and safety of children when traveling.

During our inspection we saw that no children were currently receiving medication. The childminder discussed how she would safely administer medication and make sure that parents completed appropriate consent forms before this was given. We signposted the childminder to best practice guidance on: "Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services" and she agreed to update the administering medication procedure in line with this guidance.

Grade

The quality of care and support is graded 5 - Very Good

Requirements

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 0

4 Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found the childminder's home to be a welcoming, friendly and smoke free environment for minded children. The childminder explained her daily and weekly cleaning routines which took place prior to the children arriving. This practice assisted the childminder in supporting positive outcomes for children and their families.

Storage units both inside and outdoors allowed children access to various toys and resources suitable for their stage of development. This promoted imaginative, sensory and physical play experiences. We saw that the childminder responded sensitively towards the children and it was clear that she knew the children's personality, needs and preferences, in particular their love of outdoor experiences, building blocks and dressing up resources. This assisted with the children feeling happy and settled within the environment. During our visit we observed the children enjoying a range of experiences outdoors including exploring with water and sand, throwing and running. Indoors the children shared and played with Duplo and dressing up resources. Parent's comments included:

"They are encouraged to spend time outside, to use their imagination and take part in lots of physical activities."

"My child loves arts and crafts. Susan provides lots of different arts and crafts. My child has made a bird house, bracelets for my birthday and mother's day which I will always treasure."

"My child enjoys a range of toys and equipment both indoors and outdoors. I am encouraged to provide appropriate clothing, such as a snow suit to ensure my child continues to enjoy a range of activities regardless of the weather."

The childminder demonstrated an understanding of risk factors. She recognised the benefits of continuing to review risk assessments for areas used within the home, garden and outings at regular intervals to reflect children's on-going development and level of understanding. This practice would demonstrate how she continues to keep children safe and included.

The childminding service is registered with the Food Standards Agency. The premises had been satisfactory inspected by a representative from the Food Standards Agency in December 2013. The childminder confirmed that she had a copy of and used Setting the Table nutritional guidance for early years to assist her in promoting children's health and wellbeing.

The childminder was aware of the importance of appropriate infection control methods being in place. The childminder confirmed that she used appropriate personal protection clothing when attending to children's personal care needs. We signposted the childminder to the September 2015 dated version of the following best practice guidance; 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Setting)' to assist her practice and to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

The childminder explained the procedures she had in place to promote good hygiene and safe working practices regarding the family pets within the childminding home. This information was shared with parents to keep them informed and included about this practice.

The childminder confirmed that she had appropriate records in place to record accidents or incidents. The parents would be asked to sign this information to confirm that they had been told about any accident or incident. This resulted in parents being kept informed of any issues. As part of the childminders on-going personal development she told us that it is her intention to participate in first aid training as her previous certificate had expired. We support the childminder in this area of good practice as this will keep her knowledge up to date and support her in dealing with emergencies should they arise.

The childminder had current Public Liability Insurance. This was available for parent's information.

Grade

The quality of environment is graded 5 - Very Good

Requirements

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 0

5 Quality of staffing

We only assess this where the childminder employs an assistant.

6 Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Regular attendance at the local childminding group, publications and information from Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and the Care Inspectorate had assisted the childminder with the management of her service.

We informed the childminder of 'the Hub' section within the Care Inspectorate website. This would enable her to access news, best practice guidance and keep up-to-date with required submissions and current information.

The childminder explained to us that she had identified training in child protection and first aid as previously mentioned within this report and that she had applied for funding to support her in this matter. We discussed with the childminder options for e-learning, where she could access training online at a time which was convenient to her.

As well as the training identified by the childminder we also discussed the benefits of considering training on; Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and Building the Ambition. This training would assist the childminder in implementing the themes, ideas and terminology into her service with a focus on improving outcomes for children and their families. Through discussion the childminder recognised the benefits of maintaining a record and evaluation of her continuous development. She agreed to develop a system, to support her own professional development and the development of the service as a whole.

The childminder told us of the various methods she used to communicate with parents and children to respect and include their views on her service and to keep parents informed and included with their child's care and routines. We discussed with the childminder a few different ways to continue to involve parents and children in the development of the service. She was open to the suggestions made and planned to take them forward. In our questionnaire all three parents 'strongly agreed' that the childminder had involved them and their child when making improvements or changes to the service. Parent's comments included:

"Susan is an amazing childminder and has become an integral part of our daily lives."

"I have used a childminder before for my older child and found that the childminder was not child focused/centred. In my assessment, Susan is focused on the development of my child and she strives to make every activity a fun learning experience. I believe this has led to my child being ahead with regards to his development in speech and language and his current health visitor assessment confirmed this."

The childminder gave parents access to the complaints procedure. This created an opportunity for parents to raise any concerns they may have about the service. No complaints had ever been received about the service.

Grade

The quality of management and leadership is graded 4 - Good

Requirements

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 0

7 What the service has done to meet any recommendations or requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

Previous recommendations

1. Mrs Dempster should make some adjustments to her child protection policy statement to indicated that concerns will be recorded, although not always shared with parents. She should cross reference this information with her confidentially policy.

This recommendation was made on 30 April 2012

Policy had been reviewed.

Recommendation met.

8 Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

9 Enforcements

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection

10 Other issues

None.

11 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
30 Apr 2012	Announced (Short Notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Management and Leadership</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>Not Assessed</div>
27 May 2009	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Management and Leadership</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>5 - Very Good</div> <div>Not Assessed</div>
29 Aug 2008	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>3 - Adequate</div>

		Management and Leadership 3 - Adequate
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