

Stout, Gillian Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced
Inspection completed on: 21 February 2017

Service provided by:
Gillian Stout

Service provider number:
SP2003901400

Care service number:
CS2003002954

The service

Introduction

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

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

Mrs Stout provides a childminding service on the outskirts of a rural community. The town where she lives provides her with local amenities including a primary school and nursery, some shops, community groups, walks and parks. Further away are larger towns and plenty of inland countryside and coastal areas to explore.

Mrs Stout is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 of whom no more than 6 may be under 12 years old, 3 not yet attending primary school and no more than 1 under 12 months. This includes children in Mrs Stout's own family.

Mrs Stout makes a statement of commitment in her parent's handbook which reads:

"I guarantee to provide a stimulating, warm, safe and secure environment in which all children entrusted in to my care will be treated equally and with total respect.

Fully endorsing the ethos of 'Children's Human Rights' I am committed to providing an environment in which all children's emotional, physical, social, sensual and intellectual needs and expectations are met without reservation.

Further to the above by adopting a holistic approach, coupled with listening carefully to parents, guardians, carers and other respected child development / protection agencies I will provide the resources, opportunities and create the right conditions and support to enable all children to reach their fullest developmental potential".

The Care Inspectorate is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all children receiving a care service. We want to ensure they have the best start in life, are ready to succeed and live longer, healthier lives.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (also known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right for every child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report after an announced inspection. This was carried out by one inspector. The inspection took place on Tuesday 21 February 2017 between 09:45 and 12:15.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self assessment forms that we asked the childminder to complete and send to us.

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

- We spoke with the childminder and the child in their care on the day of our visit.
- We observed the childminder working with the child in their care.
- We took account of feedback parents gave us in questionnaires.

We looked at:

- The Parents' Handbook which tells parents about the childminder's service.
- Information the childminder gathers about children to help them plan their care and support and how they involve parents in this.
- Ways the childminder reviews children's progress and identifies what support and experiences they need next towards their learning and development.
- Ways the childminder shares information and consults with parents and children about the care and experiences they provide.
- Other records the childminder maintains about children including reports of accidents and incidents and records of medicines they give children.

We discussed:

- Personal development the childminder has undertaken.
- What the childminder has developed in their service since the last inspection.

Views of people using the service

There was one young child with the childminder. They were extremely settled and happy throughout our visit. They contentedly explored the selection of toys the childminder had set out and they were extremely relaxed in the childminder's company.

We received feedback through our questionnaires from three parents. They were all highly satisfied with the quality of care and experiences the childminder provided for their child. They greatly appreciated the range of ways she communicated with them and they described her as having a very professional manner.

Self assessment

We received a completed self assessment from the childminder about how she cares for and supports children, the environment she provides for them and how she manages her childminding service.

Her account was thorough and relevant and it helped us understand what the childminder thinks she does well, how children benefit from the care and experiences she provides and how she involves parents and children who use the childminding service to help her make improvements.

What the service did well

The childminder was highly respected by parents and children were extremely fond of her.

She was deeply interested in children as individuals and in making sure she provided the right support for them no matter how long it took to find the best way to help.

She knew how to keep children safe and protected and she did that very well. She also recognised that helping children take some risks gave them useful skills and confidence to keep themselves safe.

Children had lots of fun activities with the childminder and they were out regularly in their own community and having adventures in the surrounding countryside and coastal areas.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to use self evaluation and the views of parents and children to assess what she does well in her childminding service and what she could improve.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder was excellent at caring for and supporting children.

Parents greatly praised her for being highly loving, caring and supportive and they told us they and their children had strong, positive relationships and high respect for her as a result.

"Gillian is a very warm and approachable person who is genuinely very fond of her charges, who in turn dote on her. She takes time to get to know the children and expresses an interest in all areas of their life and the people in their lives to build strong and positive relations".

"My children love going to Gillian's and would do so more often if they could, A home from home experience in which my children feel valued and nurtured".

"Gillian provides a fabulous childcare service. She is professional in everything that she does and treats the children as individuals and is aware of their changing needs"

"The care, love and support both myself and my child receives from Gillian goes far beyond what a childminder should offer".

We found her genuinely and deeply interested in children and their personal welfare and we could see that this and her extraordinary calm and kindly manner meant children in her care had thoroughly nurturing experiences which helped them thrive.

Her accounts of supporting children with additional needs were particularly clear in showing her extreme perseverance to work with parents and the child till they found an approach which supported the child having positive experiences and making progress.

She firmly believed in everyone's right to be respected and involved through having a say and she promoted this thoroughly. She communicated regularly and in meaningful detail so that parents and children were well informed to give feedback and ideas. They had a choice of how to contribute including doing so informally through conversation and children's diaries or more formally through questionnaires and care plan reviews. So devoted was the childminder's respect for parents having a say in their preferred way that, at their request, she had recently introduced social media as a new way to communicate with them although this was a testing challenge to her own technical knowledge.

Children had wholesome experiences because the childminder thoroughly understood the impact of positive lifestyle on children's good health and all round well being. This resulted from her professional training and experience as a childminder and a previous long career supporting families and, from her continuous, keen research and adherence to current childcare guidance.

For example, children benefitted from her knowing about good nutrition which kept them healthy and growing, good hygiene which kept them well, active play which helped develop their creativity and curiosity and outdoor play which helped them stay fit and learn about the community and natural world they lived in.

Children also had excellent support from the childminder for changes and challenges in their lives. She knew the children extremely well and so easily picked up on signs that something was making them worried or anxious. The excellent relationships she and the children developed meant they trusted her thoroughly and this enabled her to help them explore their worries and feelings and find out what support would help.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 – excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided an excellent environment.

Parents were extremely satisfied with the surroundings the childminder provided describing the childminder's home as "safe, nurturing and stimulating", "very warm and welcoming - a home from home".

One person said:

"Gillian is very safety conscious which makes her house very safe for children".

After touring the house, speaking with the childminder and looking at policies and records, we were fully confident also that children had safe surroundings because the childminder had thoroughly assessed and put in place the essential safeguards for the children in her care based on her sound and up to date knowledge of good health, safety and hygiene practice.

She was also very experienced in Child Protection due to her previous career which meant she was highly alert to signs a child was at harm and extremely confident about the procedures for reporting on any serious concerns. This helped safeguard children further.

However, the childminder also fully recognised that children learned strategies for keeping safe in their surroundings through exposure to reasonable risk and responsibility to manage it themselves and we saw children having valuable opportunity for this.

For example, in her spacious living room she had various activity areas set out with a range of resources. She kept a close eye on the young child with her. However she largely left them to explore as they wished.

This meant problem solving opportunities to move around or over objects in their way or to climb up on low equipment providing a seat without falling over. In doing so they learned better balance for the next time they tried.

We also saw photos of older children at various locations posing outdoor risks to manage which they may not regularly come across, including stony and rocky ground and flowing water. This gave children valuable practice of taking new risks and developing new ways to stay unharmed while in the safety of a supervised group.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We consider that the childminder was excellent at managing the service.

Parents experience was that she was highly professional and we could also see that quality in her excellent efforts to ensure parents felt involved and respected as full partners in the care and support she provided for their child.

She approached her responsibilities as a registered provider of a care service with the same high level of professionalism. She reliably provided information the Care Inspectorate requested and she engaged fully and intelligently with us during the inspection process as we discussed and debated the way she worked and wider childcare developments.

She was extremely hard working and self motivated towards maintaining high standards in her service.

She routinely and keenly accessed up to date information by attending training events, researching websites and reading guidance publications.

We saw from written materials she produced including the parent's handbook, policies and systems for recording children's information that she had carefully developed these to reflect the current practice she found out about which promoted families receiving a quality service.

She is also to be commended for developing her written materials in a style which is extremely reader friendly and highly informative. Furthermore, she discussed all information in her handbook with new families, thereby ensuring she was fair to those for whom written English was not helpful.

The personal plans she kept for children showed thorough collection of information about their needs and well considered assessment of their achievements and the developments they needed help with next. We could see she had based these on the national approach to planning for children's health and wellbeing (GIRFEC) which demonstrated the excellent care she took to keep her work fully in line with current practices.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 – excellent

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Mrs Stout should introduce a parental consent form to allow children to play on the trampoline in the garden.

National Care Standards: 2 Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - A Safe Environment.
National Care Standards: 14 Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Well managed service.

This recommendation was made on 25 February 2013.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Mrs Stout followed the advice we gave at inspection and gains written permission from parents for their children to use her garden trampoline.

Recommendation 2

Mrs Stout needed to add the local Child Protection contact address and telephone number to her Child Protection policy.

National Care Standards: 3 Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Health and Wellbeing.
National Care Standards: 14 Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Well managed service.

This recommendation was made on 25 February 2013.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Mrs Stout updated her Child Protection policy by adding the contact details for the local Child Protection team.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
25 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
1 Dec 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
9 Jun 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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