

Johnston, Allison

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 21 February 2017

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2003903281

Care service number:
CS2003005524

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 Johnston provides a childminding service in a small rural town.

The local primary school, parks and countryside walks are all easy to reach by foot from her home.

Mrs Johnston is registered to care for a maximum of 8 children at any 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 Johnston's own family.

Mrs Johnston aims to "provide a warm, welcoming and safe environment and a caring, relaxed atmosphere; offer nutritious snacks and meals; communicate with parents to offer the best care for their children".

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report after an announced (short notice) inspection. This was carried out by one inspector. The inspection took place on Tuesday 21 February 2017 between 15:30 and 17:45.

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 observed her working with the children in her care on the day of our visit
- We spoke with the children
- We took account of feedback parents gave us.

We looked at:

- Information the childminder gathers about children to help her plan their care and support
- Other records she maintains about children including reports of accidents and incidents, medicines she has provided and photos of activities involving the children.

We discussed:

- 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 she provides
- Personal development the childminder has undertaken
- What the childminder has developed in her service since the last inspection.

Views of people using the service

We met the two school aged children the childminder currently cares for who were brother and sister and the childminder's own three children.

They had just returned from school when we arrived and they soon settled to a cake baking activity which they enjoyed and each played their part in.

They spoke about when they played outside and walks they enjoyed in the woods which backed on to the childminder's home.

The feedback we received from the children's parent was positive. They appreciated the support the childminder provided and their relationship was good.

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.

The childminder gave brief detail about what she thought she does well. She also told us how she gives parents and children a say in the childminding service she provides.

The childminder should provide more information in the self assessment about how children benefit from what she does.

What the service did well

Mrs Johnston builds good relationships with parents and children using her service.

She involves parents in the care and support she provides for their child and they are happy with her approach.

Children can play indoors and outdoors and they enjoy adventures into the nearby woods , creative activities like den building which involves designing and problem solving and unusual fun like walks in the dark with torches.

What the service could do better

Mrs Johnston should :

- record briefly in children's personal plans at least six monthly reviews of children's care and support with parents, the children's achievements during that time and the next support towards development the childminder and parents agree.
- update her knowledge of current Child Protection practice.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder was good at caring for and supporting children.

She had cared for the two children with her long-term.

The childminder and children therefore knew one another very well and they were relaxed with each other as a result.

The children had just returned from school and they knew the usual pattern for the afternoon of activities then their evening meal which helped them settle and feel at home.

The planned activity was baking cup cakes and the childminder did well to fairly involve her own children and the minded children by ensuring they all had their own tasks to complete towards the final product.

When the children asked questions about their tasks including how to read the scales for measuring or about the ingredients such as "why do we need baking powder" , the childminder confidently answered meaning the children were helpfully learning about the process of cooking as they participated.

While the cakes were baking, the children smoothly moved over to a craft activity at their request. This showed them having a say about how they spent their time and the childminder being ready to meet their request because she knew well the things they liked doing and she had the materials they needed to hand.

We noted how busy the childminder was throughout the afternoon and we suggested how the children might be able to help her a little more with some of the tasks like fetching and tidying away what they were using for activities and play rather than her doing the bulk of the work herself.

This would be a helpful way for the children to learn about taking responsibility and about showing respect for others.

The feedback we received told us that the childminder was involving parents and communicating with them to their satisfaction.

We found this included parents providing information about their child which helped the childminder plan their care and support and the parents and childminder having regular conversations about their child's changing needs which meant they influenced adjustments the childminder made to what she provided.

The childminder continued to have basic personal plan information recorded about the children. However, she was still not currently adding to this record routinely in terms of the children's achievements, reviews of their care and support with parents and the next development needs they agreed. We recommend again at this inspection that the childminder should keep brief notes of these things in each child's personal plan as this will assist the ongoing review process. (See recommendation 1).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Personal Plans - The childminder should record briefly in children's personal plans at least six monthly reviews of children's care and support with parents, the children's achievements during that time and the next support towards development the childminder and parents agree.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3 Health and Well Being; Standard 14 Well Managed Service

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a good environment.

Indoors children were largely in the childminder's living room which provided comfortable seating at one end to relax, clear floor space for play and a dining table for meals and table top activities.

This gave a homely feel as children could freely use the space as they wished and still be among the rest of the "childminding family".

In addition, children had use of a large enclosed garden. They confirmed they used this regularly meaning good opportunity for fresh air and energetic activity to help them stay fit and well.

The childminder had improved the records she kept of hazards to children around her home. She had added the measures she takes to minimise these causing harm to children and, in doing so, had made her action clearer for parents to know the precautions in place and for her to review and update as children's needs required.

She had also developed and made clearer in written information the measures she takes to minimise risks to children from her family pets. This importantly included gaining written permission from parents for their child's contact with the animals which meant they had a say in their child's safety.

The childminder should continue to regularly review these measures regarding her pets, ensuring that they continue to be effective in safeguarding children both in the house and in the garden.

We were pleased to hear about activities the children had taken part in which were giving them exciting environments to explore and develop.

Walks into the woods backing on to the childminder's property let the children experience the natural world on their doorstep.

A walk in the dark using torches gave children a different view of routes around their home area they were familiar with in daylight.

A play den day indoors was both exciting and challenging as it let the children work out for themselves how to use everyday household materials and items to successfully build their own play space.

We recommend the following guidance documents to the childminder as they contain more ideas for creative play which she may like to try with the children.

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/279348/my-world-outdoors-sharing-good-practice-in-how-early-years-services-can-provide-play-and-learning-wholly-or-partially-outdoors.pdf>

<http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/media/58451/Loose-Parts-Play-web.pdf>

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We consider that the childminder was good at managing her service.

She maintained contracts with parents, keeping their working agreement professional.

She involved parents so that they had a say in the care and support she provided for their child.

She carried out her responsibilities as a registered childminder by doing things including sending the Care Inspectorate annual returns and self assessments as requested, engaging in constructive discussion with us during inspections and completing improvements we recommended.

She updated her knowledge of topics helping promote children's health and well-being like first aid.

The childminder had not yet, however, accessed a Child Protection course to gain an update on current practice. She should continue to look for a suitable course to attend. (See recommendation 1)

In the meantime she may find it helpful to consider an online course or some written publications on the subject.

When she does personal development in this way relevant to her childminding she should note this alongside other evidence of training she has accessed as this is also valid evidence of her learning.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Personal Development – the childminder should update her knowledge of current Child Protection practice.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 – A Safe Environment; Standard 3 – Health and Wellbeing; Standard 14 – Well Managed Service.

Grade: 4 – good

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

Personal Planning - the childminder should show through brief records the next developments she and the parents agree for their child during reviews of their care and learning.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 13 - Improving the Service; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had separate information for each child she cared for which helped her plan. We discussed again further information she might add to show how parents are involved and how she assesses the support children need using SHANARRI health and well being outcomes.

Recommendation 2

Risk assessments - the childminder should further develop risk assessment records.

- She should show the action she takes to minimise hazards to children in every area of her home and garden.
- She should also show on the written risk assessments when she has carried them out and when she has reviewed them.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment; Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had added the additional information we requested to records of risk assessment.

Recommendation 3

Safe use of Trampoline - the childminder should write down the rules and risk assessment for children's safe use of her garden trampoline.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had recorded the rules and risk assessment for children's safe use of her garden trampoline.

Recommendation 4

Pet Safety - the childminder should further develop her pet policy and introduce a written pet risk assessment to evidence in full that she ensures effective measures are in place to keep children safe from family pets.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment; Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder now had added written information showing how she minimises risk to children from family pets.

Recommendation 5

Parental permissions - the childminder should obtain parent's written consent to their child having contact with her family pets.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder now asks parents for written permission to their child having contact with her family pets.

Recommendation 6

Personal Development - the childminder should update her knowledge of current Child Protection practice.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 2 - A Safe Environment; Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder has not yet accessed a Child Protection course. She should continue to look for a suitable course to attend.

Recommendation 7

Medicine policy - the childminder should review her medicine policy in line with current published guidance.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing; Standard 14 - Well Managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 16 February 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had referred to current guidance and updated her medicine policy accordingly.

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	
16 Feb 2015	1	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
12 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
12 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
11 Jul 2011	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed Not assessed 3 - Adequate Not assessed
25 May 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 1 - Unsatisfactory Not assessed
31 May 2011	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed Not assessed 1 - Unsatisfactory Not assessed
11 Jan 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate Not assessed 3 - Adequate Not assessed
26 May 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate

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