

Carruthers, Heather

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 19 March 2018

Service provided by:
Heather Carruthers

Service provider number:
SP2003901875

Care service number:
CS2003003587

The service

Introduction

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Mrs Carruther's provides her service from her home in a residential area of Kilmarnock, in East Ayrshire. The childminder's current registration allows her to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age 16 of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months.

Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family. The childminder's stated aims include;

"I am committed to providing a safe and happy environment for all children in my care so that they can learn and thrive through play."

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place between 13.10 hours and 14.30 hours on 28 February 2018 and between 13.10 hours and 14.45 hours on 19 March 2018. The inspection was carried out by an inspector for the Care Inspectorate and was conducted over two days as there were no children being cared for on the first day.

The provider completed and submitted an annual return and self-assessment as requested by us.

We sent the childminder three questionnaires to give to parents/carers using her service. One was completed and returned to us before the inspection took place.

During the inspection process we observed how the childminder cared for and interacted with the children she was caring for. We discussed how she met children's needs and worked in partnership with parents to promote continuity of care. We looked at some documentation including children's personal plans, risk assessments and relevant policies and procedures. We also looked at some toys, equipment and the children's environment.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of getting it Right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Views of people using the service

The parent who returned a questionnaire told us that they were very happy with every aspect of the service. They said that the childminder always provided healthy well balanced snack for their child and made good use of local parks, clubs and activities for children and regularly gave them access to outdoor play. They also said that the childminder regularly consults and informs them of any changes to the service. A parent and child who spoke with us during the inspection confirmed that they were also very happy with every aspect of the service, and we observed that younger children were happy and content, or were being supported effectively to settle in.

Self assessment

The childminder provided a basic self-assessment. Future self-assessments could be further developed to reference the Getting It Right For Ever Child (GIRFEC) well being indicators and to include information about how implementation of best practice impacts on outcomes for children.

What the service did well

The childminder was warm, caring and nurturing with the children in her care. She communicated effectively with parents to promote continuity of care. Children enjoyed lots of outdoor play and visits within the local community.

What the service could do better

We have recommended that the childminder contacts the local environmental health department to establish whether she needs to register as a food business, based on the snacks that she provides for children. We have also recommended that the childminder should seek to keep up-to-date with and implement current best 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	3 – Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided good care and support.

The childminder involved parents in developing plans for their children's care through an effective settling in process and on an ongoing basis through daily discussions and reviews of personal plans. Very positive relationships had been established with children and their parents, and the childminder knew children well. This helped her to provide nurturing care and support.

The childminder provided a good range of play and learning experiences. Information about children's progress and next steps was recorded within their personal plans and agreed with parents. There was potential for older children to be more involved in agreeing their next steps to encourage them to be responsible and to show that their views were respected. We also suggested that more information was sought and recorded about children's routines and preferences prior to their first settling in visit to promote continuity of care.

The childminder told us how she promoted children's health through a range of approaches. Children had regular access to fresh air and energetic play in the local community and in the childminder's garden.

The childminder did not provide meals, as she was not registered as a food business. She did, however, provide some snacks. The childminder was knowledgeable about the importance of healthy eating, but was limited in the ways that she could promote this with children, as she was not registered as a food business. We have therefore recommended that she should contact the local environment health department to enquire about whether she should register. Please refer to recommendation 1.

The childminder had revised the documentation used for recording medication since her previous inspection. This reflected best practice. We discussed the importance of recording sufficient information for medication that should be administered on an 'as required' basis.

The childminder was committed to protecting children from harm and abuse. She had developed a basic child protection statement regarding child protection, and was clear about her duty to report any concerns. The childminder ensured her skills and knowledge about child protection were up-to-date by attending regular training.

The childminder told us about how she promoted positive behaviour appropriately. She recognised the importance of promoting positive behaviour and taking account of children's developmental stages when setting limits.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. To ensure that snacks are prepared and stored safely we recommend that the childminder contacts the local environmental health service to enquire about registering as a food business.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and well-being.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a good environment.

The childminder's home provided children with a relaxed, warm, bright and child-friendly environment. There were lots of toys and resources easily accessible within the living room and adjoining cupboard. We discussed how by limiting the amount of toys on the floor at any time, children could have more space to develop their play. We also discussed how resources could be developed to support heuristic, schematic and loose parts play experiences, which will support children to achieve.

Children had access to a secure outdoor area, which meant they were able to play actively and energetically to support healthy lifestyles. The childminder told us that she liked to ensure the children were involved in activities and accessed amenities with the local community. We saw from various records that children enjoyed a range of experiences both indoors and outside. The childminder was aware of the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles, and provided regular opportunities for children to play energetically and access fresh air. Parents said in their questionnaires that their children always had plenty to do and that they were able to choose the range of outings and experiences available.

The childminder had taken account of current infection control guidance to develop policies and practice that helped limit the risk of the spread of infection, to ensure that children were safe and healthy. At the time of our inspection she did not have suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for nappy changing. She confirmed that she would purchase this prior to the next settling in visit for the young baby present during our inspection. During our inspection one of the children being cared for was not supported to wash their hands prior to eating. We reminded the childminder about the importance of this in limiting the spread of infection.

Risk assessments had been developed to record how the childminder would reduce potential risk of harm to children. Since the last inspection the childminder had acquired a large, freestanding television. We discussed the risks associated with children pulling these over. The childminder advised that she intended to have this wall mounted, which we agreed will be a positive step.

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

The childminder had adequate practice in relation to management and leadership.

The childminder was keen to provide a quality service for children and their families. She kept up-to-date with statutory training, such as in first aid and child protection. We discussed the value of accessing training and best practice information relating to other aspects of children's learning and development, and the potential to find new ways to do this if there is limited availability to local courses. Please refer to recommendation 1. The childminder might find 'Your Childminding Journey, a learning and development resource and 'My Childminding Experience' which showcases good practice in childminding useful.

The childminder evaluated her service by consulting parents and children both formally and informally. This demonstrated effective partnership working based on respectful relationships.

The childminder had appropriate insurance and had a complaints policy that she shared with parents. This meant she was complying with legislation relating to these.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. In order to promote continued professional development, and to ensure practice reflects the most current guidance, we recommend that the childminder finds ways to keep her knowledge and skills in early learning and childcare current.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 12: Confidence in staff.

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The childminder should develop a personal plan for each child using the service. The plan should record how the childminder will meet the health, wellbeing and safety needs of the child. The plan should be reviewed at least six monthly or sooner and revised to address the child's current needs and interests.

This is in order to comply with: The Scottish Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011: 210 Personal plans 5.-(1) (3) a provider must, after consultation with each service user and, where it appears to the provider to be appropriate, any representative of the service user, within 28 days of the date on which the service user first received the service prepare a written plan ("the personal plan") which sets out how the service user's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met.

This requirement was made on 30 January 2014.

Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had developed personal plans for each child using the service. These recorded how the childminder would meet the health, wellbeing and safety needs of children and were being reviewed at least six monthly and revised to address the child's current needs and interests.

Met - within timescales

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

The childminder should develop and record her risk assessment procedures to ensure she records potential hazards and the measures she has put in place to minimise risk to the children using the service.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 2.2: A safe environment.

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2014.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had recorded risk assessments to identify potential hazards and the measures she had put in place to reduce these.

This recommendation is: met. We have, however, noted an area for development in relation to the large flat screen television with the environment quality theme.

Recommendation 2

To improve how she meets the children's health and wellbeing needs the childminder needs to develop an effective administration of medicine policy and procedure.

The provider must ensure accurate records of children's health and wellbeing needs are maintained.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2014.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had acquired documentation to support the effective administration of medication from East Ayrshire Council. We have provided the childminder with best practice guidance relating to medication.

This recommendation is: met.

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	
30 Jan 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
8 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
9 Sep 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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