

Little Buds Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 10 April 2018

Service provided by:
Erin Reilly trading as Little Buds

Service provider number:
SP2010980860

Care service number:
CS2010279011

The service

Introduction

The service is provided from the childminder's home in a residential area in Milnathort. The children have access to all areas of the house including designated playroom spaces and an enclosed back garden. The childminder currently has 14 children registered with the service. The children all attend on a part-time basis and are all under school age. Erin Reilly currently works with assistants Leann Savage and Margaret Stuart.

The service is currently registered with the following conditions:

1. To provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.
2. Leann Savage is employed as an assistant. When Leann Savage is working with Erin Reilly, the care service will be provided to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than six are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than two are under 12 months.
3. Margaret Anne Stuart is employed as an assistant. When Margaret Anne Stuart is working with Erin Reilly, the care service will be provided to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than six are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than two are under 12 months.
4. The child minding assistant must work under the supervision of Erin Reilly with the exception of the time involved in school, nursery or playgroup drop-off and collection times or for a maximum of two hours within the working day. During these times the child minding assistant may care for a maximum of six children under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.
5. Overnight service will not be provided.
6. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those stated on the registration certificate

We found that the childminder adhered to the conditions of her registration. On the day of the inspection, four children were present. They were being cared for by the childminder and two assistants.

The childminder has clear aims for her service and these included to:

- offer a quality, safe and flexible care service to children and parents
- encourage children to develop self-esteem and confidence and
- treat children as individuals and work with their parents to offer the best care for their child.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection, which took place between 10.00am and 1.15pm on 10th. April 2018. The inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate Inspector.

During this inspection we spoke to the childminder, her assistants and the children present. We observed the care given by the childminder and looked at a number of documents including the personal information for each child, service policies and menus.

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

As part of the inspection process we spoke to three parents. We received three completed questionnaires which had been returned to us.

The comments from parents were very positive. It was clear that the service was held in very high regard by them all. All of their comments were very positive.

They told us:

"The children are out and about all of the time."

"They do so many activities, lots of art and craft and baking."

"My children just love coming here. The girls are so good with them."

"We chose it because we like the small setting."

"The childminders really care. I am very happy, they have been great."

"The childminders are very approachable. I can talk to them about anything."

"The craft work they do is great."

"The kids openly show their affection for the team so they can't be doing much wrong."

During the inspection we spoke to the children present. They were happy to tell us about the things that they enjoyed doing.

They told us:

"I like the garden, it has a slide with steps."

"I like to play outside."

"I want to dress up to be a princess."

Self assessment

The service had not completed their self assessment in advance of the inspection. We discussed this with the childminder. She, along with the assistants had a clear idea of the areas that they did well and had plans on how to improve other areas of the service.

What the service did well

The childminder and her assistants offered a warm, nurturing and caring environment to children who were under school age. The childminder and her assistants clearly knew the children well and had formed strong bonds with the children and their parents. They used this knowledge effectively to support the children and to meet their needs.

They provided children with healthy snacks and meals which were cooked daily. The views of children and their parents were used to influence what was offered each day.

The children benefitted from regular outdoor activities and play. They made good use of the childminder's garden and had daily walks in the countryside around the town.

What the service could do better

We looked at the information that was held on each of the children. We discussed how this could be developed to allow the childminder to record how each of the children was developing by recording areas of significant learning. They should consult with parents and note any areas of development that they would like the childminder to work on. There should also be an opportunity for the children to identify areas and topics that they would like to learn about. Children should all have a personal care plan which sets out how their needs will be met as well as their wishes and choices.

We asked the childminder and assistants to consider how to record their planning to show how they have responded to children's interests. Children should have fun as they develop their skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving through imaginative play and storytelling.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We judged that the childminder was working to a good standard in this area. The children were cared for in a homely and caring environment. They had access to good quality toys and resources. The childminders knew the children well and were sensitive to their needs.

They offered good support to all of the children and were good at working together to meet the needs of all of the children. There was evidence of good communication between the three childminders who worked together and with parents. This contributed to the positive outcomes for children.

During the inspection we saw happy and relaxed children who were enjoying their play and clearly had warm and trusting relationships with the adults in the service. We identified an area of development as being to extend the use of more open-ended and natural materials to promote investigation and problem solving.

The childminders told us that they worked hard at developing strong relationships with the families they worked with. They were happy to spend time each day with parents as they dropped off or collected children. They promoted an open discussion where families felt confident to share their suggestions and talk through any concerns. They were flexible and accommodated the needs of parents and children. Parents we spoke to told us that they appreciated this.

A new system had been implemented which ensured that all of the personal information for each child was updated every six months as required. The service was continuing to work towards creating personal plans for the children which would allow them to record the learning and achievements of the children. Further advice was given on this along with suggestions on how to involve the childminders and the children in planning how skills, confidence and problem solving would be offered within the setting. **(See recommendations 1 and 2).**

The childminders offered good quality, home cooked meals. Snacks and meals included fresh fruit and vegetables. Meals were eaten in a sociable and unhurried way. The children and parents contributed to the menu planning process. Meals and snacks met the dietary needs of all of the children, food allergies and intolerances were sensitively managed.

Children should have the opportunity for daily outdoor play. We saw that all of the children had access to the garden area and could participate in active, creative and imaginative play. The children were encouraged to be aware of their natural environment. There were regular opportunities for walks and adventures in the local woods. This was confirmed by parents who were very pleased with this part of the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The provider should develop personal plans for each of the children by 1 August 2018.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15).

2. The childminders should consider how they could develop their planning of activities and experiences to fully involve children and to be more responsive to their interests and suggestions. This should be done by 1 August 2018.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in a way that I choose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity. HSCS 2.27."

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection we found that the service was performing to a good standard in this area. The environment of the childminder's home was relaxed, welcoming and peaceful. This promoted a sense of wellbeing for the children.

From our observations we saw that the childminder's house was clean, tidy and well organised. She operated a strict no smoking policy. We saw that the house was safe for children. Some risk assessments had been completed for activities. She made a daily visual check to ensure that the house and garden were fully prepared for children.

During the morning we saw that children were encouraged to take responsibility for keeping the areas tidy and well organised. When using the outdoor areas the children were dressed in appropriate warm and waterproof clothing which allowed them to play in comfort and to enjoy their time in the fresh air.

Children should have enough physical space to meet their needs. We saw that the children could move freely between the two playrooms. These offered space for free play and activities such as dressing up. Furniture was of an appropriate size to allow the children to sit comfortably when doing art and craft activities or eating snacks or meals.

All children should be able to access a toilet from the playroom they are using. The toilets were close to the playrooms and children were seen to use them independently. They were clean and well maintained.

Suitable nappy change facilities were available for the younger children. There was a sink close by which allowed hand washing to take place. The childminder adhered to best practice guidance which helped to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.

Parents were given guidance on when children should stay away from the service when they were unwell. This guidance was strictly adhered to by the childminder and as a result children were protected.

Children were kept safe and secure on their journey to and from nursery. These were either done on foot or in the childminder's car. We have repeated a previous recommendation that full risk assessments be completed for these. **(See recommendation 1).**

When the children were transported in the childminder's car she used the approved car seats for the age and size of the children.

Information about accidents and incidents was recorded appropriately and shared with parents. A copy was kept by the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should create risk assessments for all activities which take place outwith her home by 1st June 2018.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My environment is secure and safe." (HSCS 5.17).

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection we found that the service was performing to a good standard in this area.

The childminder worked each day with two assistants. This high number of adults ensured that the children benefitted from lots of input and discussion. Children and parents could have confidence that all of the adults in the service were competent and skilled.

The childminder and her assistants showed a high level of commitment to communication and teamwork. This had a positive impact on the support that they could offer to all of the children. This was commented on positively by parents.

The team was strong and effective. The adults worked closely together and through this they advised each other on ways to improve their skills and to develop their practice. We observed the adults treating the children with warmth and compassion.

Physical comfort was offered when children were upset. Children should be protected from harm by staff who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Children were protected from harm as staff were responsive to the signs of neglect and abuse. Staff were seen to know children well and to listen to them respectfully. Regular training for most of the adults in the setting helped to ensure that staff were appropriately skilled and knowledgeable about their child protection responsibilities.

The childminder and her assistants were very clear on how to use their own interests and strengths to ensure that children had high quality experiences. We suggested further reading and training that the childminder and her assistants could undertake which would help them to ensure a culture of continuous improvement.

'Building the Ambition' will support their development of appropriate learning activities and experiences for the children. The newly published document: 'My Childminding Experience' will allow them to read about examples of good practice from other childminders and help to support their further developments.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered during the inspection we found that the service was performing to an adequate standard in this area.

Although the experiences and outcomes for the children and their families were good; we considered that there were important shortcomings in recording, and some of the necessary documents which were important to the setting. In addition the service had not taken action on some of the previous recommendations made at the previous inspection. We discussed this during the inspection and were confident that the service had the capacity and the motivation to complete this work now.

All children should be actively involved in improving the service. During the inspection we heard that children were given choices and allowed to make decisions about their play and activities. We suggested how this could be recorded in a responsive planning document. We discussed the importance of completing the annual return for the service within the given timescale as requested by the Care Inspectorate.

The childminder promoted openness with the families with whom she worked. She had a complaints policy which was shared with parents. This contained all of the necessary information. A full range of policies was shared with parents when they began to use the service. All of the parents we spoke to confirmed that the childminder was approachable and responsive to any worries or suggestions.

From all of the evidence that we saw we concluded that parents and children were very happy with the service that the childminder provided. This was confirmed by the comments in our questionnaire.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

The service should ensure that all the personal information kept on each child is reviewed with parents once every six months or more often as necessary. This is to include contact information for parents, consent forms and 'All About Me' information.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 3: health and wellbeing; standard 6: support and development; standard 14: well-Managed service.

This recommendation was made on 1 August 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had reviewed her approach to recording information for each child. This had all recently been updated and there was now an area on each information form to show that it was being regularly checked with parents.

Recommendation 2

To support the children to reach their potential it is recommended that the service establishes personal files that record children's learning and development. These should include the contribution of parents and children.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 6: support and development.

This recommendation was made on 1 August 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation had not been implemented. The childminder had the ideas about what she wanted to add into the personal files but had not yet begun to create them. Further advice was given to support this development.

Recommendation 3

The childminder should review and update the service policies, procedures and risk management strategies on a regular basis and ensure they are implemented. These should be shared with the assistants and parents.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 14: well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 1 August 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service policies had been reviewed and updated where necessary. All policies were shared with parents when they began to use the service.

Recommendation 4

The service should continue to develop the participation and involvement of the children and parents using the service.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 6: support and development; standard 1: being welcomed and valued.

This recommendation was made on 1 August 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The service had taken some action towards meeting this recommendation. We saw that children and their parents were consulted about some aspects of their care within the service.

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	
6 Jul 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
10 Jun 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
5 Jun 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
19 Jul 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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