

Nichol, Susan Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 5 June 2018

Service provided by:
Susan Nichol

Service provider number:
SP2003902291

Care service number:
CS2003004145

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 registered with the Care Inspectorate on April 2011.

Susan Nichol provides a childminding service from her family home in the Gourrock area of Inverclyde. The premises are a back and front door terraced house. Children have access to rooms on the ground floor and an enclosed back garden.

Current registration allows the childminder:

To provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time, under the age of 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 shall be under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

Included in Mrs Nichol's aims is to "provide a safe family based care service for you and your child and treat all individuals as children whilst in my home".

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place between 0900hrs and 1150hrs on Tuesday 5th June 2018. The inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate Early Learning and Childcare inspector.

During the inspection, we spoke to the childminder and the minded children present. We observed the care given by the childminder and looked at a number of documents including health and safety records, planning tools and certificates of training. We looked at feedback given by service user through questionnaires.

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 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 children present during inspection enjoyed playing with the toys and resources available to them. They told us that they liked going to the childminder's house; they enjoyed playing with Peppa Pig and going to the park.

Three parents returned questionnaires to us. The responses from these demonstrated that they were happy with the quality of care their child received. Included in the comments were:

"Susan is a fantastic childminder. She has cared for my son and now my daughter. She puts a lot of time and effort into planning activities and places to visit. My children have a great bond with Susan; my daughter is very excited on the days she is going".

"This is the first time using a childminder and I can't fault her. She's been so supportive. My child's speech has improved dramatically and she's much more confident which I believe is down to Susan's influence. Susan is fab".

"The variety of activities that Susan involves the children in is brilliant and Susan has a real enthusiasm for caring for the children. Importantly, my daughter loves going to Susan each day and is happy to be with Susan".

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment from the childminder.

The provider identified what the service did well and gave examples of how she worked closely with parents to ensure that she met the care needs of every child. The self-assessment clearly identified how the childminder seeks feedback from children and families. The childminder told us that she makes changes to her service, whenever possible, based on the feedback given.

What the service did well

We saw that the childminder's interactions with the children were warm, caring and nurturing. She provided a very good standard of care and support to the children and their families while meeting their individual needs. Personal plans were in place for each child and reviewed regularly with parents.

What the service could do better

The childminder should develop more robust risk assessments for activities and outings such as contact with her pet dog and transported children by car. She should continue to develop more robust systems for self-evaluation so that children and families feel involved

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found that children received very good care and support from this service.

Children and their families were offered a settling in period to meet their individual needs, building relationships with the childminder. A welcome handbook told parents what they could expect. The childminder had gathered information on each child and used this to form her personal plans. We observed the childminder working with the children and saw that she knew each child as an individual. This told us that her record keeping was effective; information gathered about children ensured that needs were met and choices respected. We discussed how personal plans could be improved further.

The childminder could demonstrate that children and their families were included as active participants; they were listened to and offered choices. The childminder had daily discussions with the minded children's families, in person and via text messaging. We saw photographs of children where they participated in 'Bookbug' sessions, visited local parks and learned how to care for animals. Photographs of children's activities were shared with parents.

During our inspection visit, children enjoyed role playing, dancing and singing their favourite songs. We found the childminder to be caring, nurturing and supportive towards the children in her care. Children had made friendships and the childminder sensitively supported them in sharing and playing together. Throughout the inspection, the children presented as happy and secure in the childminder's care, confident their needs would be met. The childminder promoted positive behaviour using praise and encouragement to build children's confidence and self-esteem. She had a policy in place to assure parents how she would work in partnership with them should she need to resolve any behaviour concerns.

The childminder was confident in her role to safeguard children. She had a child protection policy in place and told us how she would respond to any concerns. Should children require any medication, a procedure was in place and the childminder was confident in her role to meet children's identified health needs. Children who were unwell did not attend the service. We discussed how consent forms for administering medication could be improved.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found the family home to be a warm, homely and comfortable environment for young children. The childminder mainly used her lounge/dining area for the minded children with access to an upstairs bathroom. The lounge area provided good floor space for the children to play with toys, and comfortable sofas were available should the children wish to relax. A large table in the dining area allowed children to complete jigsaws, craft activities or eat snacks. A range of toys were organised for easy access which allowed children to make choices and develop their independence.

A garden at the rear of the property could be accessed via the kitchen. However, the childminder told us that she rarely allowed children access to the garden as it was not completely enclosed. We found that she made good use of the local area to provide children with opportunities for outdoor play. However, we referred her to the latest good practice guidance and suggested that she review children's opportunities for daily, outdoor free play.

Should children be ill, the childminder followed best practice guidance on periods of exclusion for any childhood illness. This helped to limit the spread of infection. The bathroom used by minded children was clean and cleaning products were securely stored. The childminder changed her hand towel daily; we suggested that she could use small flannels for single-use which helps prevent cross-contamination. To support this, we signposted the childminder to the best practice guidance 'Infection prevention and control in childcare settings'.

The childminder carried out daily visual checks to ensure that the environment was safe, hazard-free and child friendly. She had a risk assessment in place for inside her home and she held information about regular places she visited with children. The childminder allowed contact between her pet dog and the minded children and she had a policy in place to manage this. However, we asked that the childminder complete a written risk assessment for contact with the dog. She should also develop more robust risk assessments for activities and outings including transporting children by car, outings in the community and use of large play equipment (see recommendation 1).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The childminder should compile robust written risk assessments for resources, activities and outings that may have potential hazards for minded children. This should include risk assessments for the childminder's pet dog, transportation by car, outings and access to large play equipment.

Health and Social Care Standards. Standard 5:17: My environment is safe and secure.

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The childminder used a range of methods to keep up with best practice and legislation. This included attending training and receiving updates as a member of the Scottish Childminding Association. The childminder also told

us that she networked with other childminders in the area to gain new ideas, share good practice and organise joint training opportunities. We found that the childminder had attended a wide range of training to support her practice such as road safety, safety in the home and a first aid course.

Daily discussions with children and parents took place, and care plans were regularly reviewed. Feedback gathered directly influenced the care and support the childminder provided to the children in her care and any improvements to the service. The childminder took into account children's thoughts and opinions when she planned activities. Parents who returned our care standards questionnaire agreed the childminder involved them and their child, in developing the service; for example, asking for ideas and feedback. This told us the childminder valued contributions from children and their families to help make improvements. We discussed how the childminder could develop this further.

In discussions, we found the childminder continually evaluated her service making changes to improve children's experiences. She presented as committed to improving her service, placing children's interests at the centre. We discussed further use of national documents: for example, Building the Ambition (2014) and How good is our early learning and childcare? (2016) that would assist her with self-evaluation and reflection, making any improvements as necessary. The childminder had a clear complaints policy which was made available to parents and families when registering with the service. Parents who returned our care standards questionnaire told us they were confident in raising any concerns they may have with the childminder.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very 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

There are no outstanding recommendations.

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
19 Jun 2014	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
6 Jul 2010	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
5 Mar 2009	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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