

The Village Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 November 2018

Service provided by:
Lawrence, April

Service provider number:
SP2013985305

Care service number:
CS2013320502

Introduction

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

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

The Village Childminding Service is provided by April Lawrence. The service is registered to care for a maximum of six children 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. These numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

Ms Lawrence operates her childminding business from the family home in Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire. The lounge, kitchen and bathroom are used for childminding purposes. Children have access also to a private garden for outdoor play. The garden is at the rear of the property and has secured gates.

The childminder's aims include:

- 'to provide a safe and secure environment for your child'
- 'to provide a clean environment in which your child can play, learn, develop and grow'
- 'to provide a wide variety of stimulating activities that are appropriate to the age of your child'
- 'to recognise your child as an individual and provide opportunities for your child to develop their own personal interests'

A full copy of the aims and objectives can be obtained from the service.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection. This took place on 26 November 2018 between 12:00 and 15:00, where two minded children were present. This inspection was carried out by one inspector.

During this inspection we gathered evidence from a variety of sources including discussion with Ms Lawrence and two children who were present during our visit. We sampled photographs of play activities that children had been involved in, medication forms, accident and incident files, public liability and car insurance policies. We observed how Ms Lawrence interacted with the children. We considered the general environment and the equipment used in the provision of the childcare service.

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 very child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Views of people using the service

We observed two minded children aged between one and four over the course of the inspection. We saw that both children were settled, happy and confident in the care of the childminder. The children chose from a selection of adult and child led experiences that the childminder had provided. The children readily approached the childminder, who was caring and responsive to their needs and wishes.

We sent three care standard questionnaires to the service to distribute to parents/carers of children who used the service, three of which were returned before the inspection. The feedback provided from parents was very positive, in particular with regard to the consistency and care shown by Ms Lawrence and the important role she has played in their children's confidence and development. The parents were satisfied with the service provided and would highly recommend Ms Lawrence care and setting to others.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment from the childminder prior to the inspection. The childminder identified what she thought the service did well and gave examples of improvements and some areas for development. This included completing a recent course on child-led planning, which has helped Ms Lawrence to re-evaluate her service. Children are encouraged to express their choices and opinions on what activities and snacks they would like when contributing to the weekly planner.

What the service did well

Ms Lawrence provides an excellent child centred service that is highly regarded by families. The childminder was very responsive to children's individual needs and this resulted in children being very happy and relaxed in her care. Children directed own play whilst the childminder was observant about their safety. We found the childminder had an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities when meeting the children's care and support needs. She responded well to children and offered them cuddles and a comforter when needed.

What the service could do better

Ms Lawrence should continue to offer an excellent quality of care to families using her service.

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 knew the children well and described how she cared for and supported them as individuals. We sampled children's personal plan and scrap book and found them to be clear and very detailed and were reviewed with parents and children where appropriate at least once every six months. The evidence from our care standard questionnaires told us that parents were involved in reviewing information about their children in the service. One parent commented that both they and the childminder updated their child's information, reviewed their care and made comments/suggestions at their child's six month review.

The childminder told us that she had developed positive relationships with parents/carers. She felt communication was very good and that parents were fully supported to be involved in their child's learning and development. We looked at younger children's 'Development Rainbows' a tool that tracked their learning in key areas, such as, social, communication and physical development. The childminder told us how she shared children's achievements and progression with children and their parents on a regular basis. This helped highlight any gaps in children's learning and provided the childminder with a simplified method to record children's milestones.

Parents of children that attended after school agreed through discussion with the childminder that verbal communication at drop off/collection times was better suited than a diary. This allowed the childminder to spend more time with the children during activities and outings. The childminder told us that she kept parents updated through the use of a private Facebook page and WhatsApp. This gave parents regular updates of their child's day. Younger children received an online daily diary that was sent to parents with observations and photographs of activities they had been involved in. This reassured parents that their child was safe, happy and achieving at the service. One parent commented that the childminder regularly asks about the care of their child. Information is discussed at the end of session and if needed recorded.

As we arrived the children were having their lunch in a calm and unhurried way after returning from nursery. The childminder provided all meals and snacks for the children. This included breakfast, lunch and dinner for some children. Children chose what they would like for snack the previous week. This allowed the childminder time to discuss healthy options and encouraged a healthier lifestyle. We saw that the childminder had written a menu planner at the start of the week. This was displayed for the parents and children in the kitchen and enabled the childminder and parents the opportunity to discuss children's likes/dislikes and what foods they could try at home. One parent told us that the childminder provided their child with well balanced meals and snacks, including fruit/vegetables. They told us that their child tried more vegetables at the childminder's home and how fantastic this support was to parents that had early drop offs/late pick ups. The childminder told us that she followed best practice guidance 'Setting the Table' (NHS, Scotland) to plan snacks and lunches, this helps to support children's healthy eating habits. Information can be found here

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/177298/nhs-setting-the-table.pdf>

The childminder was registered as a food business with the local authority.

The childminder told us that the children had access to an allotment plot which the children had taken full involvement of clearing weeds and grew their own vegetables. One parent commented that they liked how their child had grown tomatoes, potatoes and spring onions. In particular how it taught their child to understand where foods came from as well as the importance of healthy eating.

Relevant storage, consent and administration of medication forms were in place in line with current medication guidance, should a child require medication to be administered during childminding hours. We advised that sections on ailment, signs and symptoms and the outcome be included, to ensure the reasons for administering medication was clear and the outcome recorded. This helps children receive treatment that is safe and effective.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a welcoming and comfortable home from home environment. Children were comfortable and familiar with members of the childminder's family, including the family dogs. The minded children had the opportunity to care for them whilst at the service. They walked the dogs twice daily and respected them when they needed their own space. This helped children develop an awareness of needs of others.

The childminder's home was a smoke free zone. The main areas used for play were the kitchen, living room and garden that children accessed freely. The garden was well resourced with a mud kitchen, bug area and tyres with seasonal flowers that children used for fairies/dinosaurs. We discussed the guidance documents 'My World Outdoors' and 'Loose Parts Play' which give examples of inexpensive play opportunities to extend activities and can be found on our HUB www.hub.careinspectorate.com. This will support the childminder to provide further opportunities for children to explore, investigate and be creative. Parents commented positively about the huge selection of activities for children to access as they please. This included the mud kitchen, home made toys and arts/crafts materials. This approach encouraged children to lead own learning, be confident and problem solve.

Children were made to feel at ease and relaxed in the childminder's care. The indoor environment provided children with an area to unwind. We saw children rest on the couch in the afternoon with their comforter. Children had sufficient space to play and be involved in a range of adult/child led experiences. On the day of the inspection the children played with the sand/glitter tray and made pretend snow. The childminder used this experience to engage in open ended conversation with the minded children. Children had opportunities to build using construction and used their imagination with the dress-up materials, bangles and beaded necklaces.

There were suitable risk assessments in place for the service. Documentation that we sampled showed that the childminder was conscientious about her responsibilities to look after children safely and to support them to learn about their own safety and awareness of risk. There were very good standards of cleanliness seen throughout the home, the childminder was aware of how to minimise the spread of infection. For example, the children and childminder both washed their hands before they ate and after petting the dogs. The childminder removed the dogs from the kitchen whilst the children ate.

It was evident from talking to the childminder, information within the returned care standard questionnaires and photographs sampled, that the children benefited from the use of the local and wider community. For example, regular walks to the Glen with the dogs. This encouraged children to manage own risk when taking part in activities like climbing trees and accessing the stream. In addition, to being aware of any other dangers they might encounter. Children attended the library where they took part in Book Bug sessions and toddler groups. This promoted children's language/literacy skills as well as their social development. We sampled personalised photo books linked to outings and experiences that children had been part of. For example the visit to the pumpkin field at Halloween. These books were a fantastic resource for children and the childminder to reflect

on. One parent told us that the childminder does a huge range of activities and trips, and how their child was excited about the trip to pumpkin field.

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

The childminder told us that she kept up to date with best practice and legislation through a variety of ways, this included being a member of Scottish Childminding Association <https://www.childminding.org> that she kept updated with the literature provided. The childminder sourced new publications by the Care Inspectorate and saved a hard copy for reference and families to borrow and read. This enabled her to share resources/advice on a range of topics and new initiatives.

The childminder was keen to develop her knowledge and skills through training and had attended regular training that kept her business current. This included Solihull training, paediatric first aid, nurture, outstanding leadership/management and Health and Social Care Standards.. The child minder shared her experiences with parents and used what she had learned to identify learning and care needs of children in her care. The childminder was working towards a SCQF Level 7 Social Services (Children and Young People) award. This has helped her to reflect on her service and improve outcomes for children and families that attend.

The childminder used questionnaires for both children and parents. This provided her with feedback that helped evaluate her service. Since the last inspection she has introduced parent evenings to accommodate working parents that are unable to drop off/collect children. This gave parents the opportunity to discuss any ideas/improvements that the childminder could consider. The childminder had a comments/complaints book that she shared with parents that used her service. One parent commented that they can easily approach the childminder with any concern or complaint. They were aware of the complaints procedure as the childminder has posters/literature well displayed within the setting.

The childminder had registered her service with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) This ensured information about children is shared professionally and lawfully. Information gathered from parents and children through daily discussion, text messages and questionnaires was used routinely to plan her service and make any changes for improvement. One parent told us that the childminder regularly sends them messages to confirm

what is required for their child whilst in her care. She asks also if there is anything specific he needs during his time spent with her. This helped parents to feel included in their child's care.

We found the childminder demonstrated a sensitive understanding of her responsibilities to keep children safe and had recently attended child protection training and updated her policies. Her policy was in keeping with national guidelines, such as including contact details for the relevant agencies responsible for safeguarding children.

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

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
14 Jan 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		6 - Excellent 5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good

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