

Miller, Thelma Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 28 February 2019

Service provided by:
Thelma Miller

Service provider number:
SP2003902927

Care service number:
CS2003005083

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 Miller provides her service from her home in the town of Ayr, South Ayrshire. She can care for up to six children at any one time under the age of sixteen years, of whom a maximum of six will be under twelve, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under twelve months.

Mrs Miller's philosophy is "largely influenced by Maria Montessori's teaching, in that a holistic approach to childcare actively encourages individual development".

At the time of this inspection, she was providing her service to a total of five children on a part-time, after school care basis.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an announced inspection, which took place between the hours of 15:30 and 17:30 on 28 February 2019. The inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate early years inspector.

During this inspection, we spoke to the childminder, the children present and one parent when they arrived to pick up their children. 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 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 (GIRFEC) approach and say that children should be: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included.

Views of people using the service

The children present were very happy in the childminder's care. They were very secure and confident in her home and chatted enthusiastically with us about the activities they enjoyed.

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

"Thelma's an exceptional childminder. She looks after my child very well and I trust her 110%. She teaches him so many different skills, takes him on outings to the local area, cooks, bakes, spends time chatting with him - things which I want him to be involved in. She always goes above and beyond. She trains guide dogs, which I think is amazing as my child is involved when the dogs at her house."

"She treats my child with respect and we can't thank her enough for what she does. She is very kind, patient but

also firm when she needs to be. I never need to worry when my child is at Thelma's as I know he is well taken care of."

Self assessment

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

The provider included detailed information on what they thought the service did well and gave examples of improvements in training she had attended and supporting children to move on from her service. The self-assessment clearly identified some key areas that the childminder believes can be improved and showed how the service intends to do this. The provider told us how the parents and children had taken part in the self-assessment process and how their feedback directed the development of the plans for improving the service.

What the service did well

The childminder provided a very welcoming and friendly setting for children and parents.

She cared for children on a part-time basis and invested a great deal of energy and enthusiasm into offering children a wide range of activities. She shared her love of the outdoors with the children and, as a result, they benefitted from many opportunities to engage in active play in the fresh air.

The childminder had been creative in developing ways of involving children and used the SHANARRI indicators very effectively to support children's wellbeing.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to access training and professional development opportunities when possible.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder worked on a part-time basis, caring for children after school and during the summer holidays.

There were six children present during the inspection; they welcomed us into the service and chatted freely throughout our visit. The children were keen to be part of the inspection and their contributions were a very valuable part of our visit.

Children spoke enthusiastically about the wide range of experiences and activities they took part in; in particular, outdoor activities. These were a key feature of the childminding provision and included hill walking, river walks, trips to the beach and country parks and day trips during the school holidays. It was clear from speaking with the children that they thoroughly enjoyed these adventures.

With regard to home based activities, children spoke about arts and crafts, games, learning to knit and sew. They had made clothes for the dolls and a child told us they were, "knitting gloves for my granny who has arthritis."

Some children shared an interest in woodwork with the childminder's husband and appreciated his help, "He tells me good places for things and gave me advice and some tools."

The childminder had maintained a care plan for each of the children, which were updated every six months in discussion with parents and children. We found that they contained a significant amount of information in relation to contact and medical details. Also, descriptions of them as individuals, their interests, personality and characteristics. Some children had identified a goal they would like to achieve; for example, flying a kite. One child told us, "I wanted to learn to tie my shoe laces and Thelma helped me."

It was evident from spending time with the minded children, that they felt very involved. The childminder actively encouraged them to share their ideas and suggestions and had created a range of meaningful ways for them to do so. Children spoke about how she listened to them and followed their interests. Through discussions, it appeared that it was as much their service as the childminder's.

Children were very familiar with the SHANARRI indicators; these come from the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach. They shared large mind maps where each of them had written a description of how they were supported by the indicators. Children were keen to show us what they had written and to revisit comments they had competed when they were younger. Children had written about being nurtured because the childminder's kindness made them feel happy and respected because they were trusted to help younger children.

In particular, children spoke about how they felt respected while in the childminder's care and described how she praised their achievements and always supported them. Children shared positive comments about each other and were encouraged to recognise their own strengths and skills and write them under the heading "I am Awesome". It was clear from speaking with the children and reading feedback from parents, that these activities had a positive impact on children's confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder took a positive approach to managing children's behaviour. Children were rewarded with "Positive Pebbles", which they all gathered in a jar. When the jar was full, they then shared in a treat.

We learned from the childminder and children that she had supported them through bereavement by organising an appropriate memorial activity which had helped speak together about their feelings.

The childminder followed suitable procedures when giving medicine to children. She was familiar with the document "Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Settings" and kept relevant records.

The childminder was fully aware of her role and responsibility in safeguarding children. She had accessed child protection training and had a written policy in place which she shared with families.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 – excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder's home provided a safe, clean and suitable setting for the children.

When they first arrived, children spent time in the kitchen sitting at the table chatting, enjoying snack and planning what they were going to do. Later, they moved into the lounge where they could relax and play games and choose toys. Children were familiar with the range of toys and activities available. They could access them independently or ask the childminder for specific resources.

The children told us that they often did arts and craft activities in the kitchen, cooked or baked.

A main focus of the childminder's service was outings and active play outdoors. Many of them of them were quite adventurous and we heard from children how they were involved in assessing risks. They described types of hazards they may encounter and what action they would take.

We saw that the childminder had asked them to describe how they felt safe while in her care. They had written the following:

"Because we always have to risk assess and stay safe."

"Because we have rules at the park to keep us safe."

"She always makes sure I have my seatbelt on."

The childminder was a registered guide dog trainer and was often caring for a dog in her home. She had clear guidance in place regarding how children interacted with the dog and we saw that all of the children were comfortable with him.

Children told us "when the dog has his coat on he is working and we don't touch him as we will distract him." Parents who wrote to us described the benefits of their child having this access. The childminder had registered as a food business which meant she was able to provide homemade snacks. She had also displayed information on allergens for children and parents.

The childminder followed the Scottish Childminding Association procedures when recording any accidents involving children and informing parents.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 – very good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

It was evident from speaking with the childminder and looking at paperwork, that children and parents were involved in the service in a range of meaningful ways. She had introduced creative ways to ensure every child's voice was heard.

During our visit, we found that children were confident in sharing their ideas and suggestions. They knew that the childminder would follow their wishes, where possible.

Parents who wrote to us described ways in which the childminder involved them both informally through speaking each day and more formally through texts and emails.

A parent wrote in a completed questionnaire, "Thelma keeps me up to date about any changes and always asks my opinion beforehand. She also involves my child by asking his opinion."

The childminder had reviewed and developed children's personal plans, ensuring they were updated at least every six months.

She had updated her first aid certificate and accessed child protection training.

The childminder had implemented the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and had used them effectively to ensure children's wellbeing needs were at the centre of her service.

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

Requirement 1

Mrs Miller must ensure that personal plans, setting out how service user's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met, are developed for the children in her care. Reviews of personal plans must take place at least once in every six month period.

This is in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulation 5 - Personal plans.

Timescale - within 3 months.

This requirement was made on 20 January 2015.

Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had developed children's personal plans further and updated them routinely with parents and children.

Met - within timescales

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

Mrs Miller should update her knowledge of current child protection best practice by attending relevant training.

National Care Standards 'Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16',
Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 20 January 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had accessed child protection training.

Recommendation 2

Mrs Miller should consider attending relevant training to update her knowledge and progress her own professional development. She should also access our on-line HUB which is a resource aimed at supporting improvement and keeping service providers updated on developments with regard to good practice.

National Care Standards 'Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16',
Standard 12 - Confidence in Staff.

This recommendation was made on 20 January 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder routinely accessed the Care Inspectorate HUB and had become familiar with best practice guidance documents.

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
20 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
28 Jan 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
23 Apr 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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