

Towns, Fiona Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 29 April 2019

Service provided by:
Towns, Fiona

Service provider number:
SP2003904213

Care service number:
CS2003007221

Introduction

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

Fiona Towns (referred to as 'the childminder' throughout this report) is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The parts of the premises to be used for childminding purposes are the sitting room, the playroom, the kitchen and the bathrooms on the upper and lower levels of the home only. The garden to the rear of the premises may also be used.

Overnight service may be provided for one child.

The childminder's home is situated in Tayport in Fife and is close to local amenities and public transport. The children have access to all areas of the house except for the bedrooms. The areas that the children access include the sitting room, bathrooms, kitchen, playroom and a fully enclosed garden which contains active play equipment.

The aims and objectives as stated by the childminder had included:

'As a registered childminder I will work hard to provide your child with the best possible care and service that I can.'

'Provide a warm, welcoming, stimulating, homely and safe environment for your child in order for them to feel happy and secure.'

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (also known as GIRFEC). This is 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 GIRFEC. They are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.

Parents and carers will be referred to as 'parents' throughout this report.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following a short notice announced inspection, which took place on 29 April 2019 between 11:00 and 13:30. The inspection was carried out by an early learning and childcare inspector. During this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources including:

We spoke to:

- the childminder
- the child present.

We observed and viewed:

- the childminder's practice and interactions with the child who was present
- the child at play.

We looked at:

- observations of the children at play
- a sample of children's personal plans
- a sample of other documentation relevant to this inspection such as accident and incident forms, medication records, policies and evidence that included photographs, questionnaires and the children's art work
- certificate of registration
- certificate of insurance
- the general environment.

Views of people using the service

We spoke to one child who was using the service; they appeared happy and were having fun. Comments from the child included:

'There's a ladybird.'

'I'm having a cheese sandwich.'

'Daddy is in the car.' (This was during a role play experience)

We issued three Care Standards Questionnaires for the service to distribute. Two completed questionnaires were returned of which both had additional comments. These comments included:

'Fiona always takes my feedback, thoughts and opinions and uses or follows through with them where appropriate.'

'Toys are accessed independently by the children. There is a wide range available. Fiona has a great garden.'

'Fiona provides questionnaires for parents and children. There are opportunities to comment on and shape policies. There are focussed discussions on activities and policies with parents and children.'

'Fiona caters for all age groups and needs and ensures that she maximises opportunities to use facilities within the local community.'

Self assessment

The childminder submitted a detailed and fully completed self-assessment to us before the inspection took place. We were satisfied with the information provided which included areas of strength and areas for further development. For example, one of the children suggested creating an achievement tree to celebrate their successes; this will be developed by the children.

What the service did well

The childminder had a very good knowledge and understanding of each of the children in her care and provided a nurturing and calm environment. Exceptional child led play was encouraged by the wide choice of high quality play activities on offer.

What the service could do better

We advised that the childminder could continue to develop the range of loose parts on offer to the children. It would be beneficial for the children to be involved in making decisions regarding the development of loose parts within their environment. This would result in the children being included and respected within the 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 children were happy, settled and content in a loving and nurturing environment and it was evident that they had formed positive relationships with the childminder. For example, a younger child approached the childminder to ask questions and to request play preferences and choices. This resulted in the children being confident and feeling safe and secure.

The childminder showed an outstanding responsive approach to delivering excellent outcomes for children. For instance, the interactive planning supported children to make choices, share ideas and work together to make decisions. This resulted in the children being included in all decision making and achieving through a high standard of excellent child led play experiences.

An exceptional and flexible approach to settling in new children to the service was in place and routines from home were followed wherever possible to ensure continuity for the children. This ensured that an excellent transition took place to allow the children to feel safe and nurtured in their new environment. Each child had a detailed personal plan and an in depth All About Me form which resulted in the childminder knowing the children and their families well. The plans were reviewed at least six monthly by parents to ensure that the childminder had the most current information to meet each child's individual needs and health and wellbeing.

Effective health and safety awareness which included the ongoing development of road safety as well as bi-monthly emergency evacuations were having a positive impact on the children. For example, these topics were included in the children's questionnaires under the heading of safety to allow the childminder to gain an understanding of their current knowledge and skills to determine appropriate next steps. This resulted in all the children having a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and assess risks. For example, when picking up a child from playgroup during our visit, he looked both ways for cars and said when it was safe to cross the road.

High quality and outstanding child led play was promoted and encouraged on a daily basis in a numeracy and literacy enhanced environment. The children had the opportunity to choose from a wide range of quality experiences for all ages which included art and craft, construction, story sharing, role play experiences and mark making. The children were in the process of planning to create a village using loose parts over the summer holidays. They had planned to take photographs of their local community including shops and cafes to support them to create their own village. Meaningful child led experiences, like these, enhanced skills and learning and supported children to achieve.

The older children were encouraged and supported to use cookery books to plan and prepare healthy snacks and meals independently which have included, for example, pasta carbonara. This has supported the children's co-working skills as well as developing their life skills. This has all resulted in the children gaining a much greater knowledge and understanding of nutrition, healthy eating and a desire to learn more about the contents of foods including refined sugars.

The childminder had a sound understanding of child protection and how to safeguard the children in her care and also a clear knowledge of who to contact should a concern arise. This would give parents confidence that this high quality service was supporting their child's health and welfare.

Resolving conflict independently was encouraged by the childminder which promoted positive decision making by the children. For example, the childminder would listen and observe and then decide whether her interactions were required. A restorative approach was used to support the children to develop an increased understanding of the feelings and emotions of each other which resulted in a shared respect between the children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 – excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The children had regular access to the outdoors as they would spend time at the local park or at the trim trail after school. There were also regular trips to the local library, Broughty Ferry beach, Cairnie Fruit Farm or to the local community garden. The children had the opportunity to plant, grow and learn about nature as well as work with local residents of all ages at the community garden which supported bringing generations together. The children also had regular opportunities to spend time in the large and fully enclosed garden. The garden included a wide range of physical play equipment on a grassed area as well as a sand and water tray on a decked area. This all supported and developed the children's active play, health and wellbeing and also allowed them to become more familiar with their local community and surrounding areas.

The environment was spacious, clean, tidy and calm with ample room for the children to move around safely and take part in a variety of activities. There was a table in the kitchen that was used at meal and snack times and was also used for taking part in art and craft or other activities. This resulted in the children having the opportunity to choose from a variety of high quality experiences as well as being able to choose where they would like to participate in the activity.

The playroom environment was set up with a sofa and soft furnishings which resulted in it being a nurturing environment for the children. There were well organised storage systems with a wide range of high quality resources including construction, small world, creative experiences, loose parts and a bookshelf with a variety of books for all ages for the children to choose from. The children's art work and photographs of their learning experiences were displayed around the house. This resulted in an outstanding homely environment which provided high quality experiences and celebrated children's successes and achievements.

There were a range of learning posters displayed on the walls which enhanced a numeracy and literacy rich environment. Children were encouraged to place their photographs and work alongside one of the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) indicators displayed in the kitchen area. This developed the children's knowledge and understanding of each of the SHANARRI indicators, for example, how to keep themselves safe when crossing the road.

As planned by the childminder, we were in agreement that the range of loose parts could be further enhanced. It would be beneficial for the children to be involved in this and make decisions regarding the enhancement of loose parts within their environment. This would further develop the excellent opportunities children currently had to be included and continue to show them respect.

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 had undertaken a number of training courses to support and enhance her service including first aid, food safety, GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child), child development and child protection. The childminder is due to update her first aid training to refresh her knowledge and skills to meet children's health and wellbeing needs and safeguard the children.

There were regular communications between the childminder and the parents which included informal and formal chats, text messages, questionnaires and regular newsletters. Parents had the opportunity to share ideas and suggestions and comment on the self-assessment document before it was submitted to the Care Inspectorate to support the continual improvement of the service. This resulted in excellent communications being maintained and parents being actively involved in the quality assurance monitoring of the service.

The childminder regularly reflected on her practice using 'Building the Ambition' and focused on how she could improve the care that she provided for each of the children within her care. It was evident that the childminder showed each child respect and was passionate about meeting their individual needs to support their wellbeing and development. There were plans in place for the children to reflect on and evaluate their playroom environment and they would create plans to develop and enhance the environment and resources within it. Children's views and ideas were listened to and used to evaluate and improve the service. This also ensured that the childminder continued to provide appropriate resources to allow the children to lead their own high quality play experiences and feel respected and included.

It was very evident that the childminder had a good knowledge of best practice documents and shared how these are used to impact and enhance the service that she provides for the children. For example, loose parts were used throughout play experiences which had promoted and developed the children's curiosity and creativity. The childminder had regularly read and located other books and guidance documents which included 'How to talk so kids will listen' and 'Misunderstood' to support her to provide an excellent service and meet each child's individual needs to a high standard. For example, quality strategies were used to support the individual needs of the children and in depth stage of development progress charts were being used to accurately assess and evaluate learning needs.

The childminder was very well organised and her knowledge and skills in providing high quality uninterrupted play experiences for all of the children was very evident throughout our visit. She was constantly seeking new information, ideas and methods to sustain a high quality provision to support children to achieve and have fun throughout their high quality play experiences.

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	
26 May 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent Not assessed 6 - Excellent
1 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed 6 - Excellent
25 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent Not assessed
26 May 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed
18 Feb 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent Not assessed

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