

Smith, Donna Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 July 2019

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2008968299

Care service number:
CS2008168964

Introduction

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found 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.

Donna Smith, referred to as the childminder in this report, is the provider of Donna Smith childminding. She is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of 8 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 6 will be under 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

Ian Smith, Lillias Baff and Emily Hogg are employed as assistants. Ian Smith was present at the time of the inspection and will be referred to as the assistant in this report. When working with an assistant, the childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum number of 10 children at any one time, under the age of 16, of whom a maximum number of 4 are not yet attending primary school and whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is run from the childminder's home in Bonnybridge, close to all amenities including local parks and schools. The house is well-maintained and organised to meet the needs of children. The children have a designated playroom with attractive displays of their work and photographs. In addition to this, they have access to most areas within the house including the exciting back garden.

The childminder aims to:

"Create a child-centred environment for the children in her care where their views are acknowledged, and they are included in decision making."

"Provide appropriate spaces for the children to play and learn with a range of possibilities to develop their present and future potential."

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.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 July 2019 between 10:45 and 13:45. The inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate early years inspector.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self assessment forms that we asked the childminder to complete and submit to us.

We sent three care standards questionnaires to the childminder to distribute to relatives and carers of people who used the service. We received one completed questionnaire following our visit. Parents were very happy with the service provided.

During this inspection, we gathered evidence from a number of sources, including the following:

We spoke with:

- the children present
- the childminder
- the childminding assistant.

We observed and viewed:

- the environment
- the childminder's practice and interactions with children
- the children playing.

We looked at the following evidence:

- children's information
- accident records
- administration of medicine records
- photographs
- policies including child protection, medication and infection control
- insurance certificates
- certificate of registration.

We took account of all of the above information when we evaluated this service and wrote this report.

Please note that all parents and carers will be referred to as parents throughout this report.

Views of people using the service

Five minded children and the childminder's son were present during our inspection. The very enthusiastic children were keen to share their photo books with us and tell us about their experiences. They told us:

"I like to play with ponies."

"We found sea glass and a big jellyfish at the beach."

"We made jelly fish of our own when we got back to Donna's house."

"I made a unicorn with the sea glass and my friend made a fish."

The parent who returned a questionnaire commented:

"I would recommend Donna's services 100% to anyone. She always puts the children first and they are her main priority. Donna is flexible and I honestly think she really enjoys her job. My children have gone to Donna's for many years now and are very happy."

Self assessment

The childminder submitted a detailed, fully completed and comprehensive 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, the childminder had plans for the assistants to be trained in child development to improve the very positive outcomes for children.

What the service did well

The highly passionate and dedicated childminder and her assistant had children's learning and wellbeing at the heart of their practice. Children were experiencing rich and exciting play and learning opportunities, indoors, outdoors and in the local community. Excellent learning experiences resulted in positive outcomes for all children.

What the service could do better

To enhance the excellent practice in the service, we suggested to the childminder that she could consider developing training records and quality monitoring sheets to record the impact made on the outcomes for children that we saw in practice.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children received excellent care and support from a very knowledgeable and understanding childminder. Interactions with children were loving and they were supported to develop independence and thinking skills. Planning for children's learning was flexible and tailored to meet individual learning needs. The breadth of highly motivating and relevant experiences were extended upon. For example, observing and discussing jellyfish when on a visit to the beach, which led to children creating their own jellyfish when back in the childminder's home. Children were being supported to be creative and to make informed choices to lead their own learning.

Children were learning about resilience and self-worth. We saw photographs showing that achievements and successes were recognised and celebrated. Similarly, clear boundaries and rules were set within the childminder's home, which children had helped to make. Children knew what was expected, for example: "No running in Donna's house." Routines were flexible to meet children's needs and wishes. For example, during the inspection, one child chose to eat his lunch later because he did not feel hungry. There was a strong focus on respecting and valuing children's rights and responsibilities. This supported them to feel confident and included.

Recording of children's learning was exceptional. The floor book told the learning story of the children through lovely photographs and children's comments, which were linked to GIRFEC wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) and the national Curriculum for Excellence outcomes. Similarly, children's folders contained highly effective observations of learning, which were again linked to the wellbeing indicators and Curriculum for Excellence outcomes. Next steps in learning and tracking sheets were used to ensure that children were making progress at an appropriate pace. In addition to the folders, children had photo books, which would be keepsakes for parents at the end of their time with the childminder. The children enthusiastically showed us their folders and photo books and were delighted to tell us about their experiences. Children were able to reflect on their high quality learning. This information was shared formally with parents every six months, ensuring parents were fully involved and there was a shared approach to supporting children's development.

Children's care needs were met effectively as the childminder gathered all relevant information and kept this under regular review. We reminded the childminder to ask parents to sign a review sheet to show that care plans had been reviewed every six months or when there were changes in situations. This would provide the evidence that they had been reviewed to ensure that children's care and welfare needs were consistently met. WhatsApp (a mobile phone communication application) and daily diary sheets, for younger children, contributed to daily information sharing and consistency in care.

The childminder demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection; she administered medication safely and recorded accidents and incidents as required. This helped to keep children safe and protected.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The indoor and outdoor environment was excellent. The childminder's home provided a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that was of a high standard of cleanliness. The childminder and her assistant effectively used the community and indoor and outdoor spaces to maximise high quality learning. In the home, there were well appointed areas for children to engage in play and for them to safely rest and sleep. Children were included, nurtured and respected, which supported their confidence and wellbeing.

The children benefitted from having a designated playroom which had easy access to the kitchen and out to a large, safe, enclosed garden, which they were able to access independently. The environment was very respectful and welcoming. There were attractive displays of children's artwork and photographs of what they had been doing and the children present during the inspection were very keen to show these to us. Children told us about their high quality experiences and the exciting places they had visited. Through revisiting and discussing such learning opportunities, children developed social and language skills.

Toys and equipment within the childminder's home and garden were outstanding. The childminder had researched the benefits of using natural open ended resources (loose parts). As a result of this research, she had introduced loose parts indoors and outdoors to support children to develop creativity and imagination skills and offer more engaging and challenging experiences.

During the inspection, the children were fully engaged in high quality purposeful play, mostly in the garden to enjoy the warm sunny day. The garden was steeped in rich opportunities to be active and imaginative and for children to explore the world around them. This included vegetable growing, water play using guttering and a well-resourced mud area and playhouse.

There was a focus on being out and about in the local and wider community. The childminder had joined a local childminding group, and together, they took the minded children to visit the older people in the local care home. Such visits promoted greater understanding and respect between generations, and they enjoyed singing and playing with musical instruments. Another trip with the group was to visit the woods with the ranger, where they toasted marshmallows in the fire pit. This gave children opportunities to learn to assess and manage risks and develop confidence during physical play.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The fun loving assistant, present during the inspection, interacted positively with the children who had clearly formed a bond with him. He was very knowledgeable about the children in their care and the routines. The assistants had clear roles and responsibilities and had attended some training events delivered by the local authority, such as effective observations of children's learning.

The childminder and assistant worked well together during the inspection and we saw that this supported routines and met children's care, learning and wellbeing needs very well. The childminder encouraged the assistant to carry out his role to the best of his ability and offered advice. We suggested to the childminder that she met with the assistants to reflect on their professional skills and identify areas for improvement.

We were satisfied that the childminder had followed safe recruitment procedures, which kept children safe and protected. The childminder planned for the newest assistant to attend first aid training. We suggested that assistants could also keep training records and record the impact that their new knowledge had on outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The childminder actively engaged in training and professional research to improve her understanding to continue to provide an outstanding, high quality service. She had recently completed a level three Scottish Vocational

Qualification, which had developed her knowledge and understanding. This led to positive changes, such as effective recording of children's learning to ensure progression.

The service was managed to an excellent standard. The childminder and assistants were highly motivated carers who were passionate about making a positive difference to children's lives. This strong commitment to learning and development helped them to stay abreast of developments and make meaningful improvements. For example, having read the best practice guidance *Animal Magic*, the childminder purchased two rabbits which the children clearly loved. Having pets to care for, and love, helped the children to be responsible and caring.

The childminder had an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities and delivered superior outcomes for children and an excellent start to their earliest learning experiences. Children were encouraged to be involved in making decisions to improve the service. Their opinions were valued. Similarly, questionnaires for children and parents were continually reviewed to reflect current practice, making them meaningful and useful in making improvements. The childminder had begun to audit her service to identify areas for improvement and we suggested that she could also use *Your Childminding Journey* and *Building the Ambition* framework documents as audit tools. We suggested that she could consider developing training records and quality monitoring sheets to record the impact made on the high quality outcomes for children that we saw in practice.

The childminder had recently gone into partnership with the local authority to provide funded places for children from the age of three years. She and the assistants had benefitted from training opportunities provided by Falkirk Council and we recognised that the childminder was well placed to share her knowledge with partner childminders.

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	
24 Jul 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
22 Oct 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
21 May 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
24 May 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
21 Oct 2009	Announced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.