

Lorraine Howe Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 31 July 2019

Service provided by:
Howe, Lorraine

Service provider number:
SP2013985177

Care service number:
CS2013319320

Introduction

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 30 October 2013.

Lorraine Howe, referred to as 'the childminder' in this report, is the provider of Lorraine Howe Childminding. She is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six children at any one time 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. The numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. Overnight care will not be provided. Minded children will not have access to the front garden.

The service is run from the childminder's home in the rural village of Buchlyvie, which is situated 14 miles west of Stirling. The house is close to local amenities, such as schools and parks. Minded children have access to the living room, kitchen, bathroom and enclosed back garden of the childminder's home.

The childminder aims to:

'Encourage children to make choices and decisions and where possible have an effective input of the running of the service.'

'Provide structured, flexible and free play experiences to help and support children's development, learning and achieving their goals, independence, self-esteem and respect for themselves and everyone around them.'

We also 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 a short announced inspection, which took place between 13:30 and 16:00 31 July 2019. 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 three completed questionnaires 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.

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
- 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

Two minded children, aged two years, were present during our inspection. They were settled and relaxed. The childminder was caring and respectful in her interactions with them and responded to their wishes and requests. The children were initially sleeping when we arrived and then, when awake, they were playing with the building blocks and toy animals. They told us:

"Dinosaurs". (looking at a book about dinosaurs.)

"Fish." When showing us the tropical fish tank.

Parent's comments on the completed questionnaires told us:

"Lorraine is fantastic, the children love her, and she is so caring and kind."

"Safety and their happiness are always her priority."

"We feel they are nurtured and well looked after."

"She is obviously working towards developing them through numeracy, reading books and shapes and colours, but they also have fun."

"We have regular conversations about how my daughter is getting on via Facebook messenger and face to face."

"Lorraine regularly takes my daughter out for walks and to the park."

Self assessment

We received a fully completed self-assessment from the childminder. We advised her that this form could be used to include identified areas for development and to evidence the impact of improvements made. For example, introducing natural 'loose parts' resources into the service.

What the service did well

The childminder was highly dedicated to continuing her training and research to improve her very good service. Children were experiencing rich and exciting play and learning opportunities, indoors, outdoors and in the local community.

What the service could do better

To enhance the very good 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	5 - Very Good
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 loving and caring childminder had developed positive relationships with children and parents. During our visit we saw settled and confident children, who clearly felt comfortable in the childminder's care. This resulted in mutual trust and respect, and parents felt valued and confident to leave their children in her care.

All children had an informative personal plan, which was reviewed with parents every six months. This confirmed that children's care and welfare needs were being consistently met. Similarly, the childminder demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection and kept record of concern sheets if appropriate. She administered medication safely and recorded accidents and incidents as required. We suggested that she should also record when parents gave the last dose of medicine at home on medication forms. Very good systems such as these, helped to keep children safe, healthy and protected.

Recording of children's learning was very good. Photographs and text in the floor book told the story about the breadth of learning experiences provided. Children regularly contributed to the floor book by adding stickers and photographs and writing comments. The childminder linked the experiences to the national wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included). Similarly, all children had their own folder, which contained effective observations, photographs of their learning and examples of their artwork.

Observations of learning were again linked to the wellbeing indicators. We suggested to the childminder that she used the language of the wellbeing indicators through her observations, as appropriate, rather than listing them. This would support children and parents to become familiar with how the indicators link to learning. Moving forward, we suggested to the childminder that she could begin to link the national curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence (CFE), outcomes to observations of children's learning.

Next steps in learning and tracking sheets were used to ensure that children were making progress at an appropriate pace. Similarly, the childminder formally shared a summary of children's learning every six months with parents. This kept parents fully involved and ensured a shared approach to supporting children's learning.

We suggested to the childminder to consider developing a safe sleep policy to inform parents of current best practice. We advised her that current research and advice recommended that children do not sleep in pushchairs. This is because long periods of sleeping in pushchairs and car seats could restrict children from being able to naturally move position during sleep. We signposted her to the following guidance <https://safesleepscotland.org/reduce-the-risks-dont-let-me-sleep-in-my-chair-swing-or-nest/>.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder's home was clean, bright and attractive and provided a very good environment to meet children's care and learning needs. The living room offered good space for children to play and relax. The children present on the day of inspection were using this space to play with the toy animals. Children had access to the fully enclosed back garden. There were rabbits and fish in the childminders home. On the day of inspection, the children were keen to show us the fish in their tank, which was situated in the living room. Children took pleasure in having the pets and learning about how to care for them.

The service was well resourced with a variety of age appropriate toys, games and books. These were accessible so that children could easily choose what they wanted. The childminder had researched the benefits of natural 'loose parts' resources and had started to introduce these to her service. For example, we saw, shells, corks and stones. These types of resources increase creativity and imagination and offer more engaging and challenging experiences for children.

The childminder planned to develop the use of 'loose parts' further and we signposted the following good practice guidance to support her: My World Outdoors and Our Creative Journey - available at www.hub.careinspectorate and Loose Parts Play - available at www.inspiringscotland.org.uk.

To ensure the continued safety of the children, daily risk assessments were carried out on all areas used for childminding. We reminded the childminder to keep beauty products out of reach of children in the toilet area. This would ensure that children were protected from harm. Very good use was made of the local and wider community to give children a wealth of experiences. Photographs showed us regular visits to the toddler group, soft play and the park. Similarly, regular visits were made to the library and post office vans. Children were active participants in their local community and were developing social and physical skills.

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

The childminder managed the service to a very good standard. She was committed to continuous improvement and was very enthusiastic to receive advice to enhance her service to provide quality outcomes for children. She had taken on board advice given at her previous inspection, such as, to continue to identify training or research that will promote her continued professional development. Through discussion and looking at her training record and records of children's learning and progression, it was clear that her commitment to training had positively impacted on the very good service provided.

The childminder was a qualified Early Years Educator who had experience working on a supply basis in nurseries throughout Stirling Council area. Similarly, the childminder was in partnership with Stirling Council to provide funded places to children aged three years and above. Findings from this inspection informed us that she was well placed to do this. This gave parents more choice about which childcare service they wished to choose for their child. She told us that training opportunities provided by the local authority had helped her to develop her practice and improve quality outcomes for children. In addition to this, she was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and had developed experience and knowledge of current childcare practice over time through access to SCMA training opportunities and publications. She told us that she found SCMA magazines very informative and helped to keep her up to date with changes in legislation. We suggested to the childminder that she could record the impact that her new knowledge made on outcomes for children.

The open and welcoming ethos offered children and parents the opportunity to express their views and give feedback. The childminder kept her very good service under review by gathering formal feedback, through parent and children questionnaires to evaluate and respond to their wishes. We suggested to the childminder that she might want to consider changing the format of the questionnaires to open ended questions that may provide more detailed and focussed views. This would give parents the opportunity to think about specific areas for improvement.

We saw evidence, in the floor book, of children being included in making decisions to improve the service. Such systems supported the childminder to improve the service and helped children and parents to feel included by being regularly involved in decision-making. We suggested that the childminder could record the impact made by improvements to evidence the positive outcomes for children. Similarly, we reminded her about the Health and Social Care Standards and Building the Ambition framework documents, which she could use to help her review and develop her service further.

The childminder had recently got married and we reminded about her responsibility to formally notify the Care Inspectorate that she had changed her name. We signposted the childminder to the 'records childminding services must keep and guidance on notification reporting' available at www.hub.careinspectorate.

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

Recommendation 1

The childminder should identify training or areas that will support her professional development and keep her knowledge and skills up to date. She should be able to demonstrate how she uses this within her service.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16.
Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing and Standard 14 - Well-managed Service.

This recommendation was made on 14 July 2015.

Action taken on previous recommendation

This recommendation was met.

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
4 Jun 2015	2	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 4 - Good

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