Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 17 January 2020

Service provided by: Forrest, Irene
Service provider number: SP2003900258

Care service number: CS2003001503
Introduction

The childminding service is provided in a large detached house in the central area of Aberdeen city. There is a small drive at the front and a fully enclosed garden at the rear of the house. The childminder provides a drop off and pick up service from a local school nearby.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of seven 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. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder’s family. The childminder does not use the first floor of her house for childminding purposes.

Included within the childminding aims and objectives were:

- “To create a family atmosphere with the children being treated like my own so they will experience going to the supermarket, hairdresser, coffee shop, along with trips to the community centre, school, local parks and amenities”.

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. Here are eight well-being 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.

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection, which took place on Friday 17 January 2020, between 10:30 and 13:00. One Care Inspectorate inspector carried out the inspection. When we arrived, the childminder was caring for one minded child, then we left to collect another child from nursery at a nearby school. We left early to allow the child to play in the school playground since it was a sunny day and they had asked to play there. We then returned to the house and completed the inspection.

During this inspection, we spoke to the childminder and the two minded children. We looked at various documents including policies and procedures, personal plans and children’s records. We observed the minded children as they played and also having lunch.

At the end of the inspection we gave feedback to the childminder.
Views of people using the service

We sent four Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) to the childminder to give to parents before the inspection and received one completed before the inspection. From looking at this we noted the parent was happy with the service the childminder provided. We also emailed the parent and received a positive reply.

Included in the written comments were:

- “I am happy with the service Irene provides. While .....I prefer that he is in a home environment after school rather than a busy after school club”.

We did not meet any parents during our inspection.

We observed the minded children during the inspection and saw they were relaxed, happy and: ‘at home’ in her care. The children asked to play in the school playground before going back to her house and then enjoyed a walk back. They washed their hands and then enjoyed their lunch at the table. Afterwards they chose activities and settled happily with these. When asked if they liked coming to play at Irene’s they told us they did. When asked if they had fun they told us they did and they liked playing with the toys, especially the large blocks.

Self assessment

This was completed and submitted before the inspection date. We noted this gave a fair description of the service provided.

What the service did well

Children were cared for by an experienced, warm and friendly childminder who put the needs of the children in her care first. Children had access to a good range of activities suitable for their age both indoors and outside in the large garden. The childminder liked to walk to and from the local school which ensured children had access to fresh air and exercise daily.

We noted her environment was safe and secure where the children could relax and play being carefully supervised. The childminder’s home was spacious and comfortable, with a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Children were treated with respect and listened to. It was nice to see them playing together with the large blocks, having fun and enjoying their time with the childminder.
What the service could do better

We discussed some areas the childminder could review and further develop during the inspection.

We agreed she would look at:

- The children’s personal plans: each child should have a personal plan which must contain all the relevant information and outline how she would meet their care and support needs. Personal plans must be reviewed every six months with parents or sooner should needs change.

- Training and the need to ensure her core training is regularly refreshed and up-to-date. This should include: first aid, child protection awareness and food hygiene.

- The need to keep up-to-date with current best practice and childcare guidelines which would enable her to continue to provide a good standard of care and support for the children in her care.

- We discussed working in partnership with the local authority and providing funded care for preschool children, which was an area she was looking at.

- We discussed the need to further develop the administration and business side of her service, the importance of robust record-keeping as well as planning and how she evaluates her practice.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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<tr>
<th>Quality of care and support</th>
<th>4 - Good</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of environment</td>
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<td>Quality of staffing</td>
<td>not assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of management and leadership</td>
<td>3 - Adequate</td>
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Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were cared for by a warm and nurturing childminder who was experienced in the caring role. She had a good knowledge of each child’s needs and could describe how she was providing support for the children in order to meet their individual needs. Though the childminder recorded children’s health and care needs in a personal plan we found there was not one for each child. We discussed the need to have a personal plan for each child, and reminded the childminder that plans must be reviewed every six months with parents, or sooner should the child’s needs change.
We looked at the childminder’s communication and noted various methods were used including email, texts and daily conversations. The childminder told us she worked together with the parents to make sure she provided the care their child needed. We noted the parent who we contacted was happy with the care and support provided.

Children were assured of being kept safe within the service. The childminder had knowledge about child protection, and demonstrated her understanding of keeping children safe. She used the Scottish Childminding Associations format (SCMA) to record accident and incidents though we noted this had not been needed for some time. We reminded the childminder to send notifications to the Care Inspectorate regarding any serious incidents.

Infection control practice was good with the childminder aware of current best practice guidelines as well as the importance of ensuring children washed their hands appropriately. The childminder had a copy of the current medication guidance and used the SCMA regime for recording medication administered when needed.

Children were supported to lead healthy lifestyles by having regular access to fresh air and exercise, for example: daily walking to and from school for pick up and drop offs. Children also visited parks and areas locally as well as enjoying time in the garden. We accompanied the childminder when she was collecting a child from nursery, and observed children being reminded of road safety when crossing roads and to take care on the apparatus. She discussed the importance of outdoor play and energetic play as being necessary for healthy development.

Healthy eating was promoted with the childminder encouraging parents to include healthy options in their lunch boxes. Water was available daily with the childminder being aware of the need to keep children hydrated.

We looked at behaviour management and noted her experience shone through. She managed minor disagreements calmly with simple reminders and explanations about sharing, waiting their turn and being nice with their friends. We found the childminder was a very positive role model for young children to follow.

Overall we saw happy children who were relaxed and content and could choose from a wide range of activities suitable for their age and stage of development. The childminder planned her day around what the children asked to do, and told us she liked them to choose so as she knew they were playing with their favourite activities.

We saw photographs of children experiences various other play opportunities and when asked if they had enough to play with at Irene’s the children told us they did. We noted both children were enjoying their time and very much ‘at home’ within the childminder’s setting.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good
Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found a warm and caring atmosphere within the childminder’s home. Children were cared for on the ground floor of her home, which was spacious, warm and adapted for play. The childminder had made good use of the space she had for play, mainly within the back sitting room area and the garden.

Children had access to the kitchen which had a good level of safety. The home was checked for safety before children arrived, ensuring all areas were safe for them to play. Safety equipment was well maintained. We noted the family dogs were kept apart from the children, though they did have supervised access to the pets, which they liked.

We saw a good standard of cleanliness, which showed us the childminder was aware of her role in maintaining a safe, suitable environment for the children. Good infection control practices were in place with children washing hands before eating and after the toilet. We did not observe a nappy change but the childminder demonstrated she was aware of the need to maintain children’s privacy and dignity and use appropriate equipment when/if caring for this age group. By looking at the Care Standards Questionnaire we found parents very happy with the childminder’s environment particularly liking that it provided a ‘home from home’ for the children.

We saw a good selection of toys and activities available which were in a very good clean condition and noted a wider choice stored within the home which children could ask for at any time. The childminder spoke of the need to keep toys clean and well maintained.

During the inspection children chose toys and played happily, being carefully supervised by the childminder. Outdoor toys and activities were viewed though children did not play in the garden during our visit.

Overall a warm, caring environment where children were happy, safe and very ‘busy’ with their play.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.
Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Overall the service was managed adequately and met the needs of the children, however, the childminder did tell us that the administration side of her service was the area she knew needed further developing. We saw records continued to be safely stored within the home with confidentiality always maintained. We saw appropriate insurance was in place for her service as well as the home and car. We noted the annual return was submitted as well as the self-assessment.

Since the previous inspection we noted the childminder had not attended any training. She was aware the core training needed to be refreshed and had booked courses for January 2020. This was refresher in first aid, child protection and food hygiene. We agreed she would benefit from attending this training in order to ensure she was up-to-date with current best practice and, therefore, aware of how best to support the children in her care.

We looked at the childminding records, for example: personal plans and agreed work was needed on these (see also Quality theme 1: care and support). We discussed evaluation of her service and noted this was mainly informal though parental questionnaires had been given to parents at times. We discussed how personal plan reviews was another way she could review her service with parents when she started the six-monthly reviews of these.

We looked at how the childminder kept up-to-date with childcare initiatives and best practice in general. The childminder had a copy of the health and social care standards but was not aware of the new good practice documents specifically for childminders ‘Your Childminding Journey’ which would help her formally evaluate the service. The childminder could also view the Care Inspectorate’s online information hub which contains all of the above documents and other information which would help childminder to manage and improve her service.


We suggested using this for self-evaluation as well as the questions in ‘Building the Ambition’ the national practice guidance on early learning and childcare. We shared information on the latest Care Inspectorate’s publications relevant to children services: ‘My World Outdoors’ and ‘Our Creative Journey. the childminder received information updates from SCMA, which she enjoyed reading.

We discussed the need to ensure she was aware of best practice guidance especially if she was considering working in partnership with the local authority and providing funded places for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate
Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

Previous recommendations

**Recommendation 1**

To continue with plans to introduce a personal plan for each child. Each plan must be reviewed every six months or sooner should the need arise. The plan will detail the care and support she will give to each child to ensure their care needs are met.


This recommendation was made on 15 December 2015.

**Action taken on previous recommendation**

The childminder had developed personal plans for some children but not all. We discussed the need for each child to have a personal plan which clearly outlined their health and wellbeing needs and how this would be supported within her service.

We agreed she would continue further developing the personal plan regime.

**Recommendation 2**

To update the administration of medication policy and procedures in line with current guidelines.


This recommendation was made on 15 December 2015.
Action taken on previous recommendation

We noted the childminder had appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding medicine and a format for administering medication when needed.

This had been met.

**Recommendation 3**

To stop providing anti-bacterial hand wash for the children. This should be replaced with ordinary liquid soap.

Reference: National care standards, early education and childcare up to the age of 16 years.
Standard 3: health and wellbeing.

This recommendation was made on 15 December 2015.

**Action taken on previous recommendation**

This had been met following the previous inspection.

**Recommendation 4**

To update all childminding records, policies and procedures to reflect details of the regulatory body: the Care Inspectorate.

Reference: National care standards, early education and childcare up to the age of 16 years.
Standard 14: well-managed service.

This recommendation was made on 15 December 2015.

**Action taken on previous recommendation**

This had been completed following the previous inspection report.

**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

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