

Grant, Ann Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 13 February 2020

Service provided by:
Grant, Ann

Service provider number:
SP2003910465

Care service number:
CS2003016391

Introduction

This service has been registered since April 2002.

Mrs Grant, referred to as 'the childminder' in this report, is registered to provide a care 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 no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family. Mr Grant (spouse) is employed by Mrs Grant and is permitted to assist her when required. However, Mr Grant works away from home and is rarely used as an assistant.

The service is provided from the childminder's home in a residential area of St Ninians in the town of Stirling. The children have access to a large kitchen, living room, upstairs toilet and conservatory within the home. The enclosed garden to the rear of the property offers a safe space for active and healthy play.

The aims of the service include:

- To create a warm and friendly environment
- To provide challenging and stimulating activities
- To have good standards of hygiene and safety
- To work with parents to meet the needs of children and parents
- To have good routines according to children's age and stage of development
- To provide a service which is well-managed and complies with standards
- To undertake any training courses when required or needed.

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 wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. This was carried out by one Inspector. The inspection took place on 10 February 2020 and 13 February 2020. We gave feedback to the childminder and her assistant on 13 February 2020.

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.

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

We spoke with:

- the children
- the childminder
- the assistant.

We observed and viewed:

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

We looked at the following evidence:

- evidence from the most recent self assessment
- children's records
- accident and incident records
- written policies and procedures
- information from parents
- training records
- questionnaires
- registration certificate
- public liability insurance certificate.

We took account of all the above information when we evaluated this service and wrote this report. Please note that parents and carers will be referred to as 'parents' throughout this report.

Views of people using the service

We sent out three Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) for parents prior to our inspection. We received two completed questionnaire from parents before the inspection. They were all happy with the service they received.

Comments from parents included:

"Ann is great my child has a very positive relationships with Ann and she supports him to develop and grow".

"If I need to work a little bit longer than usual Ann is very flexible and would go out of her way to help us, it is a home from home for my child".

Children during the inspection visit told us:

"I went to London". (recent trip with parents)

"King's Park is my favourite". (when asked about where he likes to go with Ann)

"I get lunch, wraps and sandwiches".

"I love Choo Choos". (trains)

Self assessment

We received a fully completed self assessment from the childminder. We were satisfied with the way this was completed and with the relevant information included.

The self assessment gave some examples of service strengths for each theme. This could be further developed to

show any areas identified for service improvements. More consideration could be given to the wellbeing indicators and the new Health and Social Care Standards to support outcomes for children.

What the service did well

Children were happy and confident in the care of the childminder. She nurtured their needs and knew them well as individuals. The service offered a variety of challenging and exciting learning opportunities. Children were included in the family home and were encouraged to care of the family dogs. Involving the children in this way contributed to their feelings of being safe, included and responsible.

What the service could do better

The childminder could use personal plans more effectively to plan, record and monitor outcomes for children. Moving forward she should ensure that she gains a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators and how they are applied in practice. By doing this she will be able to evaluate her practice more easily and recognise areas for improvement more readily.

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	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were being cared for by a nurturing and experienced childminder who knew each child as an individual. The atmosphere in the home was calm and welcoming. During our visit one child played purposefully with trains and a train track and the childminder told us he had a keen interest in trains. He accepted us as visitors to the home and was keen to show us the trains and share his knowledge about them. We noted that the childminder's thoughtful timely interactions and knowledge of the child promoted play. She told us that they had visited the local train station and that the child enjoyed this experience. Following children's interests ensured that the experiences on offer were meaningful and children were encouraged to extend their learning and reach their full potential.

The childminder worked in partnership with parents and other professionals. For instance, she supported transition arrangements from home to nursery for one child. She adopted approaches used by the nursery for separation and understanding of time spent away from loved ones. The childminder offered a flexible and supportive service that supported the needs of the whole family. Times and days were accommodated to suit the changing needs of the families. This meant that the childminder valued partnership working and had good systems in place to encourage trusting and respectful relationships.

Very good cleanliness and well organised and uncluttered play spaces both indoors and outdoors allowed

children to play without interruptions and resulted in a safe and pleasant environment. Infection control procedures were effective and ensured children remained healthy. For instance, the childminder was mindful of separating toys used by the family dogs and toys used by the children. We were confident that the childminder had worked hard to provide a safe environment which promoted health and wellbeing.

The childminder's skilled questioning techniques encouraged children to talk about every day life experiences. She took time to engage children in meaningful conversations to support emotional wellbeing and knowledge and understanding of the world around them. It was evident that the childminder had a relaxed approach and used humour and familiar subjects to build close bonds. Working in this way helped children to feel important and supported their feelings of being included and respected.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder made good use of her local community to engage children in play and social interactions. They were encouraged to be respectful, responsible and included in their community through these experiences. Trips to the local community centre, library, parks, ice rink and train station were regularly planned with the children. One child during our visit told us, "Kings Park, that's my favourite, I love the choo choo (train)". Parents commented positively on the play activities on offer saying, "Ann supports my child to develop and grow". Children benefited from being out and about in the local community this would give them a sense of belonging and provided them with rich learning experiences.

There were a range of stage appropriate play opportunities on offer in a designated play area. The well-resourced and organised storage units encouraged creative and social play opportunities. Children could independently access books, small world figures, construction materials, home role play items and puzzles. Awareness of children's favourite characters, such as 'Zog the dragon' enhanced early literacy and a love of stories. This attention to detail would make families confident and reassure them that the service is managed by an organised and reflective person.

Sufficient knowledge and understanding about child protection and reporting concerns was evident. This knowledge and the procedures she had in place would help to protect children. The general practice of managing medications and recording accidents and incidents were managed well and would reassure parents that the childminder was well placed to care for children and keep them safe.

The outside play area had been recently developed with a new drainage system and block paving. The childminder told us she had a storage shed with a range of large physical toys that she rotated as required by the children. We suggested more open-ended loose part play to enhance creative thinking, problem solving skills

and new learning. Loose parts are every day materials (water, sand, gravel, logs) that children can move, manipulate, control and experiment with during play. This would offer them endless opportunities to explore possibilities of materials and learn by trial and error. The childminder was keen to develop this within her service to further extend play experiences for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

At the time of the inspection the named assistant the childminder's husband was present. We could see children had formed close bonds with him and that he was aware of children's likes and dislikes. Children were relaxed in his company and good communication and humour was evident in his engagements with the children on the day of our inspection visit. One child had fun with the assistant about how many sweets he had eaten, laughing and saying, "I ate 100". The childminder and her husband worked well together as a team to meet each child's needs and include them as important people in their home.

The assistant and children often walked the family dogs together and on dark mornings children enjoyed wearing head torches to lead the way. It was clear that the children were very much involved in caring for the animals and they told us, "Only two scoops" when asked what the dogs had for dinner. The service was aware of the Care Inspectorate's best practice guidance "Animal magic" which highlights the ways many people get the most out of life by being around or caring for animals and pets.

The childminder took relevant action to ensure the he remained knowledgeable and well-informed about the children's individual care needs and the policies and procedures in place. This had resulted in the assistant having a good knowledge of how to care and support each child appropriately and keep them safe.

A Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check had been carried out for the assistant and first aid training was in place. This ensured the safety checks and knowledge of how to keep children safe were adhered to. We discussed with the childminder her responsibility as an employer for ensuring that training was on going for any assistants working within the service.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 – very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We could see the childminder had positive relationships with children and parents. Families felt included in the service through daily conversations and the home from home ethos of the service. Parents told us they would feel comfortable approaching the childminder with any concerns.

We were confident that information was shared with parents through social media systems about children's daily play opportunities and care needs. However, the childminder could give some thought as to how she can develop the personal story of play and learning opportunities and experiences for children and parents. Involving children in this process of developing a personal journal should make their learning more visible and give them ownership of their learning stories. Children would benefit from revisiting and discussing play and learning projects over time, helping them to deepen their understanding and knowledge of the world around them.

Moving forward we suggested the childminder developed her knowledge of best practice guidance such as, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children. This will ensure she is mindful of the eight wellbeing indicators: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. This would ensure she continues to follow best practice when thinking about future policy making, record keeping and interactions with children.

The childminder had a range of policies in place which were shared with parents when they began to use the service; however, we asked that the childminder updated the Care Inspectorate address. This would ensure the complaints policy had all the relevant information if a parent wanted to make a complaint against the service.

The childminder accessed relevant up-to-date training through her foster care commitments. Such as, training on children's adverse experiences in younger life. This training gives an insight into how experiences in younger life could compromise wellbeing and relationships in later life. The childminder talked about the impact this new knowledge and understanding had on her daily practice. For example allowing children more time in certain situations and the use of effective questioning during times children may be distressed. This told us she was motivated to ensure children received high quality care and support to help them achieve and develop life skills.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – 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

We recommend that children's personal plans are developed and reviewed at least once in every six months or when there is a significant change in children's circumstances. Consideration could be given to sharing children's progress as well as linking the plans to the wellbeing indicators. This will ensure that children's holistic wellbeing needs are met effectively. In addition, it will ensure each family's needs, wishes and choices are gathered systematically and communicated clearly and concisely.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

This recommendation was made on 23 October 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children's personal plans detailed children's care needs and preferences and were shared with parents every six months. We could see information from care plans regarding children's likes and dislikes were being used in practice to provide effective care and support.

This recommendation is now met.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the childminder review and evaluate the policies and procedures for her service to be in line with best practice guidance and communicate effectively the practices which are used in the service to care for children. Specific attention should be given to:

- administering medication
- attendance records
- consultation with parents and families.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This recommendation was made on 23 October 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Medication policies and procedures were in place and we could see relevant information was shared with parents. Policies and procedures demonstrated the practice within the service and some policies had been updated to reflect best practice guidance.

This recommendation is now met.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the childminder develop her awareness of best practice in early learning and childcare, proactively engaging with relevant documents to recognise her strengths and areas for improvement. Showing how this research has impacted on improving the service will allow her to develop as a professional and make changes to meet the needs of the children in her care. This may also lead to changes to policies and procedures in the service which are shared with families.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

This recommendation was made on 23 October 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had good knowledge of current best practice and had engaged in a variety of targeted training sessions through her work as a foster carer. This had impacted on her thinking and positive changes within the service were made as a result.

This recommendation is now 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	
19 Sep 2018	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 3 - Adequate
19 May 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good
23 Apr 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
14 May 2009		Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 5 - Very good Not assessed

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