

Little Angels Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 24 February 2020

Service provided by:
Dunnachie, Rhona

Service provider number:
SP2015986837

Care service number:
CS2015336582

Introduction

This childminding service, known as Little Angels, is provided from the childminder's semi-detached home in a residential area of Cumnock in East Ayrshire. Children are cared for on the ground floor of the home and have access to a bathroom on the first floor. Children have access to a large, secure outdoor play area to the rear of the property. The childminder has two friendly cocker spaniel dogs, which are carefully supervised around children. Little Angels is registered to care for a maximum of eight 8 children whilst working with an assistant, 5 of whom have not reached school age and 2 who can be under 12 months old at any one time. These numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

The childminder stated, in summary, that she aimed to: provide any child within her care a safe and secure environment to develop and grow within, recognise children's individuality and support children to make choices and to reach their full potential.

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

This service was registered by the Care Inspectorate on 1 June 2015. It is registered to provide care for six children up to the age of 16 years, of whom a maximum of three are not yet attending school, and of whom no more than one is under 12 months of age. If the childminder's assistant is present the childminder may care for a maximum of eight children, of whom no more than two are not under 12 months of age and of whom no more than five are not yet attending school.

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 24 February 2020. The inspection was carried out by an inspector for the Care Inspectorate and feedback was given to the childminder on the day of the inspection.

We observed how the childminder and her assistant interacted with and cared for the four minded children present. We spoke with the children about their experiences whilst in the childminder's care, and reviewed relevant documentation.

This included:

- aims and objectives
- certificate of registration
- range of policies and procedures
- personal plans and individual records
- health and safety risk assessments and hygiene infection controls and safe sleeping procedures
- public liability insurance certificate

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 Getting it right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Views of people using the service

Children told us that they were very happy attending the service. They felt that there was lots of choice for them and that the childminder and her assistant were caring, kind and funny.

Parents who returned questionnaires to us were very happy with every aspect of the service. They spoke particularly highly about the extra training and resources that the childminder accessed to meet their children's individual needs and interests. Parents also spoke highly about their involvement in making decisions about the service, and the quality of food and resources.

Comments included:

"I strongly recommend Little Angels to any one looking for a second family for you and your children. There is an open environment that encourages each individual child to grow, learn and play.

My daughter is always telling me that Rhona is the best cook and prefers to have breakfast with her. Rhona regularly introduces new foods and feeds back to me any likes and dislikes. Rhona always provides a range of healthy snacks and meals. Fruit is always offered along with health and nutritious meals.

Rhona has renovated her back garden in to a play area for the children which includes a play house, a ground trampoline, a sand pit and a large castle. She has an extensive range of toys, arts and craft materials and toys and equipment to support children's learning. Children regularly visit places such as Dumfries House. Children attend Book Bug sessions and toddler groups.

I am personally extremely happy with the childminding service. I am grateful to have found such a caring childminder and the care she provides is amazing. No task is too big for any child she looks after. She is well loved by the kids she looks after and mums alike."

Self assessment

We received a fully completed self assessment from the childminder prior to this inspection.

The childminder clearly identified what she thought the service did well and gave examples of improvements in all areas of provision. The self assessment also identified areas for on-going development. Parents and children were actively involved in the self assessment process.

What the service did well

The childminder and assistant demonstrated sound knowledge of the children and families they cared for. They had developed very strong relationships with children and their families and routinely involved them in all aspects of the service. They were excellent in meeting the care and support needs of each child and in promoting active outdoor play experiences.

The childminder and assistant confirmed their commitment to improving the quality of service provision to promote positive outcomes for children and their families. Regular training and reference to current best practice underpinned a culture of continuous improvement.

What the service could do better

The childminder discussed plans for the continued development of resources to meet children's developing interests. She highlighted through discussion how she would continue to refer to the Hub section of the Care Inspectorate website, and other media, to further inform her practice and outcomes for children and families.

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	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The childminder and her assistant provided excellent care and support.

The childminder provided a flexible service to meet the needs of working parents. She had effectively planned each day to meet children's individual needs and routines. This included organising school and nursery drop off and pick-ups to take account of the care and emotional needs of babies and younger children.

The childminder was very well organised, skilled and knowledgeable. She had developed effective systems to access and record relevant information about children's needs. This information was used effectively to inform each child's personal care and support plan, in line with the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) health and wellbeing indicators. Clear information was provided for parents about the well-being indicators, and how these were promoted within the service. The format of children's personal plans had recently been amended to provide clearer information for parents about how conclusions about children's development and next steps were reached. The childminder had consulted with parents about this development, and responses were very positive. The childminder maintained accurate records that systematically tracked each child's needs, progress and developmental achievements. This helped children to achieve their potential.

The childminder had appropriate measures for managing medication safely. We asked the childminder to further develop written information in one instance. Effective arrangements were in place for limiting the risk of the spread of infection. These approaches helped ensure children's safety and well-being.

To ensure an inclusive and safe service that supported children's health and well-being, the childminder had accessed guidance from specialist agencies. In addition she had sourced relevant training for her assistant, and worked closely with parents to ensure a consistent approach. This meant that the childminder and her assistant agreed a care and support plan with parents at the start of, and throughout, every child's placement.

The childminder supported children and parents to make healthy lifestyle choices. She helped children to learn about the importance of healthy diets through a range of play based approaches. Children had regular opportunities to try new foods and information about their preferences was shared with parents. Children enjoyed a nutritious and sociable meal during our inspection.

The childminder also effectively supported children's emotional well-being. Older children had developed their one 'alone time' concept and used this when they felt overwhelmed. Children told us how they had proposed and agreed strategies to help them express their rights and feelings. The childminder highlighted her understanding of how fresh air and energetic play, and techniques such as yoga, could also help children's general mood and feeling of well-being. Children were encouraged to discuss their feelings, to respect each other, and to be kind and considerate.

The childminder valued and respected children's ideas and suggestions and supported them to make informed decisions using a floor book to take forward their interests. This demonstrated that children were fully involved in leading their own learning and enjoyed a wide range of experiences to support this.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder made excellent use of space within her home and amenities in the wider community to provide positive outcomes for children.

Since the childminder's previous inspection she had effectively consulted with children and families and researched best practice to develop outdoor play experiences. Children enjoyed daily outdoor play in the large, well resourced garden, which included a large outside playroom structure, and in a range of community resources. The childminder had completed a comprehensive study on the benefits of outdoor play and learning, and shared this with parents and children. Children told us that this was one of their favourite aspects of the service. The childminder recorded the impact that these experiences had on children's physical development and health within their personal plans.

The childminder was skilled and knowledgeable about risk management and food safety. She had developed robust policies and procedures to keep children safe. Appropriate information and consent from parents was recorded in personal plans to enable children to safely participate in a wide variety of learning experiences. On the day of the inspection, we saw and discussed a wide range of safety measures that the childminder had put in place to help children develop the skills needed to keep children safe within her home, garden and when on outings in the local community. The childminder had effectively planned school and nursery pick-ups to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of individual children. She used effective and stage appropriate approaches to help children learn to keep themselves safe.

The childminder told us that her main aim since starting her business was to provide children with a 'home from home' where they felt completely secure and relaxed. We saw, and children confirmed, that this was the case.

Within the home careful consideration had been given to meeting all children's needs. Older children told us that they liked having a designated area where they could relax and socialise with their peers, and play with age appropriate resources. They highlighted that they would like more resources, such as computer games, but understood that these needed to be budgeted for. The range of toys and resources available during our inspection met children's needs and interests. Furthermore, the childminder and her assistant used their skills very effectively to extend children's learning and development using these. We saw children developing their maths and problem solving skills using joining straws to make a road, and using them as a measuring tool. The childminder and her assistant skilfully used lots of mathematical language and effective questioning to support children's learning during this play.

Parents told us that they found the service to be safe, hygienic and very stimulating. They spoke very highly about the range and quality of toys and resources.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 – excellent

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The childminder and assistant worked very well together.

The childminder carried out appropriate safer recruitment checks for her assistant, prior to commencing employment. This helped to ensure children's safety and well-being.

We spoke to the childminder's assistant, who held a recognised social care qualification. The assistant confirmed that since starting her employment she had been able to use her skills and training to assist the childminder to enhance the quality of children's care and learning. She discussed particular areas of interest that she had developed, such as exercise time and yoga. She confirmed that the childminder would feedback information from training events and that she had opportunities to attend external training including first aid, child protection and child led participation. She considered that this had informed her practice and improved outcomes for children.

The childminder monitored the work of her assistant carefully, and provided supportive feedback and guidance. This resulted in her assistant gaining a greater understanding and confidence when assessing children's progress using the health and wellbeing wheel and SHANARRI indicators. She also explained that the safety of children had been a focus for improvement and demonstrated a very good knowledge of child protection procedures in place to keep children safe from harm.

The childminder and her assistant confirmed that they had daily discussions about the needs of each child, future improvements and overall quality of the service. They demonstrated that they knew the individual needs of children and families very well. They were responsive, nurturing and kind in their interactions with 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 was pro-active and committed to her continuous professional development. She routinely updated her knowledge and understanding of early learning and childcare practice.

The childminder actively sought opportunities to discuss and share best practice guidance with other childminders through an extensive range of forums. This included a local childminding group, membership of various umbrella groups online forums. She kept up to date with current best practice guidance and legislation available on the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Childminding Association websites, and other media, which she shared with her assistant. In addition, the childminder was working towards a Higher National Certificate in Early Learning and Childcare, and as part of this was undertaking research in a number of areas, but particularly the benefits of outdoor play. This had influenced her practice and development of her outdoor play area.

We noted that the childminder was very well organised. She had consistently updated her policies to reflect changes to legislation and best practice. She routinely shared and discussed relevant information with parents and carers.

The childminder had consistently engaged her assistant, children and their families in assessing all aspects of her service. She had used a wide variety of ways to share information and receive feedback from parents. This included Facebook, text messages, telephone calls, daily diaries, personal plan review meetings and through daily chats. This demonstrated that the childminder respected their input.

Parents and carers told us how they enjoyed attending seasonal events and had regular opportunities to share their skills and knowledge. This approach supported positive relationships and contributed to the inclusive ethos of the service.

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

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	
19 Apr 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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