

Watt, Connie & Joanne Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 12 November 2019

Service provided by:
Connie & Joanne Watt

Service provider number:
SP2007966725

Care service number:
CS2007160967

Introduction

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

Connie and Joanne Watt referred to as the childminders in this report operate a childminding service from a family home in a residential area of Alva, Clackmannanshire. Children have access to a dedicated playroom, supervised access to the kitchen and a cloakroom. They also have access to a suitable garden for fresh air and exercise.

The conditions of registration state the following:

1. To provide a care 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.
2. Overnight service will not be provided.
3. The parts of the premises not to be used are the main bedroom and the living room.

On the day of the inspection we spoke with one childminder only as the other childminder was not available. On that day the childminder was caring for two children ranging in age from one to three years old.

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection that took place on the afternoon of 12 November 2019.

We gathered evidence from discussion with the childminder, examining relevant records, observing the care given to one minded child and observed the premises, toys and equipment. We discussed our findings with the childminder.

As requested by us, the service sent us an Annual Return document before the inspection. 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 parents to work with 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.

Parents and carers will be referred to as parents in this report.

Views of people using the service

The children present were too young to express their views. Observing the interaction between them and their childminder we noted that they were comfortable in her presence and happily approached her for comfort and reassurance. We spoke with two parents during our inspection, both of whom stated they were extremely happy with the service they received. Comments included:

"really good with children, has the skills and experience to meet their needs."
 "100% brilliant service!"

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. We advised the childminder that this form could be adapted throughout the year so a current self assessment remains available.

The childminder identified what she thought the service did well, some areas for development and any changes she had planned. She told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self assessment process.

What the service did well

Children and their families received high quality care and support from the childminder. The childminder was very good at providing age and stage appropriate experiences for the children to challenge and stimulate them

What the service could do better

The childminder should further develop her knowledge and understanding of best practice guidance. She should refer to this guidance to help her to continue to improve her service. She should continue to develop a method to evaluate all aspects of her service and use this information to make improvements where these are identified.

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	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Meaningful communication between the childminder and parents contributed to nurturing care for individual children. This was because the childminder was very good at using information from parents to deliver an appropriate level of care and support, which met each child's needs. Having consistency in their care helped children to feel safe and secure. For example, parents were encouraged to share information at drop off times, because the childminder understood that it was important for them to feedback on their child's care needs since she last saw them. This allowed her to meet any changes in children's routines and day-to-day care needs.

The childminder had very good methods in place for settling children into her service. For example, she encouraged prospective parents to visit with their child for the first few times to enable the child to become familiar in their new surroundings in the company of their parents. This helped the child to feel secure because they could explore their new environment from a safe base.

Continuity of care was promoted through ensuring that children's individual routines were closely followed within the service. The childminder told us that it was important for children because it helped them feel a bit more secure and settled because they knew what to expect.

The childminder was very good at monitoring the progress children were making and using this information to ensure that the activities she offered met their age and stage of development. This contributed to children feeling respected because it highlighted to them that the childminder acknowledged their right to engage in experiences, which met their needs and interests.

Personal plans showed children's achievements, which were linked to the wellbeing indicators. The childminder offered termly progress meetings with parents for them to discuss their child's needs. This allowed both parties to identify how the childminder could provide individualised support to meet their child's specific needs.

Healthy lifestyles were promoted well within the service and we noted that childminder made very good use of the local community to provide children with opportunities to experience fresh air and exercise.

While childminder had not administered medication, nor had experienced any accidents or incidents since her last inspection, she gave a clear account of how she would manage such situations. For example, she described the importance of keeping parents informed to ensure that they could influence their child's care needs at that time. We considered this very good practice.

Flexible methods for planning enabled the childminder to provide a very responsive range of activities and outings, with children choosing each day what they wanted to do. These child centred opportunities demonstrated to children that the childminder valued their voice and respected their right to choose how they wanted to spend their time when in her care.

Children were safe and protected because the childminder had a very good awareness of what would give her cause for concern in relation to child protection and how she would manage it. This meant that if she had a concern, she knew it was essential to address this by seeking advice from her local social work department.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found that the childminder provided children with a warm, clean, hygienically maintained and homely environment. We concluded this through viewing the premises and garden area, looking at the cleanliness of the resources the children had access to and assessing if they met their developmental needs.

The playroom used by the children was bright, attractive and visually stimulating for them. Having easy access to toys and activities helped to promote children's right to choice and gave them increased responsibility for their learning. Encouraging children to tidy away their toys and activities helped to develop their understanding of their responsibility for looking after the things that they liked to play with.

Children were kept safe and healthy because the childminder had very good systems in place to prevent the spread of infection. For example, if a child was sick or suffering from a contagious illness the childminder asked parents to keep them at home until the infectious stage had passed. This minimised the likelihood of other children becoming ill. Chatting to the children about the importance of washing their hands helped to raise their awareness of their responsibility for keeping themselves healthy.

Maintaining the safety of her home and resources through regular risk assessments enabled the childminder to protect the children and keep them safe because she was able to put measures in place quickly when she identified additional hazards. Routine risk assessments for outings and other activities ensured that the childminder was aware of hazards which could potentially cause harm to the children in her care.

Children were encouraged to experience measured risks because the childminder understood that in order for children to manage risk, they first must experience what it felt like. This helped children to become aware and responsible for their personal safety and judge what they could or could not do.

To further support outdoor and risky play experiences the childminder should consider familiarising herself with the most recent guidance 'My World Outdoors' This is a resource which explains effective practice in outdoor play across Scotland for young children.

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 was good at involving parents in the evaluation of her service and we noted that she engaged with them both formally and informally to seek their views. This demonstrated to families that the childminder respected their right to have a say in how she worked and delivered her service. And showed them that she understood their right to feel included and valued for the contributions that they made.

She was aware of her responsibility for maintaining accurate up-to-date information about the children in her care and demonstrated a very good awareness of why it was important to review this information on a six monthly basis or before. This kept children safe because the childminder was aware of any changes in their personal information, such as GP or emergency contact details.

The childminder, demonstrated a good understanding of why it was important to keep abreast of new guidance relevant to her profession. She told us that she often referred to the Scottish Child Minding Association (SCMA) to help her do this. This enabled her to provide a service which took account of any changes in new guidance and best practice.

She told us that she had some awareness of 'Building the Ambition' - This is best practice guidance for all staff working in the field of early learning and childcare. We also suggested to the childminder that she should consider referring to 'My Childminding Journey' and 'My Childminding Experience' - These are Care Inspectorate publications that are intended to support childminders to evaluate their service and promote innovation. We advised the childminder that moving forward she needed to become more familiar with these documents and begin to refer to them when planning the service. The childminder told us that she would do this.

Below are the links for these resources.

<https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

<https://www.cdn.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Your-Childminding-Journey-A-Learning-and-Development-Resource.pdf>

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1555/my-childminding-experience.pdf>

We advised that accessing the Care Inspectorate website - The Hub, on regular basis also, would support her to keep up to date with practice guidance and legislation. This additional information could further increase her knowledge and understanding and support her to make improvements in the service and lead to improved outcomes for the children in her care.

The childminder should become familiar with the Health and Social Care Standards which focus on supporting good outcomes for people who use care services in Scotland, to ensure she is meeting the standards when caring for children. These can be found at the following link:

<http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/media/12595730/health> and social care standards.pdf

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

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	Gratings	
15 Sep 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings	
15 Sep 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
16 Jul 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
8 Dec 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
25 Mar 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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