

Sarah Stoddart Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 July 2021

Service provided by:
Sarah Stoddart

Service provider number:
SP2019990598

Care service number:
CS2019375579

Introduction

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 10 July 2019.

The childminding service is located in Kirkcaldy, Fife. The service is situated close to local amenities including parks, beaches and the local nursery and primary school. The children have access to the living room, kitchen, play room and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed back garden area suitable for outdoor play.

The service is provided by Sarah Stoddart and 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 of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

The aims and objectives for the service included:

- to provide a safe, relaxed, welcoming family home from home environment for all the children in their care.
- to provide stimulating play experiences to promote child development, physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially.
- to provide a happy, friendly, comfortable home, where each child will be rewarded as an individual and respected.

A full statement of aims and objectives are available from the service on request.

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 of 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 carried out an unannounced inspection of Sarah Stoddart Childminding on Monday 26 July 2021. Feedback was given on Monday 26 July 2021. The inspection was carried out by an inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during COVID-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

We sent an email via the childminder to families using the service asking them to provide us with feedback about their experience of using the service. Three families responded to our request.

During the onsite visit we gathered evidence from several sources including the following:

We spoke with:

- 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 personal plans
- policies and procedures
- documents relating to administration of medication, accidents and incidents and child protection
- the service's key question 5 self evaluation
- registration certificate
- public liability insurance certificate

Views of people using the service

There was one minded child present at the time of the inspection and the childminder's own children. We observed children enjoying their play both indoors and outdoors and they were happy and confident in the service. The children were excited to show us around the home and were keen to show us the back garden and the outdoor play equipment. The children enjoyed showing us photographs and videos of their experiences and achievements.

Three families responded to our request for feedback. Some comments have been included below:

- 'excellent garden facilities. (The childminder) always makes a huge effort to take the kids out to a park or outside space for exercise and takes them to different areas each day'.
- 'I feel (the childminder) knows my child very well'.
- '(The childminder) makes a big effort to involve my child in different activities each week which allows them to grow and develop and support his development'.
- 'The service is like a home for home for my children which they love and I am very happy with the level of care and attention they get'.

When children were asked by their parents for feedback on the service they said:

- '(The childminder) is friendly, good at looking after us, always takes us out, helps with my homework if I get stuck'.
- '(The childminder) is good at playing and I like to play in the garden'.

Self assessment

N/A

What the service did well

Children were able to make choices about where they wanted to play and had free flow access to the enclosed back garden. Children were offered caring support and encouragement which had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. They spent lots of time in the local community and exploring the natural environment, helping them stay active and healthy.

The childminder was compassionate and caring, responding to children's requests in a respectful way. This helped children to have a positive experience and improved their outcomes. Their knowledge and understanding of child development offered a broad range of experiences and resources available for children which supported their natural curiosity, creativity and social skills development.

What the service could do better

The childminder should review the information in children's personal plans and consider how it is being used. The plans should show how children's needs and next steps are being identified and supported in the service, through discussion with parents.

We asked the childminder to review best practice documents including 'Setting the Table' to ensure an inclusive social experience is promoted during snack and meal times.

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

We found the quality of care and support to be very good with the service showing major strengths that supported positive outcomes for children.

Children were being cared for in a friendly, warm, homely environment. Minded children had good relationships with the childminder's family and were included in all aspects of family life, such as supporting with the building of a new wall in the back garden.

The childminder knew the children very well and used children's current interests to plan fun and exciting play for them. Children were happy and content and chatted with the childminder as they played together, helping them feel respected and included. The children benefitted from a wide range of daily outdoor experiences, such as trips to local parks and woodland areas. This supported children to be active and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. The children had recently been swimming and one child present during our visit enjoyed showing us a video of them gaining confidence in the swimming pool. Achievements were celebrated which supported children to feel confident and raise their self-esteem.

The childminder knew children very well and had developed personal plans to show this. They spoke with and observed children to understand their interests and celebrate their achievements. Development reviews had been created for children which were shared with parents and used to plan next steps. The observations were linked to the wellbeing indicators showing children's achievements and overall development. These could be further developed by working with parents to identify actions that can be planned to support children to achieve their next steps and reach their full potential.

The childminder was confident about their role and responsibilities for protecting children and keeping them safe. They spoke confidently of their role and the action they would take if there were any concerns about a child's health or welfare. This ensured children were kept safe and would allow the childminder to respond to any concerns in a timely and sensitive manner.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and families. A COVID-19 policy and infection prevention and control policy had been developed during the pandemic. The childminder could confidently tell us ways they were minimising the risk of the spread of the infection, for example, their enhanced cleaning routine and the children washing their hands at appropriate times.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found the quality of the environment to be very good with significant strengths.

The childminder's home was welcoming, clean and tidy. A variety of toys and resources were available and were easily accessible for children. The childminder told us how they were planning to change the storage of toys and resources so children could be more independent and have more choice over their own play. This included labelling the storage boxes and including a photo on the front of the box.

There were safe, cosy spaces indoors and out where children could rest when they wanted to relax. Children had access to resources which helped them explore their natural curiosity and creativity. We saw them using these in a fun way to make 'soup' and they were able to develop their understanding, thinking and problem solving skills in this play.

There was a strong focus on outdoor play and we observed children to benefit from free flow access to the back garden which allowed children to develop their confidence in the outdoor environment. Children had good opportunities to play and have fun in the space available. A good variety of equipment, such as climbing frame, play house and trampoline, allowed for children to develop their physical skills. We observed children being encouraged to assess risks and problem solve in a safe and supported environment. This supported children to achieve and build self confidence whilst enhancing their health and wellbeing.

The childminder offered healthy snacks and demonstrated different areas used for children to eat, for example on the table in the playroom and in the living room on a blanket. Children could be offered a more social and fun experience at mealtimes to help them build positive relationships with each other and food. We asked the childminder to look at best practice guidance, such as 'Setting the Table' to help children to feel more included and valued. Developing a food policy will support the childminder to work in partnership with parents and children to create a common understanding about their approach to snack and meal times.

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

We found the management and leadership to be very good. The childminder was focussed on continuous improvement and demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had worked hard to develop their service whilst creating an atmosphere that meant families felt valued and respected. Important information was gathered about children and families to allow the childminder to plan to meet individual needs and wishes. This responsive approach allowed the childminder to provide individualised care.

Completing the Key Question 5 self-evaluation had helped the childminder to reflect on their service. The childminder was keen to learn new things and make improvements to the service, based on children's choices. For example, children loved being outdoors and the childminder had tried to find training which would help them ensure this play was meaningful for children. We highlighted the positive impact of reflecting on training opportunities and discussed how the Quality Framework would enhance their self-evaluation process to support the continued development of high standards of care and learning for children and families.

The childminder had created a record keeping system to support the management of the service. Risk assessments had been completed which detailed appropriate measures to safely operate the service whilst both in the home and out on trips. Regular newsletters informed parents about the service and any forthcoming trips. These measures helped parents to know what to expect and supported them to feel involved and included in the service.

All parents told us they felt well informed about the changes in place to make the childminder's home safe during COVID-19. They were all happy with the level of contact they have and the information that is shared with them regarding their children. Parents told us they were regularly asked to provide feedback on the service and feel confident any suggestions they provide would be listened to.

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

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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