

Little Newts Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 6 August 2021

Service provided by:
Sheena Garden

Service provider number:
SP2019990678

Care service number:
CS2019376366

Introduction

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 26 September 2019.

Sheena Garden (referred to as 'the childminder' throughout this report) is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 may be of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be less than 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons not named on the registration certificate. Overnight care will not be provided.

The childminder's home is situated in Newtyle and is close to local amenities including the primary school, nursery, local park, shops, and woodland areas. The children have access to the living room/playroom, dining room, downstairs bathroom and the fully enclosed garden is accessed through the kitchen.

The aims and objectives as stated by the childminder included:

'Little Newts Childminding aims to care for children in a secure and stimulating home environment in which children can feel relaxed and confident to be themselves.'

'To ensure that attention and affection are priorities in each child's care.'

'To be able to adapt to the individual needs of each child within the broader routine of a family.'

'To ensure that children spend a large portion of each day outdoors, enjoying the pleasures of the natural environment.'

'To ensure that parents/carers are assured that their children are well cared for by appropriate communications and recording of their child's experiences and development.'

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 of Care and Support.

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 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 compiled this report following an unannounced inspection, which took place on 6 August 2021 between 09:30 and 12:00. The inspection was carried out by an early learning and childcare inspector.

During this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources including:

We spoke to:

- the childminder
- the children present.

We observed and viewed:

- the childminder's practice and interactions with the children who were present
- the children at play.

We looked at:

- a sample of children's personal records
- a sample of other documentation relevant to this inspection such as accident records, medication records and policies
- certificate of insurance
- registration certificate
- general environment.

Views of people using the service

We spoke to two children who were using the service; they were happy and settled and were having fun exploring a variety of toys and resources during our visit.

We spoke to three parents through email. Their comments included:

'Sheena takes a lot of care and puts in a lot of effort into her diary, and we really get a sense of what our child has done. Sheena provides a perfect level of photographs, and we really enjoy reading the diary every week.'

'Sheena has been very good at keeping us informed and finding out the rules and following them, without making any of it stressful. She's very calm and knowledgeable.'

'From the start, Sheena was very mindful to organise as many settling in sessions as our children needed and until we were all confident, they would feel happy for a full day. I appreciated Sheena taking our children's lead on this and throughout her care for them she has been very responsive to their needs.'

Self assessment

The childminder had not been asked to submit a self-assessment prior to the inspection taking place. We discussed the childminder's improvement plan which included her ongoing professional development by increasing her observational skills and recording of observations. The childminder also plans to introduce a visual timetable to support further choice making for children.

What the service did well

The childminder knew the children and their families well and effective sharing of information ensured that the childminder fully met the needs of the children. Interactions were loving and caring, and the childminder was responsive to children who required comfort and reassurance.

What the service could do better

The childminder could record, and evidence approaches used to support quality assurance within the service. For example, recording the impact of training on her practice and actions taken from feedback received from families.

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

Children had fun and felt safe and secure in the care of the childminder due to warm, loving and nurturing interactions. The childminder knew the children and their families well and was responsive to meeting the needs of the children. Children had the opportunity to make choices from a wide variety of toys and resources which supported them to lead their own play and achieve. For example, one child chose to play with the baby which developed their life skills throughout their play experience. Parents shared with us that their children had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of play experiences.

To ensure that the health and wellbeing needs of the children were met, the childminder had developed personal plans for each child in her care. These plans contained detailed information and were reviewed with parents every six months. We discussed with the childminder that all review dates should be clearly marked on the plans to show when information was updated with families.

Development plans had been created for each child based on the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators which are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. For example, the childminder had provided appropriate experiences to support a child's gross motor skills as well as developing their language and communication skills. A visual timetable was in the process of being implemented to further support children to make choices throughout their day. A floor book which was also linked to the wellbeing indicators, had been created to showcase children's learning and interests. This book evidenced how children's play and learning had been extended through visits to local farmland and woodland areas. Parents confirmed that photographs and information relating to their child's development was shared with them regularly. These opportunities were enabling and encouraged the children to learn and achieve during fun play experiences.

Children were supported to develop their awareness of nutritionally healthy snacks and meals. They were offered healthy options which included fruit during a relaxed snack time experience. The children sat at a small table and chairs in the living room with the childminder, who encouraged and supported them to eat healthy foods. Snack time was unhurried, and children returned to their fun play experiences following on from snack. Before lunch, the children took part in a baking activity to bake courgette and cheese muffins which they then ate for lunch. A discussion took place about the home-grown courgettes which were being used. This supported the children's understanding of the seed to plate concept. The baking activity provided opportunities for numeracy skills, independence, and life skills to be developed.

To safeguard children from harm, the childminder had taken part in child protection training last year and had recently completed another child protection module. The childminder appeared confident in recognising and recording any signs of concern or abuse. A child protection policy was in place to support the childminder to follow current guidance and keep children safe from harm.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, the childminder's home was ventilated, enhanced cleaning procedures were in place and hand washing was supervised and took place at appropriate times.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

To meet the learning and development needs of all children, the childminder provided a wide range of toys and resources for the children to access. Children led their own play and chose from resources which included small world, construction, books, puzzles, transport and art and craft. The resources were well organised in easily accessible storage systems. The children moved freely around the downstairs area of the childminder's home which provided a large space for them to take part in a variety of play experiences. These opportunities encouraged and supported the children to make choices, develop their imaginations, problem solve and be creative.

To encourage the children to stay active and healthy, the childminder maximised the opportunities for outdoor play experiences. A fully enclosed garden provided the children with a secure area to be creative in the sandpit, become active on the swings, explore nature and climb up to the raised wooden house. For example, the children made potions in the garden using petals and leaves from the wildflowers which grew there. The children could also access an open field from the childminder's back garden which led to a woodland area. This area provided further opportunities for exploring nature, assessing risks during play, and developing their imaginations. Parents shared with us that their children took part in regular outdoor activities which included outdoor groups and visiting the Eassie Pictish Stone at a local historical site.

To keep the children safe from harm, the childminder had risk assessments in place for all indoor and outdoor environments. The risk assessments were reviewed and updated as required and included information relating to Covid-19. Safety gates were in place at the bottom of the stairs and at the kitchen door to keep children safe. Smoke alarms were regularly checked and children took part in fire evacuations to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe during an emergency.

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

To improve outcomes and experiences for children, the childminder had undertaken several training opportunities which included a range of courses and reading the best practice document Realising the Ambition. This training had developed the childminder's knowledge of repeated patterns of behaviour, known as schematic play. It had also supported her to provide quality experiences for children and be reflective about her practice. It would be beneficial for the childminder to evaluate all learning and development and record the impact of the training on her practice.

To begin to introduce quality assurance within the service, the childminder had shared questionnaires with families. This had provided the childminder with valuable feedback about her service and the children's experiences. We discussed with the childminder that she could record any significant feedback from children and families and how this had been taken forward or actioned.

The childminder regularly reflected on children's play experiences and learning themes which had been developed and extended. This provided her with the opportunity to evaluate how these could be enhanced to support further learning and development and improve outcomes for children.

To support ongoing improvements within the service, the childminder was developing a five-year improvement plan. The plan included the childminder's ongoing professional development by increasing her observational skills and the recording of observations. The childminder also planned to introduce a visual timetable to support further choice making for children.

To ensure consistent approaches to service delivery, the childminder had policies and procedures in place. These were reviewed and updated at least once a year and were shared with families. We discussed that a pet policy should be created due to their being a dog within the family home.

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

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

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