

Duff, Claire Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 26 August 2021

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2008968859

Care service number:
CS2008170624

Introduction

Claire Duff Childminding Service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011.

The service is provided by Claire Duff, who will be referred to as the childminder in this report. The service operates from the childminder's home, a detached two storey villa with front and rear garden in a residential area of Livingston. The service is close to local amenities and transport links. The areas of the property that are used for childminding were the lounge, dining area, dedicated playroom, ground floor toilet and enclosed rear garden. Children had supervised access to the kitchen.

The childminder can provide a service to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16. A maximum of six will be under 12, 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 family.

The childminder aims are to:

- work in partnership with parents to provide all children in my care with a loving, safe, and home like environment where everyone feels valued and where children have fun and learn through play
- build confident children, successful learners, responsible citizens, and effective contributors and assist them in achieving their full potential.

What we did during our inspection

An short notice inspection was carried out by an inspector from the Care Inspectorate on Monday 23 August 2021 between 15:45 and 18:30. This allowed us to see where children were cared for and observe children in attendance as they played. Further evidence was reviewed via email and feedback was given by video call on Thursday 26 August 2021.

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

We spoke with:

- children present,
- the childminder.

We observed and viewed:

- the environment,
- the childminder's practice and interactions with the children and families,
- children playing.

We looked at the following evidence:

- children's records,
- policies and procedures,
- administration of medication and accident and incident recording information,
- registration certificate and public liability insurance certificate.

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.

Views of people using the service

Six school aged children were present during the inspection. They were very happy in the childminder's care and keen to tell us what they liked about the service:

" I like the kittens."

" I like meeting my friends, it is the only time that I get to see xx."

" I like going to the park, it has a really big slide, and you climb up the spider."

" Claire is good at reading to us and playing with us."

We invited parents to contact us to give us their views about the service provided. Three parents took up this offer and feedback validated our observations that Claire provides a loving and caring service. Parents were generally happy with the service provided and also offered their views for improvement. They told us:

"Claire provides a caring home environment that my children are comfortable to go to. When asked what they enjoy about Claire's they have said her hugs and have often asked if they can have an extra day with her during the holidays. They enjoy playing outside and with the cats, and also appreciate having a quiet space they can retreat to with a book if needed to have some downtime".

" I would like to see the cleanliness/ tidiness of the setting in general improved, especially due to the pandemic and animals being in the home".

"I would appreciate some further reassurance of additional daily cleaning measures".

"My child enjoys arts and crafts, outdoor play, sports, Lego and playing with others in the setting".

"Claire is very accommodating if additional care is required".

Self assessment

The childminder submitted a detailed self-assessment to us prior to the inspection. This helped us to get a clear overview of the service provided and showed us that she had a clear idea about how to develop her service further. We reminded the childminder to ensure that all information recorded on the self-assessment was reflected in practice.

What the service did well

The childminder is passionate about developing her practice to provide quality play and learning experiences for children. She is highly committed to seeking and attending appropriate training.

As a result, she has enhanced her practice to support children's emotional wellbeing, mental health, and resilience. Children's rights are a focus of the service provided.

What the service could do better

The childminder could improve how she manages her service and would benefit from being more organised. For example, children's records need to be kept up to date, reviewed with parents at least every six months, in line with legislation and accessible for when they were required.

There is scope to improve the indoor environment. Reducing clutter would make it easier to keep clean. Similarly, the playroom could be reorganised to create an inviting play space.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were happy and confident in the care of a childminder who was friendly, loving and caring. We saw that children clearly felt at home in the service and parents had a trusting and supportive relationship with the childminder.

Importance was given to supporting new children to settle in the childminder's home. Families who currently used the service had been using it for a number of years. Younger siblings were invited to join in with special occasions, such as birthday parties, before they started attending the service. As a result, new children were contented and settled quickly. A comprehensive parents pack supported families to be fully informed about the service prior to starting.

A strength of the service was how it helped children to develop emotional resilience through openly discussing and supporting them to understand their own and others feelings. Feelings check-ins supported such discussions.

Children felt secure in the childminder's home and understood their responsibilities, boundaries and expectations. They had decided on the house rules together which were displayed in the hall. We saw that there was a culture of fairness and children's rights were respected. Children were encouraged to be respectful role models and were rewarded when they completed helpful tasks. Children clearly loved the reward idea and were keen to tell us how it worked.

We recommended at the last inspection that the childminder should continue to develop personal plans for each child. Plans should include information about how children are supported and should be reviewed at least once every 6 months. We carried the recommendation forward and advised the childminder to develop a clear system to ensure that personal plans reflected the all-round needs of the child. This would improve their wellbeing and support positive outcomes. (See recommendation one).

Children were kept safe and protected from harm because the childminder knew her responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding concerns. Similarly, children learned about how to keep themselves safe when in the childminder's care. For example, there were opportunities to practise road safety when out in the community.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The childminder should continue to develop the personal plans for each child registered with her service to show how she is supporting their individual needs. They should include information about the ways they are supported. We asked her to ensure that:

- all children have a personal plan which contains the relevant information including information on their health, welfare, and safety needs
- a development plan section is included to help children's progress and planned next steps to support their continued development.
- children's personal plans are reviewed with parents and children, at least once every six months or sooner if there are any changes to a child's care or welfare.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that, as a child: "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).

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a homely environment for children, which was welcoming and friendly. We saw that children were valued and included in her home. For example, photographs of the children engaged in learning experiences were displayed on a monitor in the hall.

Children were able to choose and move independently between play spaces. They played in the lounge and playroom and used the dining room for eating, doing homework, and art and crafts.

The garden offered an exciting space for children to have fun and explore. The range of interesting open-ended materials, such as the mud area, engaged children's curiosity and challenged their thinking. Similarly, we saw a broad range of age-appropriate play resources to stimulate natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

We asked the childminder to consider the advice given at the last inspection to review storage to ensure a tidy environment and enhanced play space for children. Reducing clutter would assist with additional cleaning measures required to minimise the risk of infection. Parents feedback demonstrated that they shared the view that general tidiness of the setting could be improved. We suggested that the childminder could consider starting by de-cluttering the playroom to create an organised play environment where children could easily access resources. Similarly, reorganisation of the playroom could create a comfortable space for children to relax. (See recommendation one).

The childminder had three cats, who were much loved by the children and parents. The cats helped to promote the culture of kindness and tenderness. Children took responsibility for keeping the cats safe, for example, they knew to close the door so that the cats could not get out into the garden. A pet risk assessment identified potential hazards of having cats and actions taken to minimise the risks, which we saw during the inspection. For example, the cat's food bowls and litter tray were kept in the utility room, which children did not have access to. The kitchen and garden were cat free zones, as was the dining room at snack and mealtimes.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The childminder should review storage in the setting to ensure a tidy environment for the children. Improved general tidiness of the setting could:

- create an organised play environment where children can easily access resources
- assist with additional cleaning measures required to minimise the risk of infection
- create more space for children to play
- create a comforting space for children to relax
- support children to understand the importance of caring for belongings
- help children to be organised.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22)

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The childminder invested in learning to continue to develop her skills to support children to reach their full potential. She had reflected and self-identified training opportunities to further improve outcomes for children. These included training about core experiences in early years. Similarly, she had recently achieved a qualification in understanding children and young people's mental health. As a result, she had developed an understanding about the need for good mental health to support children as they grow and develop. To ensure that professional development opportunities linked directly to outcomes for children, the childminder recorded her learning from training.

We suggested to the childminder that she could introduce a self-evaluation approach to support the ongoing journey of improvement required in meeting children's care and development needs. We reminded her to make use of national practice guidance to support self-evaluation. This could include 'Realising the Ambition', 'The Health and Social Care Standards' and 'A quality framework for daycare, childminding and school aged children'. We discussed that she could record changes made as a result of self-evaluation and how these changes resulted in improved quality outcomes for children. For example, she could explore the possibility of capturing the success of plans for continuous improvement in a journal with recorded outcomes and photographs. This could be shared with children and families to include their views about improvements made.

The childminder told us that she planned to improve opportunities for children and parents to be involved in and influence change in the service. Such plans included the re-introduction of participation questionnaires to ensure that children and parents influenced decisions about learning experiences and outings.

When children required medication, this was delivered in a safe and sensitive manner. However, there was scope for the childminder to improve how she managed her recording of this. We carried forward a recommendation from the last inspection where we asked the childminder to read 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'. This would enhance her knowledge to ensure she had all the necessary information recorded when children needed to be given medication. (See recommendation one).

Moving forward, we advised the childminder to organise systems and keep children's records up to date and reviewed in line with regulation. This would ensure that their health, care, and wellbeing needs were appropriately met. (See recommendation two).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The childminder should read 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' and use it to ensure she has all the necessary information recorded when children need to be given medication. This would include:

- a clear stepped approach for children who required long term medication, which would support the childminder to give children required medication at the correct time. This should be accessible and used in practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes. (HSCS 3.14).

2. The childminder should organise systems to successfully manage the service to improve outcomes for children and be prepared for inspection. Children's records should be accessible and in use to support children's needs. Required documents should be available on request, for inspection purposes.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23).

Grade: 3 - adequate

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

The childminder should continue to develop the personal plans for each child registered with her service to show how she is supporting their individual needs. They should include information about the ways they are supported. Each plan must be reviewed at least once every 6 months.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'my personal 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) and 'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me.' (HSCS 2.17).

This recommendation was made on 23 April 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had some electronic personal plans in place, which detailed information about children's health and medical needs. She struggled to locate these to show at inspection. All children should have a personal plan that is used in practice and reviewed in line with legislative requirements. We carried this recommendation forward into this inspection.

Recommendation 2

The childminder should obtain a copy of 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' and use it to ensure she has all the necessary information recorded when children need to be given medication.

This is to ensure confidence in the people who support and care for me and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes. (HSCS 3.14).

This recommendation was made on 23 April 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Not all necessary information was recorded on administration of medication consent forms. Additionally, we advised that there should be a clear stepped approach which informed of presenting symptoms when children required medication. We carried this recommendation forward into this inspection.

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
4 Apr 2019	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>4 - Good</div>
22 May 2017	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
11 May 2015	3	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
16 May 2013	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>6 - Excellent</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
20 Dec 2010	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
3 Jun 2009	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>

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