

Sacha's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 31 August 2021

Service provided by:
Sacha Higgins

Service provider number:
SP2017989183

Care service number:
CS2017359081

Introduction

Sacha's Childminding Service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since November 2017.

Ms Higgins, registered as Sacha's Childminding Service, is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 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 family.

The childminder delivers her service from her home, a detached house in a residential area of Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire. The house is close to local amenities including parks, shops and schools.

Included in the childminder's aims is "to provide a happy, caring, warm and friendly environment. This should enable children to develop, learn and have fun whilst in my care. I aim to achieve this by providing stimulating activities which are age appropriate, with outdoor play (weather-dependent) and by encouraging good old-fashioned imaginative play". A full copy of this statement can be obtained from the service.

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 compiled this report following a short notice inspection carried out by two early learning and childcare inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. We visited the childminder on 19 August 2021 between 10:00hrs and 13:15hrs. Further evidence was reviewed via email and the childminder was given feedback on 31 August 2021 by telephone.

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

We spoke with:

- the minded child present,
- the childminder,
- one parent.

We observed and viewed:

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

We looked at the following evidence:

- children's records,
- policies and procedures,
- administration of medication recording information,

- accident and incident recording formats,
- registration certificate,
- public liability insurance certificate,
- motor insurance.

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

There was one minded child present at the time of inspection. They appeared happy and confident around the childminder and the childminding environment.

We spoke with one parent during our visit and they were satisfied by the level of care their child received. They told us how much they trusted the childminder and how their child was cared for in a caring nurturing environment.

We spoke with another parent over the telephone who was happy to tell us about the quality of care their child receives. They told us their child adores the childminder and is treated like part of the family. They had been asked to update their child's personal plan every six months. They were also kept updated throughout the day using the "Baby Days App" which included photos. They found this to be reassuring and had never felt worried leaving their child with the childminder.

They felt that communication had always been great and said that the childminder did lots of activities with the children. They said that the childminder made good use of the outdoors and did things like bug hunts and puddle jumping which were educational and fun. They found the childminder to be respectful of parents' views and wishes. They said that the childminder managed her business well during COVID-19.

Self assessment

The childminder had previously submitted key question 5 self evaluation.

What the service did well

The childminder provided a warm, nurturing environment for children to play and learn. We saw she engaged well with the child present at inspection and responded to their requests and needs.

The childminder had developed positive, friendly relationships with parents, which enabled parents to be confident that their children were well cared for and safe.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to develop her awareness of key childcare frameworks such as the Health and Social Care Standards and Realising Building the Ambition and consider how their key principles are woven into her daily practice.

The childminder should continue with her plans to access training and implement the use of self evaluation processes to help develop her service further.

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

The childminder used her observations and knowledge of individual children to plan provision which was developmentally appropriate for each child. This individualised approach allowed children to learn and develop in the way most suited to them and accordance with parents' wishes.

Parents were involved in the care of their children because the childminder communicated well with them. Settling in sessions were appropriate to family needs and parents gave the childminder information to help her meet their individual needs. This time was also used to agree on the care and support their children would receive.

The childminder kept parents up-to-date on a daily basis by talking to them about her plans and feeding back about the events of the day. Parents were also informed about their child's care and play experiences electronically. This helped reassure parents that their child was nurtured and cared for in the setting.

We saw that childminder had built up a close bond with the child in her care at the time of our inspection. Through discussion she demonstrated she knew the child well and talked about what they did together.

Throughout the inspection the childminder interacted with the child in a positive and respectful way. The natural and relaxed interaction demonstrated that the child was happy and relaxed in her care as they chatted about what they were doing or the child asked for things they wanted to play with.

All children attending the service had a personal plan. These contained information provided by parents and observations made by the childminder of children's progress and next steps in their development. Areas identified by parents were also taken into account when planning for individual needs.

The childminder discussed that how she would safely administer medication and make sure that parents completed appropriate consent forms before this was given. This meant that there would be clear,

consistent information available to ensure children's health and wellbeing if medication was given.

The childminder was confident in her ability to keep children safe and explained how she would report any concerns. The childminder had attended training on child protection and first aid. This meant that she was aware of the appropriate action to take to support children's health and wellbeing in the event of any concerns.

Good use was made of her well equipped back garden and the local community. Children were taken on outings daily to parks and wooded areas. This promoted their physical health and wellbeing also their social interactions with others.

The childminder had introduced appropriate infection, prevention and control systems in response to Covid-19. These included enhanced cleaning, hand sanitising stations and door step drop off and pick ups. We observed all areas of the childminder's home to be clean, hygienic and safe.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We saw that the childminder made very good use of her comfortable, welcoming home in order to support children's play and learning. The childminder told us how she ensured the environment was safe and well ventilated. She had completed risk assessments and identified how hazards could be reduced or eradicated. That meant that her home was well maintained and organised for the children she cared for. All areas used by the child were safe and hygienic which meant they could play safely in and outdoors.

The childminder also understood the importance of supporting children to develop and maintain good hygiene routines. This included regular hand washing which helped minimise the spread of infection.

The childminder told us that any accidents or incidents would be recorded electronically. This ensured parents were informed of any injuries, and therefore children would receive appropriate care and attention.

We saw that space was being well utilised. The arrangement of furniture in the main lounge enabled children to enjoy floor activities such as; construction and puzzles. The child present particularly enjoyed sensory experiences while modelling and creating with kinetic sand.

Effective storage systems in the lounge contained a range of play equipment and materials which were easily accessible and catered for different ages and interests. The dining area in the family kitchen was

used for creative activities such as painting and drawing.

The childminder joined in the children's play, encouraging and praising them as they played. This showed that children were benefitting from an environment that provided a range of experiences and resources that supported them to make choices in their play. It was apparent that their interests directed the pace of the day.

Children were able to rest and relax on the sofas in the lounge. Travel cots were available for younger children. Sleep arrangements took into account best practice, parental wishes and considered children's needs according to age.

Outdoor and active play was an area that the childminder considered important to children's wellbeing. We saw that the garden had been developed to provide a safe place for children to play and explore. The childminder told us that the younger children particularly enjoyed the sand, water and playing with mud kitchen outdoors. Older children liked football and badminton.

Children had been supported to understand the risks they could face participating in activities in the local community and further afield. These included crossing roads, playing in parks, climbing trees and trips to the beach. This helped the children to keep themselves safe.

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 had an organised approach to childminding. She had taken action to meet the requirement made at the previous inspection and had also addressed the suggestions made which had resulted in improvements to her service. She worked well with parents and children to find out their views and opinions in order to meet their individual needs and expectations.

The childminder had a range of policies, procedures and electronic record keeping systems in place which supported her to manage her service. These were shared with parents within an information pack which

gave them an insight into the service provided and an awareness of the procedures followed by the childminder. We asked the childminder to update the service child protection policy making reference to the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2010 which can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00450733.pdf>. We also discussed using chronologies to record significant events in a child's life and signposted her to the information on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

The childminder was keen to continue her own personal development and had accessed a variety of training prior to the onset of COVID-19. She discussed her plans to access relevant training to increase her knowledge and skills. The childminder spoke about the best practice documents she had read and taken account of following her last inspection, including my world outdoors and the Loose Parts Tool Kit. We noted that the childminder had introduced more loose parts into her out door environment.

The childminder is registered with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and told us that she kept up-to-date with best practice through their newsletters and online information. She also regularly used the Care Inspectorate Hub as a way of keeping up-to-date with current Early Years best practice. Through discussion and observation, the impact of her knowledge and understanding was evident in the experiences offered to children.

The childminder regularly evaluated her service through talking to parents and children, issuing questionnaires, through reviewing their personal plans and sending electronic daily updates to parents and responding to requests.

The child minder had completed key question 5, a self evaluation tool to assess her service during Covid-19. The childminder had provided a detailed and evaluative document. This gave us confidence that she understood the possible implications of COVID-19 on children and their families and had changed her practice in accordance with best practice. This helped keep children safe and well.

The childminder should continue to use self evaluation processes to help develop her service further. We suggested she made reference to recognised audit tools to measure strengths and identify areas for development. This would ensure children benefited from a culture of continuous improvement. **(See area for improvement 1)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1.
The childminder should develop quality assurance systems to evaluate their service. Best practice guidance documents should be used which will help identify what they do well and areas for development. Consideration should also be given to how they will gather and include feedback from children and parents in this process.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards

(HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

Your Childminding Journey - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/knowledge/useful-links/2017/09/your-childminding-journey/>

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

By the 14 October 2019; to ensure that there is proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users, the childminder must comply with the condition of registration which states that the childminder may provide a care service to a maximum of 6 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 family.

From 11 December 2018 until a child leaves the service on a Tuesday and Friday (2 weeks out of every 5 weeks) between the hours of 09:00 and 14:30 a care service may be provided to a maximum of 7 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than four are not yet attending primary school and of children of the childminder's family.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event." (HSCS 4.14) and in order to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Welfare of users.

This requirement was made on 6 November 2019.

Action taken on previous requirement

We saw that the childminder now kept an electronic attendance register which gave her a clear overview of each child's pattern of attendance. This ensured that the childminder worked in accordance with the conditions of her registration at all times.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

To ensure the health and safety of children in her care the childminder should attend paediatric first aid training at the earliest opportunity.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I receive high quality care and support based I relevant guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This recommendation was made on 20 February 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder submitted an action plan to the Care Inspectorate on 16 May 2019. She wrote and told us:

"I am booked and paid onto a Paediatric first aid course that takes place on 22/06/19 in Aberdeen Training Centre, Regent House, Aberdeen."

We found that the childminder had attended first aid training and obtained a certificate in first aid. This recommendation has been met.

Recommendation 2

In order to support positive outcomes for children the childminder should increase her knowledge of best practice guidance, such as:

GIRFEC - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/109077/sg-guide-to-girfec.pdf>

Your Childminding Journey - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/knowledge/useful-links/2017/09/your-childminding-journey/>

My World Outdoors - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/279348/my-world-outdoors-sharing-good-practice-in-how-early-years-services-can-provide-play-and-learning-wholly-or-partially-outdoors.pdf>

Our Creative Journey - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/603624/our-creative-journey-aug-17-master-combined.pdf>

Loose Parts Toolkit - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/405223/loose-parts-play-toolkit.pdf>

HSCS - <http://www.newcarestandards.scot/>

Building the Ambition - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/201173/national-practice-guidance-on-early-learning-2014.pdf>

Child Protection Guidance - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00450733.pdf>

Pre Birth to Three - <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/108777/Its-pre-birth-to-three-guidance.pdf>

She should use this knowledge to evaluate her service and identify areas where development would have the most impact on outcomes for children. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) 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 20 February 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder submitted an action plan to the Care Inspectorate on 16 May 2019. She wrote and told us:

"Recommendation no 2 plan is to review the provided links and to book onto the recommended courses. Target for the safeguarding course is to be completed by October 2019."

We found that the childminder had resourced best practice guidance and had started to use this to improve outcomes for children. For example, she had completed online child protection training and planned to develop loose parts play following her personal reading. This recommendation has been met.

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
7 Oct 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
22 Jan 2019	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings				
		<table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="595 217 1114 271">Staffing</td> <td data-bbox="1114 217 1481 271">Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="595 271 1114 351">Management and leadership</td> <td data-bbox="1114 271 1481 351">3 - Adequate</td> </tr> </table>	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
Staffing	Not assessed					
Management and leadership	3 - Adequate					

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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