

Nicola Chalmers Childminding Service

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 5 October 2021

Service provided by:
Nicola Chalmers

Service provider number:
SP2019990696

Care service number:
CS2019376517

Introduction

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 9 January 2019.

Nicola Chalmers provides her childminding service from her home in Troon, South Ayrshire. Areas of the home children can access include a lounge, kitchen, enclosed back garden and upstairs toilet. The childminder 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 include;

- Caring, supportive and happy environment a home from home
- Children will enjoy a safe, friendly atmosphere where they can play and learn
- Provide a wide range of opportunities in the form of interactive fun and challenging activities to enable children to achieve their full potential
- Flexible and reliable 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 carried out an unannounced inspection of Nicola Chalmers Childminding on 30 September 2021. We continued the inspection using virtual methods to meet with the childminder to discuss practice. Feedback was given using virtual methods on Tuesday 5 October 2021.

The inspection was carried out by one 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 to parents using the service asking them to provide us with feedback about their experience of using the service. Two parents 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
- children playing and snack time

We looked at the following documents:

- children's personal plans
- administration of medication, accidents and incidents and child protection procedures and records
- registration certificate
- public liability insurance certificate
- training records
- self-evaluation
- risk assessments.

Views of people using the service

There were two minded children present at the time of the inspection and the childminder's own child. We observed children enjoying their play both indoors and outdoors presenting as happy and confident in the service. The children were confident, settled and happy to talk to us telling us they enjoyed coming to the service feeling safe and cared for. They told us they were all friends and they liked to play together.

Two parents responded to our request for feedback indicating they were very happy with the service provided.

Self assessment

The childminder completed and submitted a self assessment identifying what they thought the service did well. The childminder also submitted Key Question 5 self-evaluation document that had details of how children and families were supported during the pandemic during the inspection.

What the service did well

The childminder had developed positive relationships with children in her care and knew them well. Interactions between children and the childminder were caring, nurturing, and responsive. The childminder was motivated to attend training and self-study to support her practice. Good communication between the service and the families had been developed and maintained.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to reflect on the quality of her service involving children and their families. More focused self-evaluation will help her to identify any specific training needs to further develop her practice.

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	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We observed happy confident and settled children. Written personal plans kept by the childminder were used to plan children's individual care ensuring their needs were fully met. Plans were clear ensuring children received personalised care. Regular reviews with parents/carers ensured any changes could be made to meet children's needs providing links with home routines. Children received warm and nurturing care from the childminder.

Children were supported to develop a positive view of themselves as the childminder offered praise and encouragement. They were also developing warm relationships with the other children attending with the support of the childminder who made sure all were included, helping them to form relationships. The childminder explained how she would work in partnership with parents should she need to resolve any behaviour concerns. We observed how children were encouraged and distracted to positive play by the childminder offering appropriate praise and encouragement as she took time to explain to children how their actions could impact on others.

The childminder encouraged children's play offering gentle reminders as needed to promote sharing and turn taking. Children had opportunity to direct their own play and activities making choices to stimulate their learning and curiosity. During the inspection they played imaginatively with the doll's house and plasticine being favourite as they explored the resources.

Healthy lifestyles including healthy eating and regular physical activity was promoted for children. The childminder used information from children and parents to plan her snack menus. We asked the childminder to consider sitting with the children at snack times. This would allow her to be a role model encouraging children to sit at the table whilst eating and offering a coming together time for children to chat after school/nursery.

Children benefitted from regular outdoor play and activities. During the inspection visit they explored the mud kitchen and had fun bouncing energetically on the trampoline. The childminder used her knowledge of the children and their developmental stages to plan her play activities linked to their interests. A floor book recorded children's ideas for activities. Children told us how the childminder had responded to their request to be helpers encouraging them to be responsible and recognising their achievements using a reward chart.

The childminder was clear in her responsibilities to ensure children were safe and protected from harm and abuse. Suitable measures for storage and administration of medication were in place. This meant if children needed medication to support their health and wellbeing whilst attending the service it would be done safely.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, we observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene. Children were supported to wash their hands regularly throughout the session. This further minimised the potential spread of infection and supported the health and wellbeing of children and families.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

Children experienced a welcoming home from home environment that made them feel safe and secure. The childminder's home was clean, safe, welcoming and offered children space to play either on the floor, at a table or relax on the sofa. The indoor environment had been organised for children to make choices. A broad and balanced range of resources led by children's interests was stored in baskets for easy access. We observed children accessing suitable resources during the visit promoting independent play and learning.

Outdoor play was a regular occurrence. Children could play outdoors in a secure back garden with a range of equipment for physical and energetic play. Children understood the need for safety when accessing the trampoline making sure the safety net was zipped up as they demonstrated their physical skills to us. We suggested the childminder could add more natural, open-ended, 'loose parts' materials into the outdoor play environment to help develop children's creativity and offer more challenge in their play. The childminder should consider how knowledge she has gained accessing outdoor learning training can be used to further develop children's opportunities for play and learning in the natural environment.

The childminder described how she would follow best practice when supporting children with their personal care making sure protective clothing was used, helping to limit any possible spread of infection. The childminder explained how she would ensure children's privacy and preferences were respected and carried out in a dignified way should children need personal care.

The childminder had a first aid certificate should children have any accidents and incidents helping to ensure any treatment or intervention is safe and effective. A recording system was in place to ensure parents/carers had all information supporting children's health and wellbeing.

The childminder was aware of her responsibility to ensure her premises are fit to provide her service from by routinely risk assessing her home, indoors and outside. The childminder told us children do not have any unsupervised access to the internet. The childminder should include cyber safety in her approaches to safe play and learning. Talking with children, when it has been agreed with parents and is developmentally suitable, about appropriate and inappropriate online behaviour will help children learn how to stay safe. This will support children in using the internet safely, responsibly and enjoyably.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The childminder discussed how they had kept up to date with guidance during Covid-19 pandemic by accessing the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Government websites. In discussions she was able to demonstrate knowledge of key childhood frameworks including Getting it Right for Every Child a national approach to ensure children received the right support at the right time.

The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to personal development and training which helped to promote positive outcomes for children. Since registering of her service she had attended a number of online training courses including virtual nature school and carrying out self study of national guidance for early learning and childcare. The childminder had started to reflect on her training keeping a record of courses attended and any impact. This could be further developed by looking at self-evaluation information available on the HUB asking what works well and what could be improved on. This will also help the childminder to identify specific training needs.

Children and their families' views were important to the childminder, using any information gathered to plan for improvement. Children's opinions and ideas were listened to and acted on by the childminder this included planning activities and topics for play and learning. The childminder had developed an online BLOG for parents use. This ensured parents were kept up to date and all information about the service including policies and procedures were available to them. The childminder had also used a questionnaire for parents, we suggested she should review this to ask more open-ended questions to provide her with information that can help plan for improvement.

Discussions with the childminder demonstrated she had a good understanding of her responsibilities knowing when to notify the care inspectorate and necessary records she must keep. Children's personal information was managed securely as the childminder had registered with the information commissioner's office helping to ensure children's data is securely stored. A complaints procedure was available at the time of registering with the service providing parents with accurate information about who to contact if they had concerns about the service provided.

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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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