

Maria's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Perth

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 September 2021

Service provided by:
Maria Hughes

Service provider number:
SP2018989798

Service no:
CS2018365657

About the service

The childminder provides her childminding service from her flat in a residential area of Perth near to the town centre. The minded children make use of a large living room, hallway and bathroom. They also have access to a shared garden and outdoor opportunities in the local community.

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 5 June 2018. They are registered to provide a care service to a maximum of five children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than four are under the age of 12, no more than three are not yet attending primary school and no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight care may not be provided. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate.

The childminder aims to 'provide a warm, safe and friendly home from home environment where babies and children from four months to 16 years can play, grow and learn whilst having lots of fun. In caring for children and young people I will endeavour to provide for their health safety and happiness'.

We are testing our new ELC quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare. This inspection was included as part of the test. We have evaluated the service based on key questions and quality indicators linked to the framework. As this was a test, we will not be publishing the evaluations. More information about the quality framework and methodology can be found on our website www.careinspectorate.com.

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which started on 23 September 2021. We gave feedback to the childminder virtually on 24 September 2021.

What people told us

We sent the service an online questionnaire to share with parents and carers. We received two responses. All of those who completed the questionnaire strongly agreed that they were happy with the quality of care their child received while in the service. Their comments included:

'I think Maria's Childminding services are excellent! The meals and snacks my child receives there are excellent and always ensures they are healthy. I really feel Maria has the children's best interests at heart and goes above and beyond to make sure the parents are informed of everything.'

'Maria is great with my daughter! She has come on leaps and bounds and the communication we have with each other has helped myself and my family massively!!'

There were three children present during the inspection. They all appeared to be settled, relaxed and happy. They were confident to chat to us during the inspection. They told us:

'Mixing round and round.'

'Watch me, I can twirl on my tippy toes.'

'I like to play with the kitchen.'

'We're having a tea party.'

'Look, I made a necklace.'

How good is our care and learning?

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children received care which was warm and nurturing. The childminder was kind, caring and gentle in her approach and as a result, children were seen to be relaxed, happy and settled. We observed positive language and praise being given to children to recognise and celebrate their successes and achievements. This impacted positively on children's confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder knew each child as an individual and had a very good understanding of their personal care needs and development. The depth of understanding around children's holistic needs enabled the childminder to work closely with families to provide effective support tailored to each child.

We saw the children having lunch and found this to be a sociable, relaxed and unhurried experience which promoted children's independence. The childminder encouraged positive discussion about food which supported children to learn about making healthy choices. We discussed how children could begin to be involved in food preparation to provide further opportunities to support their learning and development.

1.2 Children are safe and protected

The childminder was confident with her role and responsibilities to keep children safe and protected. She kept her knowledge up to date through regular professional development and as a result, had a very good understanding of safeguarding and child protection practice and procedures.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were well supported during their play and learning by the childminder through skilful interactions and the use of effective questioning. They were supported to extend their thinking, recall experiences, and consolidate their learning. Children were empowered to make choices about their play and learning and encouraged to follow their interests. This resulted in children being highly engaged in their play and having lots of fun.

Families were involved in their child's development. They had opportunities to discuss their child's progress with the childminder and reviewed this regularly. As a result, the childminder tailored children's play and learning experiences to support their individual development needs.

Observations of children's experiences were recorded on an online app and in a floorbook. We saw that children had a wide range of exciting and interesting play and learning opportunities. We discussed how written observations could be improved to capture children's learning and how the floorbook could be used to record children's progression of learning following their interests and curiosities. We suggested children have more ownership of their floorbook to enable them to reflect on and evaluate their play and learning experiences.

Areas for improvement

How good is our setting?

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a well furnished environment. The childminder's home was clean, safe, and well ventilated. The childminder was responsive to children's needs and interests. Children's voices were listened to and as a result, the childminder had implemented a child's suggestion to develop a cosy, comfortable corner in the living room to read stories and relax.

Children had access to a wide range of interesting and exciting resources which supported their development across the curriculum. There were lots of opportunities for children to develop their understanding in language, literacy, and mathematical thinking. We saw that children were highly engaged with loose parts resources. They sparked children's curiosity and supported their imaginative and creative play.

Children experienced a wide variety of outdoor play opportunities including building dens and campfires in a local woodland. Children were confident and enthusiastic when talking to us about these experiences. We suggested that the childminder begins to involve children in risk assessing to support them in understanding how to manage risks safely.

The childminder had developed the garden with the children since the last inspection. This space offered children a range of developmentally appropriate resources including loose parts, a mud kitchen, and opportunities for physical play. Children told us about how they had enjoyed growing vegetables in the garden. These opportunities supported children to be active, creative and learn about their environment.

How good is our leadership?

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder's aims and vision were reflected in their practice. We saw evidence of a warm, safe, and friendly home from home environment which supported children to play, grow and learn whilst having fun.

Families were involved in the service development through a range of methods. This included daily communication and regular parent evenings. More formal methods were also used including gathering their views through questionnaires. We suggested the childminder reviews the types of questions asked in the questionnaire to gather more constructive feedback to inform the service development.

The childminder had undertaken self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, they had developed an improvement plan with realistic and achievable targets. We saw the positive progress the childminder had already made in developing their service in line with their identified improvements. For example, the childminder had begun to undertake additional training modules to improve their understanding of how to support children's language development. They were able to confidently share changes they had made to their practice and the positive impact this had on outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children experienced compassionate and responsive care which met their needs. The childminder had developed positive relationships with the children and respected their individual needs, choices and wishes.

The childminder had a very good understanding of children's individual development, progress and the support needed to enable them to achieve their potential. The childminder was very reflective and identified any gaps in her knowledge. She accessed professional development opportunities through best practice guidance, online training and additional qualification modules to address these. The childminder also used feedback constructively from the last inspection and from improvement visits from the local authority. We saw how children had benefitted from the childminder's increased knowledge and understanding and the positive changes made. The childminder also connected with other local childminders. This provided her with a network of support and opportunities for professional discussion.

The childminder was confident in her practice and as a result, children experienced a fun, caring and nurturing environment which effectively supported their learning and development.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The childminder should develop how children and families are involved in service evaluation.

This is to ensure the quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership.' (HSCS 4.7).

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2019.

Action taken since then

The childminder encouraged families to be involved in evaluating the service in a range of ways. As a result, positive changes were made to improve outcomes for children. This area for improvement 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.

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