

Dot's Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 23 August 2021

Service provided by:
Dorothy Merrilees

Service provider number:
SP2019990914

Care service number:
CS2019377798

Introduction

Dot's Childminding has been registered since 27 February 2020. The childminder may care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet of an age to attend primary school, and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is delivered from the childminder's home in Pitmedden. This is close to the local school, shop and play areas. The childminder's aims are:

To provide

- A friendly welcoming environment for children and parents/carers
- A safe and healthy environment
- A range of indoor and outdoor activities which will stimulate and challenge children while encouraging them to try new experiences suitable for their development stage.

To promote

- Positive behaviour
- Good personal hygiene and good manners
- Each child's development through praise and encouragement.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an unannounced inspection visit on 22 July 2021. Following this we used virtual technology such as telephone calls and emails to engage with the childminder and parents. Feedback was given to the childminder on 23 August 2021. The inspection was carried out by a Care Inspectorate early years inspector.

During the inspection we spoke to the childminder and the children and observed the care given by the childminder. We spoke to two parents by telephone following the site visit. We looked at a number of documents including policies, children's records, training certificates and risk assessments.

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). 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 Getting it right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Views of people using the service

The children present enjoyed using the resources available to them in the childminder's home. They were secure and confident in the environment. Children spoke to us about activities they had participated in and told us about their handwashing routines.

We spoke to two parents who told us they were very happy with the care provided to their children. Their comments included:

"The best decision I ever made was to use this childminding service".

A highlight is "Seeing how much Dot cares for the children. Dot's attitude to care really shines we just know that she cares about our children and the children are really happy to go there".

"Communication is working well we always know everything that we need to know and I would wouldn't hesitate to recommend Dot's service to someone else".

"Our child loves spending time there, there's loads of games and activities".

Self assessment

The childminder had not completed a self assessment prior to the inspection. We discussed the importance of self evaluation and planning for improvement during the inspection.

What the service did well

The childminder's flexible approach supported her to meet the individual needs of children and their families. Strong relationships had been built with children and their families supporting the childminder to offer responsive care.

What the service could do better

The childminder should further develop her record keeping to ensure accuracy and ease of access to information. They should consider the best way to implement a more formal self evaluation system which would take into account views of children and their parents.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very 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

The childminder had built up strong relationships with the children in her care. The nurturing and affectionate interactions supported them to feel accepted and welcomed. The children were happy and well settled in the childminder's home. The older children were very confident in expressing their views and telling us of their experiences.

Personal plans were in place and contained information to support the safety of children such as medical details and emergency contacts. Details of home routines supported the childminder to provide a continuity of care. These details were augmented by the childminder's diary and her knowledge of each child. The childminder was able to discuss children's characters and preferences as well as strategies she was using to support them. We suggested the childminder develop the personal plans to reflect this level of detail. We also discussed the importance of including dates when reviewing or amending the information. This will assist the childminder in accurate information sharing and evaluating the strategies used to support children.

The childminder used her local knowledge and links with other carers in the community to support children to build positive relationships with their peers. Parents told us that the childminder's flexibility meant children were able to attend extra curricular clubs and activities. This meant children were able to establish and maintain friendships and develop their interests.

Children's safety was promoted by the childminder's experience and understanding of her role in identifying, recording and reporting any concerns she may have. In order to ensure that her training was up-to-date the childminder had completed an online refresher course in child protection. This supported her to work within the most recent and relevant guidance. The childminder had an awareness of factors which may impact on a child's wellbeing and had strategies in place to support children at these times.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, there were clear policies and procedures implemented to ensure consistent approaches. These were shared with parents, supporting their awareness of the procedures and promoting a continuity of care. Children were supported to understand the need for good hygiene through discussion, role modelling and effective use of pictures and activities.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder's home was comfortable and welcoming for children. The environment and resources were clean and well maintained, supporting children's health and safety. The designated playroom had displays of children's artwork and photos. This supported children to feel accepted and valued. The displays were used to celebrate children's achievements and support reflective discussions. The arrangement of resources and rooms supported children to decide if they wanted to play alone or with peers. The large dining table was available for art and craft projects or for older children to do homework if they wished. Children needing to rest could use a separate room where a travel cot was available for babies. The childminder had a monitoring system in place to support the safety of sleeping children.

Children had a wide range of activities on offer which reflected their interests. This provided opportunity for children to lead their own play. There were some opportunities for open ended activities indoors but this could be extended. We discussed with the childminder the importance of building on the challenging, open ended activities already available and supporting access to natural resources as much as possible.

The benefits of outdoor play for children's health and wellbeing were recognised by the childminder. Children had access to the garden which was safe and secure. We discussed how this was used for active play as well as imaginative and role play. At times children also enjoyed having their snack or lunch outdoors. The childminder told us of plans to further develop the garden area to support children's play experiences.

Areas of the local community such as play parks and woodland were used by the childminder. This supported children to feel part of their community and provided opportunities to access a natural environment.

During the visit children had snack of cereal and milk. This was a relaxed unhurried time during which the childminder spoke with the children. This supported their social and communication skills.

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 is a member of the Scottish Childminding Association and has accessed information from them to assist her in keeping up-to-date with legislation and guidance. There has been limited opportunity for in person training due to the Covid-19 restrictions. However, the childminder has undertaken online training in child protection and first aid. She has also been reading to raise her awareness of autism and ways to support children on the autistic spectrum. We discussed the importance of ensuring that the childminder's professional learning has an impact on the experiences and outcomes for children.

The childminder had a range of policies in place to support her practice. These were shared with parents which meant they knew what to expect from the service. We suggested the childminder should amend the child protection and administration of medication policies. This is to ensure that the policies reflect the correct and most recent guidance. This will support the childminder in ensuring they are providing care which is based on most recent research and guidance.

Children's and parents' views and suggestions were used to inform the activities provided for the children. The childminder used this and her observations of what children enjoyed to plan activities and choose resources. We suggested that the childminder develop a system to formally gather feedback on her service from parents and children. She could then use this to further develop her evaluation and planning.

We suggested that the childminder look at ways to streamline the information that she holds for children. This will ease the recording of information and make it easier to access specific details of children's needs or experience.

An increased use of the best practice guidance available would support the childminder in developing her service. For example, we suggested that referring to 'My World Outdoors', <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/1557/my-world-outdoors-sharing-good-practice-in-how-early-years-services-can.pdf> and 'Play Outdoors', <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/4346/out-to-play-section-9-childminding-settings.pdf> would support the childminder in developing the garden area.

We suggested that using the online resource, 'Your Childminding Journey', <http://www.childmindingjourney.scot/> would assist the childminder in evaluating her service. It would also guide her to the relevant best practice documents for areas that she identifies for further development. She may also find the document 'Self Evaluation for Improvement' useful. <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/3783/self-evaluation-for-improvement-your-guide.pdf>

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 service was registered.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the service was registered.

Inspection and grading history

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

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