

Cotter, Fiona Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 4 November 2021

Service provided by:
Fiona Cotter

Service provider number:
SP2003902513

Care service number:
CS2003004463

Introduction

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The childminder is registered to provide a childminding service for up to six children up to the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet of an age to attend primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. Overnight care will not be provided. The back garden will not be used for childminding purposes.

The service is provided from the childminder's home which is located in the village of Newarthill, North Lanarkshire. The home is situated nearby local schools, nurseries and a range of community facilities. The children have access to a lounge, extended kitchen/diner and downstairs toilet. Mrs Cotter operates a flexible service to support the needs of families.

Aims of the service include: "To provide a safe, stimulating environment for children, young people and parents alike. I will ensure this by ensuring all my policies are implemented. I will carry out regular risk assessments of my home, toys and equipment. I will record a weekly forward plan of activities to be undertaken and I will encourage feedback from the children and parents/carers. When developing these activities I will strive to take each child's needs, age and stage of development into consideration".

A full statement of the service's aims and objectives were available to parents and carers at the service.

What we did during our inspection

We compiled this report following an unannounced site visit, which took place between 13:40 and 15:30 hours on 2 November 2021. Further evidence was reviewed via email and feedback was shared by telephone on 4 November 2021. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection.

During the inspection we spoke with the childminder, one child who was present during the inspection and three parents. We observed the care given by the childminder and the environment. We looked at a number of documents including personal plans, certificates of training and policies.

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, included.

Views of people using the service

There was one child present at the time of the inspection. The child was happy and settled in the childminder's care and enjoyed playing with the toys available.

We spoke with three out of eight parents who currently use the service. They told us they were really happy with the care their child received and they liked the way the children could access social opportunities in the local community, which helped children to build friendships. Parents' comments highlighted that they were very satisfied with the service. For example the childminder is "so good with relationships", "I like the level of communication and trust, my child is so well looked after" and the childminder is "lovely with the children, spends lots of time with them and puts me at ease, the children adore her".

Self assessment

We did not ask the service to complete a self-assessment in advance of this inspection. Quality assurance, acting on feedback, and the quality of the service's improvement plan are considered within this report.

What the service did well

The childminder provided a warm, caring and nurturing environment for the children. She was flexible to meet families needs and provided individual care to meet children's needs and interests. The childminder used the local community well to extend children's play and learning opportunities.

What the service could do better

The childminder should review children's personal plans to ensure that they clearly reflect children's individual needs, wishes and choices.

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	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The child attending the service was happy, settled and comfortable in the childminder's care. Cuddles and a warm, nurturing approach was used to support the child adjust to the surroundings after a nap. This contributed to the child feeling loved, safe and secure.

The children accessed a range of social and physical activities daily, including in the local community which supported their wellbeing. For example, soft play, adventure walks, and visits to local cafés. One parent told us that the activities were "fabulous" and their child loved "Monday toast at the café".

The childminder had personal plans in place for all children and some children had strategies identified to support their learning and development. This helped ensure the right support was in place to meet children's needs. The childminder agreed to continue to develop personal plans to ensure all children's needs are met.

Parents provided a healthy lunch for their child and the children had weekly opportunities to enjoy mealtimes in local cafes. This supported children to develop their social skills and enjoy positive, relaxed mealtimes.

Children's wellbeing was promoted through the provision of healthy snacks and water throughout the day. Children's involvement in menu planning and shopping provided opportunities to learn about a healthy diet.

The childminder had a good understanding of her responsibility to keep children safe and protected. She had a clear child protection policy in place and knew how to respond if a child was at risk of harm.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, children were supported to understand the need for good hygiene and were encouraged to wash their hands regularly. Physical distancing was implemented for adults in the setting. Where children's emotional needs supported their parent entering the setting, this was managed well in line with guidance and had supported young children with settling in.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The childminder regularly used the local community to widen children's play and learning opportunities. Parents told us their children looked forward to their weekly trips and outings. One parent told us what they do outside the home was a strength of the service and liked the "social opportunities to meet up with other children".

The childminder ensured children had opportunities to access the natural environment daily. For example parks, farms and woodland areas for riskier play opportunities. This promoted children's curiosity, confidence and physical skills. We concluded that using the local community this way, meaningfully supported children's learning, development and wellbeing.

The childminder's home was a pleasant and homely environment which was clean, tidy and well-maintained. The children had access to a living room and large bright kitchen area with sofa and carpet area. This ensured children had comfortable, safe places to play and move freely between the rooms.

The children could choose from a wide variety of toys that were easily accessible, which was supporting them to make choices and be independent in their play. For example, dinosaurs, cars, puzzles and soft toys. One parent told us that the childminder will follow the child's interests. This promoted opportunities for children to direct their own play and learning.

Through discussion with the childminder, she told us that toys were changed to reflect the needs and wishes of the children. We saw one child having fun playing with the dinosaurs. He told us "that's a big one".

The childminder was aware of protecting children's dignity when supporting children with intimate personal care. This supported children to be independent and helped with establishing toilet training routines.

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 was cheerful, warm and nurturing, which contributed to a welcoming atmosphere for children. One parent told us "she feels like a member of the family and the children adore her".

Appropriate records and policies were in place which helped ensure the service was managed well. For example, child protection and administration of medication. We reviewed insurance documents and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) certificates and found that these were all in place and up to date. This contributed to keeping children safe.

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and other childminding networks. This helped ensure she kept up to date with best practice guidance. The childminder told us she was familiar with the Care Inspectorate Hub, which she accessed for updated guidance. This contributed to the childminder's skills and abilities to offer high quality care and support. The childminder planned to access further training opportunities when available or identified. We agreed this would support further improvement in the service.

Children were kept safe through a variety of safety measures. For example good supervision and regular safety checks of the premises and toys.

The childminder provided valuable, regular contact with parents through daily chats, telephone and text messages. This helped ensure parents were kept informed of their children's day, and that the childminder had the necessary information to provide the right care and support for the children. One parent told us "my child is so well looked after". This contributed to consistent and stable care and support.

Parents told us they were very happy with the level of communication and they felt that the childminder was approachable. One parent told us that what made the difference is "the level of communication and trust". This ensured that families are involved in meaningful discussion about their child, where their ideas, preferences and wishes were respected.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very 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

Recommendation 1

The childminder must ensure that robust checks have been completed for all adults aged 16 years and over at the registered address.

This is to ensure that children are safeguarded whilst at the service and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities'. (HSCS 3.20)

This recommendation was made on 1 August 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Enhanced disclosure certificates were reviewed for all adults living in the household and these were up to date. Therefore 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	
5 Jun 2019	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
10 Jul 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
17 Nov 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
11 Feb 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
22 Aug 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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