

Alexander, Brenda

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 9 December 2021

Service provided by:
Brenda Alexander

Service provider number:
SP2003902107

Care service number:
CS2003003907

Introduction

Brenda Alexander registered with the Care Inspectorate 1 April 2011.

The service operates from the childminder's home in Newton Mearns, in Glasgow. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of five children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of five will be under 12, 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 children of the childminder's family.

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.

What we did during our inspection

We carried out an unannounced inspection of Brenda Alexander's childminding service on Wednesday 8 December 2021. Feedback was given the following day by telephone call. 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 to support a safe environment for children. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator under Theme 1 Quality of Care and support.

During the onsite visit, we gathered and reviewed evidence from several sources including the following:

- registration certificate
- insurance certificates
- policies and procedures, including child protection and the childminder's training record
- observations of the interactions and quality of experience children received at the service.

Views of people using the service

There were three minded children present at the time of the inspection as well the childminder's grandchild, who was being looked after by her grandfather. The children were confident to approach the childminder and her husband for reassurance and support. Children were observed to be happy and settled in the childminder's care.

We sent a request via the childminder to the families who used her service asking them to provide us with feedback about their experience of using the service. We received feedback from one parent who told us that she was happy with the quality of care and the service provided by the childminder. Some of their comments included:

"It was important for me to find someone who values socialisation and learning play opportunities. She has plenty of toys which my child enjoys and she responds to my child's personality and communication. I like that she takes children to a toddler group for socialisation as that is something I would like to do if I had time."

Self assessment

The childminder had not been asked to submit a self assessment.

What the service did well

Children were happy and relaxed in the care and comfort of the childminder's home. We observed warm nurturing interactions between the children and the childminder.

What the service could do better

The childminder must address the requirements and recommendations made within each section of this report.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	2 - Weak

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Children were happy and settled in the care and comfort of the childminder's home. Good relationships had been developed between the children and the childminder. As a result of this children were secure and confident in making their needs and wishes known to the childminder.

All providers are required to develop, review and update personal plans which promote children's rights, choices and individual needs and wishes. The childminder did not have any written information or personal plans for children. The childminder must develop in consultation with parents and children where appropriate, personal plans which take account of children's preferences, individual needs and wishes. (See requirement 1)

We were not satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children during the Covid-19 pandemic. The childminder was not familiar with the most up to date Covid-19 guidance for childminders. Examples of this included inadequate ventilation, procedures for safe nappy changing and having a shared towel for hand drying. (See recommendation 1)

Although no children required medication at the time of our inspection, the childminder did not have appropriate paperwork to record parental consent for administration should this be required. We signposted the childminder to current guidance "Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services" for more information. This would contribute towards children's health and safety. (See recommendation 2)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. By 31 January 2022 the provider must ensure children receive the right support at the right time by developing accurate personal plans. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) personal plans are updated at least once in every six months or when there has been a significant change in the child's health, welfare or wellbeing needs
- b) accurate plans are in place to meet children's long-term health needs, for example, a plan for asthma
- c) children and families are consulted on their needs, rights and choices, recording this in their personal plan.

This is to comply with Regulation 5 (Personal Plans) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that the childminder's skills and knowledge is consistent with Care Inspectorate document, "Guide for Providers on Personal Planning: Early Learning and Childcare" and that support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To limit the risk of the spread of infection and ensure children's safety and well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic the childminder should improve infection prevention and control practice. The childminder should develop a Covid-19 policy and review the risk assessment to reflect this guidance, and share these with parents of children attending her service. This will help promote a shared understanding of the guidance to keep children safe and well.

To support this the childminder should refer to the Scottish Government's current Covid-19 guidance for childminders; "Coronavirus (Covid-19): childminder services guidance", which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot> and "Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Daycare and Childminding Settings)" which can be found at; <https://hub.careinspectorate.com>.

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

2. To support children's health and well-being the childminder should develop an appropriate process for managing medication safely. This should include, but is not limited to:

Ensuring appropriate written permission is obtained from parents prior to administering any medication.

Accurately recording the administration of any medication and sharing this information with parents.

When developing this process the childminder should refer to "Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services" which can be found at; <https://hub.careinspectorate.com>.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state; "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective". (HSCS 1.24)

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found that the childminder's home environment was well maintained, clean, warm and welcoming for children attending the service. The childminder used her living room for the children to play in, making good use of the space available. A range of toys and resources were available to children and we found these to be clean, in good condition and appropriate for children's individual needs and interests. On the day of inspection, we saw three minded children choosing the toys they wanted to play with.

Children had access to a secure rear garden through patio doors in the childminder's kitchen. The childminder told us that children did not normally go outdoors to play in the colder weather. We highlighted to the childminder that in order to support children's health and wellbeing, she should ensure that they have the opportunity to play outdoors in the fresh air daily. This is particularly important during Covid-19 as outdoor play reduces the risk of transmission. (See recommendation 1)

The childminder was aware of her responsibilities to ensure a safe environment for children and had written risk assessments in place for her garden and places within the local community. We have asked the childminder to review her risk assessments to ensure that they were current and reflected changes to her environment. The childminder agreed to do this.

We asked the childminder how she would support children with personal care routines such as nappy changing. The childminder told us that she did not have a designated area where children could be changed safely and privately. The childminder did not wear gloves and an apron during personal care routines. To reduce the possible spread of any infection we have asked the childminder to review her nappy changing practice and procedures to ensure they are reflective of Health Protection Scotland's guidance, "Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)". (See recommendation 2)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To limit the spread of infection and promote children's health and wellbeing the childminder should provide opportunities for children to play and exercise outdoors daily.

This is to ensure the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that; "As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment". (HSCS 1.32)

2.
To limit the possible spread of infection the childminder should review her nappy changing practice and procedures to ensure they are reflective of Health Protection Scotland's guidance, "Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)".

This is to ensure the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that; "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice". (HSCS 4.11)

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school. At the time of our inspection, we found that the childminder had three children in her care who were not yet attending primary school. However she told us that she was expecting another two year old child to be dropped off. This would have meant the childminder would have been operating over her registered numbers and could have put children's safety at risk. In addition to this the childminder's two year old grandchild was at her home being looked after by the childminder's husband. We discussed our concerns with the childminder and asked that she contact the child's parent to advise that she could not care for the child. The childminder should ensure that she also keeps a register of children attending the service. (See recommendation 1)

During our visit we observed times when the childminder was attending to the personal care needs of her grandchild, and when the childminder's husband was attending to the needs of minded children, for example feeding a baby a bottle of milk. This meant that at times the minded children were in the care of the childminder's husband. Although we observed warm and caring interactions between the childminder's husband and the children, he is not registered as a childminder or as a childminder's assistant. (See recommendation 2)

We discussed how a planned approach to keeping up to date with best practice and legislation, would support the ongoing development of the service. The childminder had not participated or kept up to date with changes to policy or guidance. (See recommendation 3)

We saw evidence that the childminder held appropriate and valid public liability and car insurance. This contributed to the health and wellbeing of children and families using the service and provided reassurance.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1.
The childminder should ensure that she does not plan to operate outwith her registered numbers.

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).

2. The childminder should ensure that only people registered to care for children do so. If the childminder requires the support of her husband to care for children she should submit a variation to the Care Inspectorate to request that he is assessed and registered as an assistant.

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 "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" (HSCS 4.24).

3. To support children's well-being, learning and development, the childminder should identify and access suitable training and self-directed study, and apply their learning in practice. The childminder should prioritise the areas that we have identified for improvement within this inspection report, including, but not limited to; child protection, first aid, personal planning, medication and infection prevention and control.

This is to ensure the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards which states; "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

Grade: 2 - weak

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 service should have a personal plan for each child in their care. These should show how the children's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met and must be reviewed at least once every six months.

This ensures health and social care standards that state;

"My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a carer plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices." (1.15)

This recommendation was made on 6 July 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We were concerned that the childminder had not progressed this. We have made a requirement under the quality of care and support section of this report that the childminder must develop and implement personal plans for all children.

Recommendation 2

The childminder should access training and professional development opportunities to strengthen her knowledge of best practice.

This ensures health and social care standards that state;
"I use a service that is well organised and managed." (4.23)

This recommendation was made on 6 July 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not participated in any training or development opportunities since her last inspection. In order to improve experiences and outcomes for children we have made a further recommendation that the childminder further develop her skills and knowledge.

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	
16 Jan 2020	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
10 Nov 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
2 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
17 Jun 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
4 May 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
22 May 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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