

Johnston, Catriona Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 24 March 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2007967975

Care service number:
CS2007167749

Introduction

Catriona Johnston is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of 7 children under the age of 16 years, at any given time, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school, including no more than 1 child who is under 12 months.

The service is located on the outskirts of East Wemyss, Fife, close to the local primary school, beach and other amenities. Children have access to a dedicated play space in the childminder's home, as well as a downstairs toilet and an enclosed rear garden.

What we did during our inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 March 2022 between 08:15 and 10:15. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings as well as information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation, we:

- spoke with four children and observed their play
- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed documents.

Views of people using the service

Children were happy, settled and confident in the childminder's home. They told us that they enjoyed spending time with the childminder, playing with the toys and seeing the cats. Children enjoyed spending time together and, once other children went to school, the remaining child had fun one-to-one time with the childminder which they clearly enjoyed.

We were unable to speak with parents and carers during our inspection, however, the childminder showed us some feedback from parents and carers which was positive and suggested they were happy with the service they received.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

What the service did well

- Children were offered a fun, welcoming and caring experience by the childminder.
- Children had access to a good variety of play resources which were tailored to their needs and interests.
- Children often spent time out in the local community, helping them to feel connected to the place they live.
- The childminder was meeting children's needs consistently as a result of having good personal plans in place that detailed significant events in children's lives.

- The childminder was keen to learn and develop which meant the service had improved, in line with best practice and relevant guidance.

What the service could do better

- Children's personal plans could be improved to offer more information about children's development, including how the childminder is supporting children's individual needs.
- Children should be offered more access to interesting and open-ended resources which promote their curiosity and creativity.
- Snacks for children could be healthier and more nutritious, in line with best practice guidance.
- The childminder should think of ways to ask the views and opinions of parents and carers in a way which helps to improve the service. This will help families feel included and respected.

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 found a number of strengths that impacted positively on children's outcomes, with a few areas for improvement. As a result, we evaluated the quality of care and support as good.

Children were nurtured and cared for in an environment where they felt comfortable, secure and confident. The childminder respected their views and spent time getting to know their unique personalities and interests. One child told us how much they enjoyed spending time there because they got to play with the childminder's cats. This experience helped the child to settle before going to school and supported them to have a positive start to the day. Helping to care for the pets safely also helped children to be responsible.

Children had a say over what they played with and there were examples of children's work displayed. Celebrating their work openly in this way helped children know that they were respected and valued by the childminder.

The childminder offered a valuable service to families when they needed it most, including when they needed respite care. There was a good working relationship between the childminder and the local authority which meant children and families were offered the right support at the right time. The childminder was flexible when offering sessions to parents and carers, understanding their needs and building positive relationships with them. This meant they felt respected, valued and listened to.

The childminder spoke about each child as an individual and used this knowledge well to meet their needs. Basic important information about each child was being recorded in children's personal plans and these were updated so that everyone understood how to best meet their needs.

The childminder was keen to learn more about how the personal plans could be improved. We discussed how significant events in children's lives, as well as conversations with them and their families could be included to show how the childminder was supporting them when they needed help and guidance.

Children were offered snacks, such as fruit, in addition to the packed lunches they brought from home. Some of the options available could be healthier and we shared relevant guidance on healthy eating to support the childminder in offering more nutritious snacks. Improving children's snacks would have a more positive impact on children's general health and wellbeing.

Children were safe and protected as a result of the childminder's good understanding of what to do if they had concerns about a child's health, safety or wellbeing. There was a simple policy in place to support families in understanding how the childminder would deal with concerns, reassuring them that action would be taken quickly. More detail could be added to the child protection policy and we shared the local authority's own guidelines to support the childminder's learning and development in this area. This will ensure that the childminder has a more specific understanding of the processes which apply in the area.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated the quality of environment as good, where several strengths outweighed areas for improvement.

There was a good balance between cosy spaces for relaxing and open areas for play in the dedicated play space. A small tent offered a private space for children to relax and rest, while still being close to the childminder and the rest of the group. Children could choose from a good variety of toys and activities and the childminder had chosen the resources available to meet individual children's needs. There were some interesting objects that stimulated children's senses and curiosity. Some of the play resources available meant children's creativity and curiosity was limited. The childminder had started to include some natural and open-ended materials so that children could create more interesting and exciting play. We agreed that developing this area would offer children a better quality play experience and encouraged the childminder to continue this area for development.

The childminder's home was safe, clean and well-maintained. There were appropriate infection prevention and control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, the home was cleaned regularly and the childminder had been gradually updating the home with new carpets.

Children were able to choose what they wanted to play with from the accessible storage solutions the childminder had put in place. This storage also helped to keep the environment safe and uncluttered, reducing the risk of accidents. We asked the childminder to ensure that close attention is given to cleanliness when any works are being carried out in the home. This will ensure that children remain safe and healthy, even when changes are being made to the space.

Children had opportunities to play outdoors to support their physical wellbeing, for example, climbing on the frame in the garden or visiting the local park. By using local amenities well, the childminder offered children a good variety of active, physical play experiences in the fresh air. When leaving the home and spending time in the community, the childminder ensured children were kept safe, setting clear boundaries and taking important resources such as a First Aid kit and contact details for parents and carers. Older children were also given appropriate levels of responsibility to help keep themselves and their friends safe. This gave children the chance to build independence and skills for life.

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

We evaluated the quality of management and leadership as good, where strengths meant children had a positive experience and improvements could be made to maximise their wellbeing.

Children benefitted from the childminder's motivation to improve the quality of experience they were offered. The childminder had actively looked for opportunities to learn new things and had carefully considered what training would have the most positive impact on children first. Having completed a relevant qualification in early learning and childcare, they had used this experience to make changes that helped to meet individual children's needs. We were confident that the childminder would continue to improve, while undertaking a degree based on supporting children in their early years.

The childminder had used some best practice guidance and training to update their policies and procedures.

They had also made positive changes to the home so that children and families experienced a good quality service. The childminder acted responsibly when considering how to keep children and families safe and healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic and had implemented appropriate processes to support this. As a result of this focus on developing the service, children and families were happy with the quality of experience they received and we were confident that their wellbeing was the main priority for the childminder.

Parents and carers were able to discuss what their child had been doing each day when they picked their children up from the childminder's home. There were relaxed and trusting relationships between the childminder and the families who used the service, which helped to create a homely and nurturing environment for children. We advised the childminder to ask children, parents and carers for their views more formally as this would help families to feel more respected and included in the development of the service. This would also support the childminder to understand more fully what is done well, what evidence there is to show this and what they can do next.

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

Recommendation 1

The childminder should develop: 'All about Me' personal plans for each child which document and record children's personal and individual care needs reflecting the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators. They should be used to record the learning and developments of children.

These must be reviewed with parents and updated every six months or sooner if required.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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).

This recommendation was made on 23 October 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Each child had a personal plan in place and this recorded their needs, interests and some of their play experiences. Significant events were also recorded to ensure that the childminder had a clear picture of the child's life. Relevant information was shared with other professionals when this was appropriate. We asked the childminder to continue to develop the personal plans to be more detailed and recognise a wider range of support children were being offered in the service. However, the personal plans had improved sufficiently to meet the recommendation.

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	
19 Sep 2019	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 3 - Adequate
6 Mar 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good
29 Nov 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
3 Feb 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed

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