

Dani's Little Explorers Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 26 April 2022

Service provided by:
Danielle Begley

Service provider number:
SP2019990920

Care service number:
CS2019377822

Introduction

Dani's Little Explorers is provided from the childminder's home in a residential area of Kilsyth, North Lanarkshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of four children at any one time up to 16 years of age.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks, and other amenities. The children are cared for in the downstairs of the property, and access the bathroom upstairs. They also go for walks in the local community.

What we did during our inspection

This was a short-notice announced inspection which took place on 22 April 2022 between the hours of 10:00 and 11:00. Further discussions with the childminder, and feedback took place on 26 April 2022. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluations we:

- Spoke with two parents of children using the service
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice
- Reviewed documents.

Views of people using the service

For this inspection, we received views from all parents of children registered at the service. They told us that they were very happy with the care their children received and said that the childminder knew their children well. Parents commented that they liked the home from home environment, and highlighted communication as a strength of the service.

We observed that children were happy, settled and well connected to the childminder.

Self assessment

We did not ask the service to submit a self-assessment in advance of this inspection. Issues relating to quality assurance, acting on feedback from people using the service, and the quality of the services improvement plan were considered as part of this inspection.

What the service did well

The childminder was warm, kind, and caring, helping children feel settled, loved and secure.

The pace of the day was relaxed, giving children time to settle and build connections with the childminder and their peers.

The home was clean, tidy and bright, creating a pleasant environment for children and their families.

Communication with families provided opportunities for discussions about how to meet children's needs.

What the service could do better

Children could be better supported to develop their play and learning through access to more toys and experiences.

To support children to achieve, the childminder should develop children's personal plans.

To ensure continuous improvement of the service, the childminder should familiarise herself with best practice guidance and use knowledge gained to evaluate and improve children's experiences.

To minimise the spread of infection appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn during nappy changing.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Children attending the service were happy and settled. They had positive relationships with the childminder who was kind and compassionate. There was lots of chatter and cuddles, helping children feel safe and secure.

The pace of the day was relaxed and adapted to children's needs. There was time to rest and to play. One parent commented that 'the day is built around the needs of the children'.

Settling in procedures impacted positively on children's wellbeing. Children attending the service had started at a time where COVID-19 restrictions prevented adults from entering the childminder's home. To ensure connections could be formed, the childminder met new families outdoors or at soft play areas, and gathered verbal information from families that supported meeting children's needs. We asked the childminder to record and review children's needs within individual personal plans. These would help the childminder to further support children's health, wellbeing, safety, and learning. See recommendation 1.

Children enjoyed a relaxed and sociable snack at a child sized table in the living room. Children could independently access drinks throughout the day, helping to keep them hydrated.

The childminder gave a satisfactory account of her roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, contributing to keeping children safe. The childminder agreed that participating in further child protection training would strengthen her knowledge around identifying potential signs of abuse.

To ensure that children are supported to develop their learning, the variety and quality of their play experiences needed to improve. We discussed with the childminder how children would benefit from greater choice, and the opportunity to explore, and become curious about their world. See recommendation 2.

The childminder was aware of safe sleeping guidance, however we found that there was nowhere safe for young children to sleep in the home, and they instead tended to fall asleep in buggies when on walks. The childminder agreed to provide safe sleeping facilities that met children's needs.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To ensure that children's health, safety, wellbeing, and development needs are met, the childminder should develop personal plans that set out how children's needs will be met.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 'my personal plan (sometimes referred to as my 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).

2. To support children to develop their learning, confidence, and creativity, the childminder should improve the quality of children's play experiences. This includes, but is not limited to, offering more choice, accessing outdoors more, and including books in play.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 'as a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem, and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS1.31).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Children received care in a home from home environment. The living room was a bright welcoming space with lots of natural light and soft furnishings to relax. Children cosied up on the couch to get comfortable and feel safe.

Children were confident and had free to access spaces within the childminder's home to meet their needs. For example, using the space in the hallway to play with wheeled toys.

A variety of safety measures contributed to protecting children from harm. For example, safe storage of hazardous materials, blind cords being stored out of reach, and use of stair gates. However, we asked the childminder to develop a risk assessment that took account of all areas that children access. This would enhance approaches to identifying hazards that impact on control measures being implemented to keep children safe.

Regular walks in the local community provided children with fresh air, contributing to positive wellbeing. However an increased variety of outdoor and community experiences would provide opportunities for children to explore a natural environment, support good health, and extend their play. The childminder had made a positive start on upgrading the home garden to create a safer place for children to play. At the time of the inspection the safety of this space was being reviewed for use. We recognise that use of a safe home garden would impact positively on the quality of children's experiences.

To help children develop their ideas, thinking, creativity and curiosity about the world, they needed opportunities to explore a wider variety of toys and materials. We made a recommendation under quality of care and support in relation to this. Greater accessibility and choice of play materials would support this.

The childminder's home was clean and tidy, however to limit the potential spread of infection some hygiene practices could be improved. We observed a nappy changing experience where a child was changed on the couch in the living room. We reminded the childminder that children should be changed on a wipeable mat, and that gloves and an apron should be worn to minimise the potential spread of infection. See recommendation 1.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. To minimise the potential spread of infection, children's nappies should be changed in line with good practice guidance. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of a wipeable changing mat, and use of gloves and an apron.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Communication with families strengthened meeting children's needs. Parents told us that they welcomed the daily feedback and social media updates, commenting that it kept them well informed about their child's time at the service.

The childminder knew children and their families well, and had positive relationships with them that supported meeting children's needs. Parents told us that the childminder was flexible and adapted practice if it meant children would be happier, settled and comfortable. For example, increasing changes when a child had nappy rash.

The childminder had participated in some training that contributed to keeping children safe. For example, food hygiene, paediatric first aid, and keeping up to date with COVID-19 guidance. The childminder should now focus on updating their skills and knowledge in relation to providing high quality play and learning experiences for children. Increased knowledge of best practice would support reflection about improvements needed.

Membership with the Scottish Childminding Association supported the childminder to keep up to date with developments in the sector. The childminder had found this particularly useful throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and had used guidance received to alter practice that kept children and their families safe.

On the day of the inspection, we found that the childminder's public liability insurance had expired. We were satisfied that this had been addressed before the inspection ended, with a new policy in place. However, we found that some other important records were not in place. For example, accident forms and personal plans. We made a recommendation under care and support about developing personal plans, to ensure children's health, wellbeing, safety and development needs are met.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

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 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

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

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