

Julie's Childcare Service Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 11 April 2022

Service provided by:
Julie Keiller

Service provider number:
SP2012983403

Care service number:
CS2012307484

Introduction

The childminder lives in a quiet residential area in Lochardil, Inverness. Childminding takes place in the downstairs of the home, with children accessing the toilet upstairs. Children also have access to a fully enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

The childminder is registered to provide care to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. The numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family. Overnight care is not provided.

What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection carried out by one inspector on Monday 11 April 2022 between 13:15 and 15:45. We gave feedback to the childminder onsite on the day of inspection.

During this inspection we gathered information from various sources. We observed children at play and the interactions between the childminder and children. We looked at various documents and discussed these with the childminder. Five children were present during the inspection who were observed to be happy and comfortable in the childminder's care.

Views of people using the service

An email request was sent to the parents and carers using the service, asking them to contact the inspectors to provide feedback on their experiences. Comments from parents include:

"If Julie ever changed jobs, we would be broken hearted, she is a great person, great manner and my child just loves her."

"She is welcoming, nice manner, caring and calm."

Comments from children include:

"That's my snake toy, he has black bits on his body."

"Watch how high I can kick this ball."

"Is the tower as high as me yet?"

"I want two hungries, one in each hand!"

Self assessment

The childminder had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We reviewed the service's quality assurance systems and discussed the importance of these being developed and implemented to improve outcomes and experiences for children attending the service. Further details can be found under the quality of management section of the report.

What the service did well

- Children enjoyed some good opportunities for active, physical play outdoors and exploring the local community and parks.
- The childminder had developed strong, positive, and trusting relationships with both the children and their families.
- Children were being cared for by a kind and responsive childminder who listened carefully to their views and interests, respecting them as individuals.
- The childminder provided a homely, caring, and nurturing environment for children to play and learn.

What the service could do better

- The childminder should develop a system to reflect, and self-evaluate on how the service is performing, to see what is working well and what needs to be improved. This will help to identify suitable training or self-study.
- The childminder could consider developing her service through the use of more natural, open ended loose parts play to encourage curiosity and problem-solving skills for the children in her care.

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	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder knew the children in her care well and confidently discussed individual children's personalities and their likes and dislikes. She understood the importance of building positive, trusting relationships with children and parents. Daily updates for children were shared with parents, through social media and at pick up and drop off times. This supported the childminder to work collaboratively with parents on key areas, such as naps and toileting. This approach supported parents and children to feel confident and secure in the continuity of care.

Snack was a relaxed and sociable experience. During the afternoon, while the children were in the local park, snack was offered to them by the childminder, giving them a choice on when they stopped their play to come to eat. Snack was a healthy choice of rice cakes, mini pancakes and fruit, with the children bringing their own water bottles. The childminder supported children to clean their hands using cleansing wipes and sanitiser and to choose what they wanted to eat, chatting to them whilst they had their snack. This contributed to children making healthy choices and feeling respected and valued.

Each child was valued as an individual and their needs were met effectively. Basic important information about each child was completed with parents, prior to children starting at the service. In addition, the childminder had begun to introduce personal plans for children. We discussed how significant events in children's lives, could be included in these to support children when they needed additional help and guidance. We directed the childminder to the personal plan guidance available on the Care Inspectorate hub. This would support children's care and support to be flexible and responsive to individual's current needs.

Children were safe and protected as a result of the childminder's understanding of what to do if they had concerns about a child's health, safety, or wellbeing. There was a simple, clear policy in place to support families in understanding how the childminder would deal with concerns. We spoke with the childminder about updating her child protection training to support her learning and development in this area. This would support her to have up to date and relevant knowledge to continue to keep children safe and protected from harm.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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 well ventilated. She had developed an infection control policy and risk assessment to minimise risks of infection during the Covid 19 pandemic, which had been shared with parents. Children were able to choose what they wanted to play with from the well-planned and accessible storage boxes the childminder had put in place within the living room. This storage also helped to keep the environment safe and uncluttered, reducing the risk of accidents. These measures all helped to keep children safe and healthy in the childminder's care.

Children were encouraged and supported to be active and to explore their local community. The childminder responded to children's requests to visit local parks to enable them to play and learn outdoors through active play. She supported them to manage risks whilst climbing the trees within the park, standing at a safe distance, and helping when asked. Road safety was promoted by the childminder who spoke with children whilst they walked to the park, reminding them of safe distances, stopping at pavements to look and listen for traffic. This supported children to build their self-confidence and learn how to keep themselves safe.

There was a wide variety of toys and activities available for children to choose from each day both indoors and outside. The childminder listened to children's interests and tailored their experiences so they could explore these further, including some children's current interests around snakes. However, some of the play resources available meant children's creativity and curiosity were limited due to a lack of open ended, natural play resources. There was a strong reliance on plastic resources, which limited children's play experiences. The childminder had started to include more interesting, natural, and open-ended materials to create more opportunities for interesting and creative play, including stones, shells, tubes, and bottle tops. She explained these were accessed by the children when requested. We directed the childminder to best practice guidance including Space to Grow, Out to Play and the Loose Parts Toolkit, available on the Care Inspectorate hub. Increasing the range of natural and open-ended resources would support children to develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity in their play experiences.

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

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The childminder clearly enjoyed caring for children and had developed positive relationships with parents that supported her to meet children's needs on a daily basis. As a result, the childminder's practice met children's basic needs. However, there was no clear system in place to evaluate the service and identify areas for development. We suggested the use of best practice documents would support the childminder to identify improvements that would have a positive impact on outcomes for children. We signposted the

website, My Childminding Journey and guidance documents such as Realising the Ambition, A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare and our bite sized sessions available on the Care Inspectorate hub as a good starting point (**see recommendation 1**).

Regular communication with children and parents was well established and maintained. The childminder used feedback from families to adapt the care and support she provided to meet children's individual needs. She also used social media to stay connected with families on a regular basis providing information for parents on how their child's day had been, activities and interests, mealtimes, and intimate care routines. This supported families to feel included in their child's care and feel valued as individuals.

The childminder had engaged in basic training opportunities, these included first aid and food hygiene supporting her to keep children safe. We identified some gaps in her professional knowledge and skills, which had led to limited opportunities to support the development and improvement of her service and the quality of children's experiences. We advised the childminder to seek professional development and training opportunities to enhance knowledge of current best practice guidance and legislation to contribute to improved outcomes and experiences for children. We signposted her to the website, My Childminding Journey and to our Care Inspectorate hub for further information and current best practice guidance documents including, Realising the Ambition, bite size improvement sessions and a Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare available from the Care Inspectorate hub (**see recommendation 2**).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To support high quality outcomes for children and families, the childminder should introduce clear systems in place to evaluate the service provided.

This should include, but not limited to:

- Using best practice guidance documents including Realising the Ambition and My Childminding Journey to assess the service she provides and identify areas for development.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

2. To improve her service and improve outcomes for children, the childminder should engage in professional learning and development opportunities.

This should include, but not limited to:

- Identifying and engaging with training, best practice guidance documents and professional development opportunities.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS. 3.14).

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

Date	Type	Gradings	
6 Apr 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
9 Apr 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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