

Country Bumpkins Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 1 June 2022

Service provided by:
Margaret Maitland

Service provider number:
SP2019990656

Care service number:
CS2019376142

Introduction

Country Bumpkins Childminding is a childminding service provided by Margaret Maitland from her home in Drumclog, Strathaven, South Lanarkshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children under the age of 16. Numbers are inclusive of members of the childminder's family.

The service is situated in a rural location with opportunities to explore the local natural environment. Nurseries, schools and parks in nearby towns and villages are accessed by car. The children have access to the open plan living room, dining area and kitchen, a designated playroom, bathroom and a large garden which surrounds the house. Due to the size and nature of the garden, children will be supervised outdoors at all times.

What we did during our inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 31 May 2022 between 12:30 and 13:45 hours. 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. This was the first inspection of this service.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with minded children,
- had telephone calls/email correspondence with parents of children who attended the service,
- spoke with the childminder,
- observed practice,
- reviewed documents.

Views of people using the service

One minded child was present during the inspection. Although too young to comment, they were happy and settled in the childminder's care. Two parents contacted us by telephone. They were both very happy with the service provided and the care, support and play experiences offered to their children. Two older children told us they liked to play in the garden after school.

Self assessment

We did not ask the childminder to complete a self assessment in advance of this inspection.

What the service did well

The childminder was nurturing, caring and responsive to the child in her care over the course of the inspection. This created a calm, relaxed environment for children. They were aware of the importance of maintaining children's safety both indoors and outdoors and had undertaken relevant risk assessments and actions to ensure this.

What the service could do better

The childminder should ensure all records are reviewed and updated when required and become more familiar with the notifications which must be submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very 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 significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this theme as very good.

The childminder was nurturing, patient and calm as they settled the minded child and their own child for a nap. They followed the children's individual routines, played soothing music, provided their comforters and cuddled each child. This created a safe, secure and loving environment for sleep.

The childminder knew the care and support needs of all children very well. Communication methods such as conversations when dropping off or collecting children, written daily diaries, texts and photographs were in place. This ensured parents were included and informed about their child's routine and activities and their views and suggestions respected. One parent commented, 'Both my children have been treated very much as individuals. Margaret has been so helpful and supportive with transition to nursery.'

The childminder had ensured current information about each child was reflected in their 'all about me' records and personal plans and individual next steps agreed with parents. We advised the childminder to record when each child's targets/next steps had been achieved. This would support children's development and progress.

Children's highchairs were placed around the dining table for lunch. The childminder sat and ate alongside children, supporting children where required. This provided positive role modelling and created a relaxed, homely atmosphere. Healthy food and drink options were in line with current nutritional guidance and daily food intake shared with families. The menu took account of individual children's dietary requirements and preferences and contributed towards children's health and safety.

The childminder was aware of current medication guidance. Although there were no completed medication records to sample, a safe storage area and blank forms were in place. This contributed to children's health and safety should medication be required.

The childminder had undertaken child protection training. This had improved her knowledge and given her confidence in her role and responsibilities in protecting children from harm.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this quality theme as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder had recently moved home and had risk assessed all areas, both indoors and outdoors to ensure these were safe for children to access. We advised reviewing and updating these as planned home improvements progressed. This would ensure children's safety as changes were made.

The children had access to a designated playroom and open plan living room, dining area and kitchen. This layout offered space for children to play, make choices and access a variety of toys and resources independently which were stored at their height.

All areas were visibly clean and tidy. The childminder was vigilant with infection prevention and control procedures for handwashing, nappy changing and cleaning. This contributed to a safe and hygienic environment.

The large gardens and the rural setting offered children a wide range of outdoor play and learning opportunities. Improvements to the perimeter fencing had been undertaken to contribute to children's safety when playing outdoors. One child told us, 'I like to play with the toy rockets in the garden after school.'

The childminder knew the importance and benefits of play experiences which took account of children's interests, preferences and varied stages of development. One parent commented, 'I like that there is some routine or structure, for example, they are reading the 'Hungry Caterpillar' story and planning activities around this. However, Margaret is also really responsive to the children's ideas. She knows them well and treats them very much as individuals, planning activities to suit.'

A floor book of photographs and written information detailed a variety of activities the children had been involved in. Comments included, 'Painting the ground soon became snowman painting. Child-led activities are so wonderful, expanding the learning experience and creating something wonderful. Isn't he the best snowman you've ever seen!' We advised extending this valuable record by including the children's comments and artwork.

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 this quality theme as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Strong relationships had been built and maintained with children and their families. Children and families were invited to share their views and suggestions. This contributed to children and their parents feeling respected and included. Parents told us, 'Margaret informs us through photos, texts and the diary. She is very accommodating and flexible. I honestly can't think of anything to improve, but if we had any issues or concerns, I would feel confident in approaching Margaret in person or by phone. We have a very good relationship. We can see that she is kind and loving to all the children.'

Now that the service is more established, we advised the childminder to undertake a more formal approach for the self-evaluation of the service, create an improvement and action plan. Although a training log was in place, completing an evaluation record would demonstrate the impact and positive outcomes each training session had for children, the childminder and the service development. We signposted the childminder to bitesize sessions and 'The Hub' section within our website to support this improvement focus and to access current guidance and good practice documents.

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/children-and-young-people/childminding/>

The childminder should become more familiar with the records care services must keep and notifications which must be submitted to the Care Inspectorate. This would include formal notification of any planned refurbishment of the premises or any changes in service delivery. We have copied the link below for more information.

https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/4002/records-childminding-services-must-keep-and-guidance-on-notification-reporting_covidupdate.pdf

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

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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