

Susy's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 29 April 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2019990746

Care service number:
CS2019376777

Introduction

Susy's Childminding Service provides a service from a property in a quiet residential area of Whitburn, West Lothian.

The conditions of registration state:

The childminder may care for a maximum of 6 children up to 16 years of age these numbers include the children of the childminders family:

Of those 6 no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school;

Of those 3 no more than 1 is under 12 months.

The childminder has an assistant.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the lounge area which has a dedicated play space. There is a homely dining area within this space. The upstairs bathroom is also used by minded children. Children have access to a spacious, enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

What we did during our inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 April 2022 between 11:15 and 14:15. 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 evaluation we:

- gathered feedback from three parents, two via email and one on the telephone. We chatted to the three minded children during the inspection,
- spoke with the childminder and the assistant,
- observed practice and the daily life of the service,
- reviewed documents.

Views of people using the service

Parents told us they were very satisfied with the level of service. Parents spoke about the positive relationships between them and the childminder. This supported a continuity of care for their children. Parents said the childminder was warm, kind and supportive. It was clear parents valued the childminding service and were happy with the care of their children.

All three children were not yet attending primary school. We gathered their views through observations of play. All three children were relaxed and engaged throughout the inspection visit.

Self assessment

We did not ask the childminder to complete a self-assessment in advance of this inspection. We considered the approach to self-evaluation and improvement within the quality theme of Management and Leadership.

What the service did well

Children benefitted from warm, responsive care. This promoted their emotional wellbeing and supported the development of secure attachments. The childminder provided a homely, nurturing environment for children to play and learn.

A wide variety of resources and experiences enabled children to make choices about where to play and what to play with. This enabled them to follow play experiences that interested them. Resources and experiences supported children to have fun and learn new skills.

The childminder made good use of natural environments. The garden area offered children a range of experiences that promoted their natural curiosity and inquiry. Outings within the local community enabled children to learn about the world around them and supported positive wellbeing through a connection to the natural world.

What the service could do better

The childminder should further develop children's personal plans to help the recording and evaluation of children's wellbeing and development. To ensure information remains meaningful, a consistent approach to the reviewing of children's information should be implemented. Personal plans should be easily accessible at all times so the childminder can readily access children's information and review any changes.

The childminder should review and update her child protection knowledge and policy to ensure it is tailored to the service and provides clear information for the childminder to follow.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

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

The childminder supported children in a nurturing, calm way. This helped children to feel valued and secure. They actively engaged the childminder in their play and conversations. Parents told us the childminder was flexible, supportive, and welcoming. They said they felt confident in the childminder's care of their children.

Children were achieving and active because the balance of experiences and resources were interesting and varied. Children were able to engage in sustained and meaningful play which supported their creativity and inquiry skills. For example, the good range of building materials supported children to make complex models

and promoted their critical thinking skills. The childminder asked meaningful questions and suggested prompts that supported children to further explore their ideas through play. These interactions promoted children's learning and development.

Children's independence was promoted during the mealtime experiences. Children were able to chop their own fruit. This helped them to develop their skills and confidence. The mealtime was a sociable experience. The childminder sat with children, encouraging conversation, and offering support. This meant mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and safe.

The childminder knew children well and was respectful of individual needs and interests. Routines and experiences were fun and flexible. Throughout the session, the childminder prioritised the needs of the children.

Children's personal plans included key information that supported the childminder to plan for children's care. For example, the childminder recorded information about medical needs and allergies and had measures in place to manage these needs. However, for some children the information had not been regularly reviewed with parents. To ensure the information remains meaningful and up to date, a consistent system of review should be implemented.

Children would also benefit from the childminder developing a system to record and evaluate their learning and development over time. This would help the childminder review children's needs, progress and achievements and consider any next steps or additional support they may need.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

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

The well-planned environment supported children to play, relax and be social. The lounge space had been recently adapted and developed. Within a dedicated play area open storage units enabled children to make choices and gave them space to develop their play.

Children could access a range of freely chosen activities and experiences. There were resources available to promote communication and language, creativity, problem solving, role-play, and early mark-making. This resulted in children being engaged and having fun. Children had access to some open-ended materials that promoted their curiosity and inquiry skills. The childminder was aware that continuing to add more open-

ended, natural materials could further support children to explore and learn through creative play.

Outdoors children were experiencing high levels of wellbeing as they explored the interesting, inviting, well-resourced garden. They had opportunities to develop their physical skills and confidence with a range of equipment such as a slide, and ride on resources. The childminder understood the importance of sensory and exploratory play. For example, children used a well-resourced mud kitchen, and the childminder was developing a water wall. The space and resources allowed children to be creative and explore a range of ideas.

The childminder recognised the benefits children experienced from being outdoors. Children went on regular outings to local, natural areas such as ponds and woodlands. These visits supported them to learn about the world around them whilst experiencing the positive impact being in nature can bring.

Children's safety was promoted as the environment was clean, and well maintained. However, aspects of practice around handwashing should be improved. Children washed their hands throughout the day but at lunchtime the childminder replaced handwashing with the use of wipes. This does not meet best practice guidance in relation to infection, prevention and control. The childminder was receptive to advice regarding this and agreed to change this practice with immediate effect. This will further support children to develop a good understanding of healthy hygiene habits.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

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

Children were comfortable and relaxed within the assistant's care. The assistant role modelled positive interactions in the short time observed. Children experienced a calm, warm environment as the assistant had a gentle and supportive manner when engaging with children.

The assistant supported children's play and was aware of how to safely manage the play space. For example, sensitively supporting children to use the toilet or wiping up spills.

Children's wellbeing was promoted as the assistant had undertaken training in relation to child protection and first aid. The assistant was well supported by the childminder, who made sure they were clear on how to report any concerns and manage accidents. To maintain children's safety and wellbeing, the childminder should continue to support the assistant to engage in relevant learning and development opportunities. This

could include developing a training and learning plan for the assistant to ensure their knowledge and skills remain consistent.

Although the assistant was not always in the service with minded children, the childminder ensured information was shared with them in relation to the children's care. This meant children still experienced a continuity of care if the assistant was present.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Effective communication meant parents were included in their child's experiences. For example, they received regular photos, text messages and updates to a closed social media page. This allowed them to talk to their child about the experiences. These methods also enabled them to give feedback to the childminder. Parents said the childminder was approachable and respected their wishes. As a result, children received consistent care that complimented their home routines and experiences.

Storage of children's personal plans should be further developed. On the day of the inspection visit the childminder could not locate the plan for one of the children. Whilst this was rectified before the end of the day, there was potential for the childminder to be without key information should it be needed. At all times, personal plans should be easily accessible. This is to ensure the childminder can readily access children's information and review any changes.

Child protection training had supported the childminder to develop an understanding of how to protect and safeguard children. They were knowledgeable about identifying indicators of abuse and reporting concerns to lead agencies. However, to ensure there is clarity about the management of child protection situations, the childminder should revisit their learning so they are clear when concerns could be discussed with parents and when this may not be possible. To further support this area of improvement, the child protection policy should be reviewed and updated. This is to ensure it is in line with the most recent local and national guidance. (See recommendation one).

The childminder promoted children's safety as they had undertaken first aid training. The childminder spoke confidently about how they would manage children's health care needs and any accidents. However, to ensure they are clear on how and when to share information with the Care Inspectorate, the 'accidents and incidents policies' should be updated to include the correct timescale for reporting to us. The childminder should become familiar with the guidance, 'Records childminding services must keep and guidance on

notification reporting' (Care Inspectorate, 2015). This sharing of information helps to support the wellbeing of children. (See recommendation one).

The childminder was committed to providing children with fun, safe and interesting experiences. They had developed a basic improvement plan in partnership with the local authority. This outlined one improvement in relation to planning for children's learning and involving children in this. This suggested the childminder was focused on supporting children to achieve and learn. To further develop a culture of improvement the childminder should continue to develop the approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning, linking this work to good practice guidance. For example, the guidance: A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare (Care Inspectorate, 2022) and Realising the Ambition (Education Scotland, 2020).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1.
To promote children's wellbeing, the childminder should review their learning in relation to managing child protection situations. To further support this area for improvement, the childminder should update the service policies to ensure they are consistent with national guidance. This would include but is not limited to, the child protection policy and the accident and incidents policy. This is to ensure the policies support the effective management of situations and provide clarity for the childminder when needed.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20) and I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources (HSCS 4.27).

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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