

Duck, Linda Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 18 May 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2005943206

Care service number:
CS2005087749

Introduction

Linda Duck provides a childminding service from their home, a first floor flat within the Tillydrone area of Aberdeen. Local parks, green spaces and schools are within short walking distances. A bus service provides routes to the city centre and beyond.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of five 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 24 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight service will not be provided.

What we did during our inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 17 May 2022 with formal feedback provided by telephone on 18 May 2022. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke to children during their play
- Gained feedback from parents
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and experiences for children
- Reviewed documents.

Views of people using the service

We observed children at play. They enjoyed a puzzle activity and visiting the local park. Children talked to us about going to the park, playing on the pirate ship, and looking through the 'hole to see far.' They liked to talk about Peppa Pig and the characters. We could see that children were comfortable with the childminder and their surrounding and knew routines such as hand washing and mealtimes very well.

We spoke to parents who told us they were very happy with the service the childminder provides. One parent said, "she is not just a childminder she has become a family friend."

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We talked to the childminder about areas of development which had taken place. The childminder should ensure that self-evaluation is part of their practice and that self-assessment records are completed when requested by us.

What the service did well

The childminder was warm in their interactions with the children and clearly cared about them. They had created a home from home environment which helped children and parents to feel comfortable when spending time there. They provided a stable, caring place for children to be.

What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to improve their skills and knowledge of up-to-date best practice guidance and use this to develop their service. They should actively work towards meeting areas of improvement set by the Care Inspectorate to achieve the standard expected.

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	2 - Weak

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated care and support as adequate where there are some strengths, but these just outweigh weaknesses. Continued performance at adequate level is not acceptable. Improvements must be made by building on strengths while addressing those elements that are not contributing to positive experiences and outcomes for children.

The childminder demonstrated their knowledge of the children, their different personalities, and traits. They had cared for most of the children over many years and had built positive relationships with both the children and their families.

The childminder understood their role in protecting children from harm. She was aware of signs of abuse and knew what action she needed to take if she had concerns. However up to date training had not been completed. This meant that the childminder was not aware of updated guidance. We have made a requirement in the management and leadership section of this report.

Children were confident and comfortable in the surroundings and were playing with a selection of toys. At times they found it difficult to get along with each other. This was not always approached by the childminder in a way that supported all children. We discussed with the childminder suitable ways of managing this type of behaviour in a more meaningful way that will support both children.

Children benefited from healthy meal times. The childminder had worked with parents who requests a light lunch to support children to eat better throughout the day at home and when attending other settings. The childminder provided homemade soups and light lunch options and fruit at snack times. Children enjoyed their meals together at a table developing good eating and social habits.

Every child had a personal plan which set out their basic needs. Reviews had taken place and included information from parents. This helped the childminder to support children. The childminder now needs to continue to consistently review and update information for each child and identify goals and achievements children are working towards.

Children's care needs were not well considered during a visit to the play park. During the afternoon, the childminder took the children to the local play park. This was not prepared for well. Children did not go to the toilet before leaving the home and soon after arrival at the park children required the toilet. They were asked to wait. When children could not wait any longer play was stopped so they could all return home. We spoke to the childminder about having routines for going to the park in place. We raised further concerns connected to this experience within the environment and management and leadership sections within this report.

The children were supported and supervised to wash their hands before and after meals. They were given opportunities to be independent but had support from the childminder when needed. This supported children to be healthy and develop an understanding about personal hygiene.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated environment as adequate where there are some strengths, but these just outweigh weaknesses. Continued performance at adequate level is not acceptable. Improvements must be made by building on strengths while addressing those elements that are not contributing to positive experiences and outcomes for people.

We observed that children were relaxed and confident using the space. The childminder's house provided a homely environment for children to play. Space for children included, soft furnishings to relax, a floor area to play and small child sized dining table for meal times. This helped create a warm and relaxed atmosphere which contributed to children being happy and confident.

Children had a small selection of toys and games to choose from. These were stored on open plan shelving within the living room or within cupboards and shelves in the spare bedroom. Children showed that they were aware of which toys there were and asked for specific puzzles, such as Peppa Pig.

Children would benefit from a wider selection of play equipment that promoted natural learning and curiosity. Open ended toys and materials were limited. This impacted on children learning and development.

Curiosity, enquiry, and creativity was not promoted and at times children's interests were lost or not taken forward. We discussed some examples of this, such as children's interest in collecting treasure. A recommendation set at the last inspection had not been met and therefore is carried forward (**see recommendation 1**).

Children would benefit from more regular and meaningful play time outdoors. Children occasionally used the concrete area outside for pedal and push along toys and sometimes went to the park. This was not regular enough to provide children with enough regular outdoor play and exercise. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. This has been carried forward (**see recommendation 2**).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To support their learning and development and to promote children's curiosity, inquiry, and creativity the childminder should:

- Provide more open-ended, natural resources for children to explore in their play.
- Ensure that children have access to a wide range of activities and experiences both indoors and out.

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

'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.' (HSCS 1.31).

2. To support their learning and development the childminder should provide children with meaningful, regular outdoor play and exercise.

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

'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.' (HSCS 1.32).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We evaluated management and leadership as weak. While some strengths could be identified, these were compromised by significant weaknesses. Without improvement as a matter of priority, outcomes for children may be compromised, or their critical needs not met.

The childminder had developed positive relationships with parents. Daily discussions, communication apps, and texts support the exchange of information. Parents welcomed the regular updates and photographs of their children.

Children's safety was compromised as the childminder was not up to date with core training and professional knowledge in key areas. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. We have now made this a requirement to be met **(see requirement 1)**.

Professional learning had not been part of the childminder's practice following the last inspection. As a result, children did not benefit from the best possible care and learning opportunities. The childminder should now identify learning needs and access opportunities related to the roles of the professional childminder and best practice guidance. They should actively use learning from these to improve their practice and outcomes for children. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. This has been carried forward **(see recommendations 2 and 3)**.

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who use the service, the childminder should develop their skills in risk assessing and put this into safe practice. An area for improvement had been made on a previous inspection to provide a robust risk assessment and policy surrounding Covid-19. This had not been met. Risk assessments had been completed for outings to Doonies Farm and Hazlehead Park. These did not however consider all the risk involved. During our visit we had to intervene before children went to the local park to explain to the childminder the risks of not taking a mobile phone with them. Whilst most children held hands and followed safety instructions from the childminder one child did not listen to instructions and ran across a road. During the visit, the childminder did not show an understanding of risks within the community. The play area was not checked before play to ensure it was safe and secure **(see recommendations 1 and 4)**.

Policies and procedures should be updated and extended in line with learning from professional development opportunities. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. This has been carried forward **(see recommendation 3)**.

Children did not benefit from the use of self-evaluation to improve practice and experiences for them. Regular and meaningful evaluation of the service had not taken place. This meant that children and parents did not have the opportunity to formally feedback on how well the childminder was meeting their needs, choices and wishes. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. This has been carried forward **(see recommendation 5)**.

The childminder was a member of Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). We championed some direct support that could be received from SCMA to support the childminder to make immediate changes and form an improvement plan to develop their service. We have provided support and improvement sessions and information on where to find best practice and guidance. The childminder now needs to make improvements to the service which are manageable and ensures positive outcomes for children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. By 12 July 2022 to support the safety and wellbeing of children, the childminder must update their knowledge and practice on child protection, first aid and food hygiene.

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 have been trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes. (HSCS 3.14); and

In order to comply with Regulation 4. (1) A provider must (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare, and safety of service users of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements of Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI2011/210).

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 5

1. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who use the service a robust risk assessment and a Covid-19 policy should be in place and shared with parents.

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

'As a child, I use a service that is well led and managed.' (HSCS 4.23).

2. To ensure positive outcomes for children and the development of their knowledge, skills and service, the childminder should source and access training, including food hygiene, first aid, child protection and behaviour management.

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

'As a child 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).

3. To ensure that the childminder provides support to children in line with best practice to keep them safe and healthy the childminder should:

- Identify what training they need to update and progress this.
- Review and update policies and procedures to ensure that they fully support them in their role and reflect current best practice.

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

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

4. To help keep children safe the childminder should ensure that they have written permission from parents and carers for any extended outings and ensure outings are fully risk assessed.

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

'I am helped to feel safe and secure in my local community.' (HSCS 3.25).

5. To improve practice and outcomes for children the childminder should develop ways of getting feedback on their service and then use this information to make positive changes.

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).

Grade: 2 - weak

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

In order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who use the service a robust risk assessment and a Covid-19 policy should be in place and shared with parents.

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

'As a child, I use a service that is well led and managed.' (HSCS 4.23).

This recommendation was made on 17 December 2020.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had provided a risk assessment however, this did not hold enough detail to cover all areas of Covid-19 practice and safeguarding measures.

Not met

Recommendation 2

To ensure that the childminder provides support to children in line with best practice to keep them safe and healthy the childminder should:

- Identify what training she needs to update and progress this.
- Review and update policies and procedures to ensure that they fully support her in her role and reflect current best practice.

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

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had not completed professional development activities following the last inspection.

Not met

Recommendation 3

In order to help keep children safe, the childminder should ensure that she has written permission from parents and carers for any extended outings and ensure outings are fully risk assessed.

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

'I am helped to feel safe and secure in my local community.' (HSCS 3.25).

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Written permission from parents to allow for outings and walks, along with a risk assessment was in place. However risk assessments were not yet robust enough to fully support the safety of outings. We spoke to the childminder about how to improve this and that any extended outings or visits to new places should be risk assessed separately.

Not met

Recommendation 4

In order to improve practice and outcomes for children, the childminder should develop ways of getting feedback on her service and then use this information to make positive changes.

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).

This recommendation was made on 30 January 2019.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children and parents were not yet part of the childminder's evaluation of her service. This area of improvement has been carried forward.

Not met

Recommendation 5

In order to support their learning and development and to promote children's curiosity, inquiry and creativity the childminder should:

- Provide more open-ended, natural resources for children to explore in their play.
- Ensure that children have access to a wide range of activities and experiences both indoors and out.

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

'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.' (HSCS 1.31).

This recommendation was made on 10 September 2021.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Open ended toys and materials were limited. This impacted on children's learning and development. Curiosity, enquiry, and creativity was not promoted and at times children's interests were lost or not taken forward. We discussed some examples of this, such as children's interest in collecting treasure. A recommendation set at the last inspection had not been met and there for is carried forward.

Not met

Recommendation 6

In order to support their learning and development the childminder should provide children with meaningful, regular outdoor play and exercise.

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

'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.' (HSCS 1.32).

This recommendation was made on 10 September 2021.

Action taken on previous recommendation

Children occasionally used the concrete area outside for pedal and push along toys and sometimes went to the park. This was not regular enough to provide children with enough regular outdoor play and exercise. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. This has been carried forward.

Not met

Recommendation 7

To ensure positive outcomes for children and the development of her knowledge, skills and service, the childminder should source and access training, including food hygiene, first aid, child protection and behaviour management.

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

'As a child 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).

This recommendation was made on 10 September 2021.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder was not up to date with core training and professional knowledge in key areas. A recommendation had been made at the previous inspection however this had not been met. We have now made this a requirement to be met.

Not Met

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
22 Jul 2021	Announced (short notice)	<div>Care and support3 - Adequate</div> <div>Environment3 - Adequate</div> <div>StaffingNot assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership3 - Adequate</div>
30 Jan 2019	Unannounced	<div>Care and support3 - Adequate</div> <div>Environment3 - Adequate</div>

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
20 Nov 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
27 Jan 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
30 Jun 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
24 Sep 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
18 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
30 Apr 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	1 - Unsatisfactory
19 Feb 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	1 - Unsatisfactory
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
28 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate Not assessed
13 Jun 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 2 - Weak 1 - Unsatisfactory Not assessed
14 Dec 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 2 - Weak Not assessed
22 Jul 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 1 - Unsatisfactory Not assessed
9 Aug 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 2 - Weak Not assessed
3 Jul 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 4 - Good 3 - Adequate Not assessed
21 Aug 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	2 - Weak 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate

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