

Jennifer's Explorers Childminding Child Minding

Carluke

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 July 2022

Service provided by:
Jennifer Allan

Service provider number:
SP2020991293

Service no:
CS2020380480

About the service

Jennifer's Explorers Childminding provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Law, Carlisle. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to the age of 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own children.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room, kitchen and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 July 2022 between 14:00 and 17:15. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since registration. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with four people using the service and three of their family members
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The childminder was good at building positive relationships with children and families.
- Effective communication with families supported them to feel included in the service.
- Children were involved in the planning of experiences as the childminder valued their ideas and interests.
- The childminder had a good understanding of children's development.
- The childminder should become familiar with the records they must keep and maintain these to support good outcomes for children.
- Personal plans should be a reflection of children's individual needs and detail how these are met.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

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| How good is our care, play and learning? | 3 - Adequate |
| How good is our setting? | 3 - Adequate |
| How good is our leadership? | 3 - Adequate |
| How good is our staff team? | 4 - Good |

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and content in the service. To support children to feel safe and loved, interactions between the childminder and children were kind, caring and gentle. Parents told us the childminder had built positive relationships with their children. Children were relaxed and confident in the service. They moved freely between the living room, kitchen, bathroom supporting their choices and wishes.

Each child had a personal plan in place. These contained some information about children and their individual needs. However, further information is needed to help ensure children's individual needs are met. We found that personal plans had not been maintained or reviewed and signed by parents. These should be reviewed and signed by parents every six months or earlier to adhere to legislation (see Area for Improvement 1).

The childminder valued parents' involvement in the service and shared information with them on a regular basis, through doorstep chats and text messaging. Information shared included children's learning and development and their daily experiences. Supporting a sense of belonging for parents. Parents told us there had not been a day without any communication from the childminder.

Children experienced a relaxed and unhurried snack time. The childminder promoted and supported the social experience by sitting alongside the children, taking part in discussions. Offerings of healthy choices took place supporting a healthy balanced diet. For example, fruit was available and children enjoyed this. To support children's hydration, they had access to drinking water throughout the day.

We found that although there were systems in place to support safe administration of medication, these were not always followed. The childminder should review these to ensure they are followed effectively.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were having fun, chatting to peers and the childminder supporting positive relationships. The childminder encouraged and supported children throughout their play. Children enjoyed the childminder being part of their play and eagerly sought more interactions. For example, supporting children to use safety scissors.

Children accessed a range of toys and materials to support their interests and learning. These included building blocks, books, Jenga, activity cubes and a role play kitchen. Children engaged with these well. To support children's choices and wishes, the storage of toys and materials allowed for children to access additional items as they wished.

The childminder had a good understanding of children's learning and development. Experiences for children varied to support children's interests. For example, outdoor experiences supported a child's interest of active play.

Each child had a folder which contained observations and photographs showing their learning and progression. Children were involved in creating these supporting them to reflect on their learning. These were shared with parents which contributed to them feeling involved in their child's care and learning. Parents told us they felt their child had developed well since starting at the service.

Opportunities for outdoor experiences included opportunities to visit the park and local walks strengthening community links. Children attended local toddler groups supporting them to make connections with other children and building relationships. Toys and materials were stored safely outdoors and included bikes, tractors and bats and balls.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing and development, the service should enhance personal plans to ensure they contain the information needed to meet children's individual needs and are reviewed with parents ever six months or earlier. This should include, but not limited to, strategies needed to support children, any changes that occur in children's lives and next steps to support children's progression.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a 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).

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

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

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The environment was comfortable and homely. There was plenty of light and ventilation for children attending and soft furnishings available supported children's opportunities for relaxation. For example, a comfortable sofa and cushions that children could access if they wished.

To support children's interests, both indoor and outdoor spaces were furnished with toys and materials by the children. The childminder recognised the importance of children self selecting these and encouraged this.

Risk assessments were not kept up to date. The childminder spoke of the process but had not recorded these. However, we found children had access to the kitchen where cupboards containing cleaning materials did not have appropriate safety locks. We raised this with the childminder who agreed to address this.

There was a pet policy in place to support safe practice around the family dog. We found this was not always followed. For example, children not handwashing after interacting with the pet. The childminder should ensure practice and policy are reflective of each other to ensure children and pets are safe.

During the inspection we found there were handwashing facilities and children were encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating as well as after using the toilet. However, we noted there was no soap for children or the childminder to use to help prevent the spread of infection. Hand soap should be available for handwashing purposes to ensure the spread of infection is minimised (see Area for Improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure the environment is safe and reflective of infection prevention and control policies, the childminder should identify potential risks and address these in a timely manner. This should include, but not limited to, ensuring there is hand soap available to support good hand hygiene, and safety locks are applied to cupboards containing hazardous materials.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe (HSCS 5.19) and 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24).

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

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

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Clear vision and aims within the service highlighted the childminder's aspirations to provide a warm friendly caring environment for children to be in. One parent told us 'I feel my children are safe and well looked after'.

The childminder worked closely with parents to share daily information on their child's day. A variety of ways were used to communicate with parents, for example, verbal discussions and text messages. The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). The ICO is an organisation that promotes good practice in data protection. Feedback from families was welcomed and acted upon to help make improvements to the service.

Children were encouraged to share their views on their experiences of the care they receive and they actively reflected on their learning contributing to them feeling involved and valued within the service.

There were a number of policies in place to support the childminder's practice. However, these did not always align with each other. The childminder should review policies and practice to ensure they are reflective of each other to support good outcomes for children.

Records were not always kept up to date, for example personal plans, risk assessments or registers of children attending. The childminder should review the records they hold and ensure these are kept up to date. This is to ensure that children are kept safe, and help to ensure their individual needs are met (see Area for Improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To help ensure children are safe, the childminder should review and maintain the records they must keep, in line with best practice. This should include, but not limited to, registers of children's attendance, personal plans and policies.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (HSCS 4.11).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

For this key question we have made an evaluation of good. This means several important strengths, as taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

There was a warm welcoming atmosphere within the home where we found children felt valued in the setting. The childminder was mindful to give each child attention, care and support supporting them to feel loved. For example, sitting at children's level, encouragement, giving children comfort if needed and fun interactions, promoting a positive ethos.

During the inspection, the childminder was welcoming and engaged well. They recognised where improvements were needed and discussed these during the inspection. They showed a commitment to making the improvements identified and acknowledged these promote good outcomes for children and families.

The childminder had a clear understanding of children's learning and how best to support these. They spoke confidently of committing to assist children to reach their full potential. A good understanding of best practice documents supported the childminder's practice with children helping to ensure each child achieves.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

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| How good is our care, play and learning? | 3 - Adequate |
| 1.1 Nurturing care and support | 3 - Adequate |
| 1.3 Play and learning | 4 - Good |

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|---|--------------|
| How good is our setting? | 3 - Adequate |
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 3 - Adequate |

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| How good is our leadership? | 3 - Adequate |
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 3 - Adequate |

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| How good is our staff team? | 4 - Good |
| 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values | 4 - Good |

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