

Twoshoes Child Minding

Musselburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 July 2022

Service provided by:
Nicola Kieran-Smith trading as
Twoshoes Nicola Kieran-Smith trading
as Twoshoes

Service provider number:
SP2008972095

Service no:
CS2008187993

About the service

Nicola Kieran-Smith, trading as Twoshoes, provides a childminding service. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminders family.

The childminder uses her home for the provision of the service. The two-storey house is in a quiet residential area of Musselburgh in East Lothian. It is close to a number of local parks and amenities. Children use the ground floor of the home for their play. There is access to front and rear gardens for outdoor activities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14 July 2022 from 9:30am - 12:00pm. 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 previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

To inform our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service and gathered the views of their families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily experiences for children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- An embedded understanding of childcare practice to promote securely attached children who were happy and having fun with the childminder and each other
- A homely environment which was arranged to provide independence and high quality opportunities for learning
- A demonstration from the childminder of an in-depth understanding of nurture, attachment and the need for fun and laughter in children's lives
- A high standard of communication with parents and other professionals to fully support positive outcomes for children.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	6 - Excellent
How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this Quality Indicator as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children received an outstanding level of nurturing care from the childminder who had an in depth understanding of nurturing approaches and attachment. This knowledge was used to support children's relationships and make them feel secure and bonded with the adults in their lives. Interactions between children and the childminder were warm and kind. The childminder understood children's emotional needs and provided sensitive responsive care to support individual children. Children sought appropriate reassurance from the childminder, which was given swiftly, and we could see that they were relaxed and confident in her care and in her home.

The childminder actively used the wellbeing indicators to provide a high level of holistic care. She shared with parents how this was achieved for example, describing how she developed respect in the childminding setting and how she worked effectively with another childminder to provide shared placements for children. One child told us: 'I love Nicky, she makes me feel safe and special.' One parent told us: 'I genuinely feel that my child is in the best possible place. They are respected for who they are as am I.' another said 'Her care is underpinned by the "Getting it right for every child" aims, which she has shared with us, and it's obvious she uses them when developing plans for each child she cares for.'

There was a great sense of fun in the childminder's home. Children told us that the childminder was 'very funny' and that they liked coming to play with her. There were appropriate jokes with children and laughing at the things that had happened during their time with the childminder. We could see that the childminder knew children and their families very well through the discussions with children about close and extended family members, school, and nursery life. The close attention paid by the childminder to events in children's lives resulted in close attachments.

Children's needs were at the heart of the service provided. Personal planning, which was the information provided by parents and children to enable the childminder to promote children's wellbeing, had been gathered and actively used to meet care and support needs. Parents were provided with regular written updates about how their child was developing and the areas which were being supported by the childminder. This included emotional, physical and social development, and areas of significant learning. One parents told us: 'She has great insight into the ages and stages of children and puts so much into her updates and planning we feel like we have learnt so much from her and know exactly how they are progressing.'

Children brought their food with them to the childminder's home. Throughout our visit children had access to fresh water to ensure they were hydrated. To promote a social experience children ate snacks and lunch at the kitchen table. During snack we chatted about food and how we should look after our bodies. Children told us that they went on picnics or sometimes had snack or lunch in the garden. Snack time was flexible and provided children with a relaxed and reflective time before they resumed their play.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning.

We evaluated this Quality Indicator as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

The childminder used the ground floor of her home as a large play space and children could choose to play where they wished. She provided rich, fun, high quality learning opportunities which along with basic play resources included: making music, making up reading stories, arts, crafts, role play, cooking and gardening. The childminder used her professional understanding of how to extend children's learning through questions and conversations.

On the day of our visit children sustained their interest in the play activities they had chosen for themselves. The childminder planned some activities around significant events or seasons of the year, but on the whole children had free choice in what they would like to do. This responsive planning followed children's interests which led to them being more engaged in their play. For example, the childminder used children's interests in pirates and treasure to plan a recent trip to the beach. Children told us excitedly, about their adventure and had many questions about pirates, treasure maps and the sea. These questions had then been used by the childminder to further extend children's knowledge.

The range of activities provided children with variety and resources could be easily added to, which extend the learning experience. For example, children were role playing with dolls which was supported by a range of clothes, baby care equipment, and space in the home corner for feeding and looking after the babies. The childminder provided care for a wide age range of children and showed skill in ensuring that all children were provided with play experiences which interested them. This quality of play provision enabled children's learning to be extended through their play experiences. Children told us that there was always lots to do at the childminder's house.

To gain a more secure knowledge of child development the childminder had completed the HNC in childhood practice. This had enabled her to assess children's learning more accurately and provide play and activities to support learning. This had been shared with parents through the regular development reports. These recognised children's achievements and recorded their developmental progress. There was photographic evidence, which was shared with parents, of the wide range of activities that children accessed. These showed the depth and sustained nature of play which some children took part in.

Play and activities throughout the day were led by children. The childminder consulted with them about what they wanted to do or where they wanted to go. The childminder had an excellent understanding of how physical play and the outdoor environment impacted positively on children's wellbeing. They could use the small garden to the rear of the home for more active play and showed us the lettuce, pansies, and tomatoes that they had planted. They went on regular walks in the local area, which was close to community amenities but also more natural areas such as woodlands and the beach.

The childminder understood the impact that Covid-19 had on some children's experiences of groups or social gatherings. She had supported children to become familiar with peers and group activities by using the local toddler group. At this group she was able to attend with children to support them when necessary but also encourage them in their group play.

How good is our setting?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The ground floor of the home was used by children. It was arranged in a way to enable children to access different areas of the home independently for their play. The childminder could appropriately supervise the rooms but also enable children to have time to play alone or have quiet time. Each room had natural light and was well ventilated to ensure that it provided a homely and comfortable place to play.

Safety features were in place to ensure that children were safe and secure at all times. Stair gates and locks on storage cupboards and bathroom cabinets were used. Children could not access the gardens until the doors were opened by the childminder. The childminder helped children to assess risks for themselves, which developed a sense of responsibility and safety for children. Children talked to us about the things they did to keep themselves safe. For example, when crossing the road or not 'scaring' yourself when climbing trees. One child told us: 'You need to be able to get down by yourself!'

The areas of the home were attractively set out for play and well kept. This showed a respect for children's right to be cared for in a safe and attractive environment. Children were encouraged to tidy up after their play to help them foster an attitude of respect for their play environment, resources, and peers. There was an excellent range of resources for a wide age range. Older children had more complicated puzzles, books and small world play resources and a range of art materials. Younger children had age-appropriate resources which could be extended as learning or skills developed. One child told us that they 'never get bored' and 'I am always busy!'

Children were well practiced at hand washing and this was second nature to them. They explained to us why and when they washed their hands. They could do this independently with the childminder supervising them at times to reinforce the process. Procedures for infection prevention and control were in place and we could see by the standard of the environment that these procedures were consistently carried out.

Although small, the outdoor areas provided pleasant places to play. The rear garden was fully enclosed and provided a safe play space. The summerhouse was set up as a cosy outdoor space for play in all weathers. Children regularly helped in the garden and had planted flowers and vegetables which helped to connect children to the natural world.

Information about children and their families was kept in a safe manner. Paper documents were held in a secure location and information held on e-mail or the childminders phone needed passcodes in order to access the information. Through her experience of counselling the childminder had an in-depth understanding of confidentiality and where appropriate information sharing needed to take place. For example, there were information sharing agreement in place for a child who has a shared placement to ensure continuity of care.

How good is our leadership?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this Quality Indicator as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had a very clear vision for the service she provided. We discussed the values of the service at length and could see from the interactions between the childminder and minded children that children's welfare and emotional wellbeing were firmly at the heart of the service. One parent commented: 'There is

nothing at all we would change. Our children have been receiving the best possible care (more than we could ask for) for the last 7 years.'

The childminder actively involved children and parents in the life of the service. Children were actively and consistently consulted with regarding the pace of their day and the activities they wanted to take part in. Parents told us that the childminder 'valued' children and provided a very 'child led' service. They also commented that communication with them was meaningful, very open and that they 'felt involved'. This level of communication helped the childminder to provide consistent supportive care.

The childminder was familiar with the processes of self-evaluation and periodically issued parents with a questionnaire to gather their views. In addition, she held an annual review of her service with parents in order for them to make comments about her service or make suggestions. Parents said that: 'In these email updates (and verbally) she always asks us if we have any suggestions or comments. We feel we can easily (and do) speak to her directly or email her at any time if there was anything we wanted to discuss.'

As part of her own reflections on her professional practice the childminder had identified that she could increase her knowledge of child development in order to help her further promote positive outcomes for children. She achieved this by undertaking a childcare qualification. We could see the positive impact of this improvement in professional understanding, through the quality of assessments she carried out to monitor children's overall development and the quality and range of play experiences she provided.

How good is our staff team?

6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children.

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder had carried out formal qualifications including the HNC in Childhood Practice. We have described in this report the positive impact that this course had on the improvement of play and learning opportunities for children and the understanding of child development that the childminder displayed.

To support the nurturing environment the childminder used her professional knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's), and good practice documents such as Realising the Ambition to provide emotional safety and security. This helped to develop resilient children who would be able to face life's challenges. We have commented throughout our report about the outstanding quality of nurture and support that children received. One parent commented that: 'It is obvious the children in her care are her top priority. Her house is full of love and kindness and our children adore her. She goes above and beyond what we would have expected and our children love going there.'

Through our discussion with the childminder she demonstrated a reflective approach to her professional development. In our observations of the childminder's interactions with children and her childcare practice we could see that professional courses were actively used to support outstandingly high outcomes for children. We discussed the plans she had to continue with her career in childcare. At the time of our visit the childminder was also working in local authority settings. She did this to gain further experience of group care and she planned to continue with this as a method of embedding her practice.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	6 - Excellent
1.1 Nurturing care and support	6 - Excellent
1.3 Play and learning	6 - Excellent

How good is our setting?	6 - Excellent
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	6 - Excellent

How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	6 - Excellent

How good is our staff team?	6 - Excellent
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	6 - Excellent

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