

McMurchie, Arlene Child Minding

Denny

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 August 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2006959085

Service no:
CS2006118856

About the service

Arlene McMurchie provides a childminding service from her home in a residential area of Dunipace, close to Denny. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age at any one time. They also provide funded early learning and childcare as part of an agreed contract with Falkirk Council.

Children are cared for in a designated playroom which is situated at the back of the home. There is direct, free flow access between the playroom, kitchen and an enclosed garden and these are separated with safety gates for younger children. The downstairs toilet is also directly accessible from the playroom. The service is also located close to schools, shops, parks and a car is used to take children to other local attractions, with appropriate insurances and safety checks in place.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 9 August 2022 between 09:00 and 11:00. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- spoke with and observed six children using the service
- spoke with three family members
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were listened to, respected and valued as individuals and they were praised and encouraged often, helping them to build high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Very good personal plans helped the childminder meet children's needs and both children and families felt fully included in keeping these up to date.
- The childminder had built strong and trusting relationships with families and tried to improve the wellbeing of the whole family to promote positive outcomes for children.
- Children had very good opportunities to play both indoors and outdoors, being active and exploring their own interests and curiosities.
- The childminder remained up to date with current best practice and the learning was used to offer children high-quality experiences.
- The childminder could now have more formal plans in place to improve the service, including how this is recorded.
- The childminder would benefit from reflecting more on how any changes to practice promote 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in the care, play and learning children experienced and these promoted positive outcomes. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced very good quality care and support that nurtured their needs and supported them to be confident. They were able to lead in planning their own routine and families told us they felt fully included in making any changes to their child's care, when this was needed. The childminder had built strong and trusting relationships with children and their families, recognising that the wellbeing of the whole family was important in promoting positive outcomes. Older children were encouraged to be independent and the childminder often praised them, recognising their individual talents and helping them to build a strong sense of self-esteem.

Children were treated with kindness, compassion and respect. The childminder listened carefully to them, watching their body language and offering appropriate support when they needed it. When their needs, rights and choices changed, the childminder responded sensitively and recorded this in detailed and meaningful personal plans. These plans clearly showed how the childminder supported children to develop and reach their potential. The childminder had a very good understanding of how to communicate with children to help them feel safe and secure, encouraging them to talk openly about any worries they had. This helped the childminder to plan how to respond in a way which supported their wellbeing. As a result, one family told us that their children "adore Arlene and feel part of the family."

Meals and snacks were provided by families and the childminder tried to make sure these were mainly healthy. Children enjoyed eating together and often took their lunches with them on outings so that it became a part of their play experience. This made it a more relaxed and social experience which helped children build positive relationships with food. Children had independent access to water all day and younger children were encouraged to drink water frequently.

1.3 Play and learning

Children explored a very good range of play experiences with the childminder. They told us about trips to local areas of interest and they loved spending time in woodland areas, exploring nature. The childminder made very good use of the local community to encourage children to remain active and build connections to their local community. There were often opportunities to take risks in their play and the childminder ensured children remained safe while allowing them to explore their own boundaries, for example, in rough and tumble play. Children were clear that their ideas and choices were used to decide what happened each day which meant they felt respected and could build independence.

The play experiences on offer helped children to develop skills for life as well as building confidence in themselves. This was done in a fun and enjoyable way and children were happy in their learning. Children were proud of the things they made and the games they played, talking to us about the fun they had in the childminder's care. This sense of success was openly celebrated and the childminder was very encouraging and positive about children's achievements. Giving children this freedom in their play meant they were more likely to be creative and reach their potential in a way which fully met their needs.

How good is our setting?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good where performance demonstrated significant strengths and very few areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were being cared for in a homely and welcoming setting that offered them space to be themselves. The playroom walls were full of children's own work and photos of them having fun and playing together. This clearly told them that they mattered and that this was a place they were valued and respected. The childminder could now consider reducing the amount of official paperwork that is on display so that there is more space for children's work which is highly valued and enjoyed by everyone.

The free flow access between indoors and outdoors created an airy feeling in the children's play space with plenty of natural light. This also increased children's choice over their own play. The childminder had thought carefully about where furniture was placed so that children could have spaces to relax, spaces to play with friends and spaces to be messy. There was a good balance between resources for older and younger children while also considering their needs and interests. This helped children to achieve and they were encouraged to play together, sharing and taking turns.

The home was very well-maintained, clean and safe. The childminder was aware of the potential risks and hazards in the home and had put appropriate measures in place to reduce any risk of children hurting themselves. When potential risks presented themselves, the childminder acted quickly to keep children safe. A wide range of hazards had been reviewed and planned for, showing that the childminder was vigilant and confident in maintaining a secure environment for children. For example, the childminder had thought carefully about how and when children interacted with the family dogs, making parents aware of this early in their child's care. This meant children were kept safe while also having a fun and enriching experience learning about looking after pets.

How good is our leadership?**5 - Very Good**

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question. We identified that practice was promoting positive outcomes and that any areas for improvement had a minimal adverse impact on this.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

All families were happy with the information they were given about their children's progress and development. They felt included and respected by the childminder and told us that they trusted the childminder to make any changes their children might need. The childminder asked for their views and opinions of the service regularly and made changes based on these requests as well as the needs, rights and choices of children. Children felt listened to and respected and were fully included in creating their own personal plan. This helped them to tell the childminder who they were and what they valued and the childminder used these meaningfully to make improvements that children valued. One child had evaluated the childminder as "ARLENE = Always Respectful Lovely Encouraging Nice (and) Excellent." This showed the strong and caring relationships that the childminder had built with individual children, including how they were involved in giving feedback creatively.

Children benefitted from the culture of continuous improvement that the childminder had created in the setting. The childminder spent significant time listening to what families needed and how improvements could be made to promote positive outcomes for children. With a very good understanding of children's individual needs and their overall wellbeing, the childminder had made changes to children's experiences that supported them to develop and learn. This had been linked to relevant best practice and the childminder understood how some aspects of practice helped children to achieve and feel valued. High-quality learning through play was at the heart of any improvements and a sense of fun and enjoyment meant children were happy and confident. The childminder had very good oversight over the setting and we asked that more formal improvement plans were created so that positive outcomes were shared more easily with those who were involved with the service.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where opportunities were taken to consistently improve children's outcomes and where practice did not require significant adjustment.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children were frequently encouraged and praised by the childminder for their unique talents and personalities which made them feel special. They were listened to attentively, responded to sensitively and the childminder nurtured them, especially when they needed reassurance. Many children spoke lovingly about the childminder and told us how they felt well cared for and positive. The childminder described the very nurturing care and support children and families were given, especially when this was needed most. The kindness, warmth and compassion the childminder offered to families extended into the local community and children were encouraged to take part through charity work. As a result, children were thriving and flourishing.

The childminder had worked hard to remain up to date with best practice and sought training that helped her to meet children's needs. We were confident that the main areas that keep children safe were well-managed and of a good quality. For example, the childminder had recently been involved in child protection training which helped her to recognise when children may be at risk of harm and how to protect their health, welfare and wellbeing. Children's care and support had also been changed and adapted to reflect new research and best practice. This meant that they were offered a very good quality of experience in the childminder's care. We asked the childminder to think about how this learning and development could be better recorded. This includes reflecting on previous practice and detailing improvements that promote positive outcomes for children.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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