

Ross, Carolyn Child Minding

Prestwick

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 August 2022

Service provided by:
Carolyn Ross

Service provider number:
SP2016988281

Service no:
CS2016349276

About the service

Carolyn Ross provides a childminding service from their family home in Prestwick, South Ayrshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to the age of 16, of whom no more than 3 may be of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be less than 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

The service is close to local primary schools and nurseries, parks, woodland areas, and other amenities. Childminding takes place on the rear ground floor of the home with children having access to a designated playroom, and the family kitchen/dining area and toilet. Children also have access to a large, enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 25 August 2022 between 15:00 and 17:30. Feedback was provided virtually on Monday 29 August 2022. 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 reports, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with three children in the service
- spoke with two parents at collection time
- reviewed emails sent directly to us from three families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and interactions with children
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Aspects of the childminder's practice were excellent, delivering positive, high quality experiences for children in their care.
- Children had access to an excellent range of age appropriate toys, activities and experiences which supported their language, literacy, numeracy, and overall play and learning development.
- The outdoor area provided excellent opportunities for active play and learning about nature with a childminder who took a risk benefit approach when planning activities which supported children's independence and confidence.
- The childminder maintained exceptionally detailed care plans which were created and reviewed frequently in collaboration with children and their parents ensuring their health and wellbeing needs were supported appropriately.

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?	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?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where performance had major strengths and supported positive outcomes for children.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

During the inspection there were three minded children present. It was clear they had a positive relationship with the childminder who was kind, caring and compassionate in their interactions which helped the children feel welcomed and loved. Children experienced a warm, nurturing response from the childminder who provided lots of praise, attention and reassurance which helped the children feel safe and secure.

We observed children having lots of fun, with plenty of laughter and engagement with their peers and the childminder throughout our inspection. Children were confident expressing their wishes in relation to their care such as where they wanted to play, what toys they wanted to play with and what they wanted to eat for their lunch. This enabled children to lead their play and showed us they felt comfortable their voice would be listened to by the childminder. One parent told us "Carolyn will often ask the kids what they would like to do, go or play after school. Often when I arrive to pick my child up I can hear the kids and Carolyn laughing and playing through the door."

Children experienced an extremely positive mealtime experience that was sociable, unhurried and relaxed. Children were prompted and praised appropriately and were confident in the process. We particularly liked the manner that the childminder used with the children. The childminder sat with the children and joined in with their daily reflections which further enhanced the experience for the children. After snack children independently cleared their plates, and moved any food rubbish to the compost tub, which promoted their independence and life skills.

Food choices were nutritious and reflected current guidance. Fresh water was also available for the children to self-serve, again, promoting their independence skills. The childminder appropriately prompted the children throughout the session to have a drink of water as it was a warm day.

Children were cared for by a childminder who knew them and their families well. Children attending the service had exceptionally detailed personal plans in place that were up to date, reviewed regularly with families, and clearly identified next steps. This ensured children's current health, wellbeing and developmental needs were supported effectively by the childminder. The childminder used a range of communication methods to effectively share information about children with their parents. This supported effective and meaningful involvement from children and parents in planning for children's individual care and helped overcome barriers to children's learning and development. One parent told us "Carolyn provides plans and updates at regular intervals. The plans are devised and aligned to wellbeing indicators. At the time of setting these plans Carolyn asks for my input and asks if there is anything I want her to work on with the children. Carolyn also invites feedback from the children on the plans."

We sampled accident and incident records and found these were completed appropriately. We also sampled the medication policy and found this was in line with current good practice guidance. Consent forms were completed appropriately and signed by families.

The service had an appropriate infection prevention and control policy and procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and the childminder. The childminder prompted children to wash their hands at appropriate times.

The childminder actively engaged with other local childminders and support groups. The childminder had actively sought opportunities within the local community to increase their childminding skills and knowledge.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were meaningfully and actively involved in leading their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences that promoted choice and independence. Free flow access to activities indoors and outdoors supported children to explore their ideas, build on their interests and stimulated their creativity. Children independently accessed a wide variety of toys and open-ended materials. On the day of inspection, we observed them playing with the outside mud and sand kitchen, they got water from the taps in resources that were available. They set up and played with mud pies, using a weigh scale and ice cream scoop. Children were confident collecting the toys or materials they wanted to play with further supporting their independence. We spoke with the childminder about developing skills for providing innovative and creative ways to build on children's interests to scaffold and further extend their play opportunities.

Children's needs were supported by a childminder who understood their preference for playing and exploring the outdoors. Children were supported daily to go on walks in the local area, play at the local park, access forest sessions and the beach when they chose to do so. Opportunities to play outdoors enhanced children's play and supported their health and wellbeing.

Children's views were listened to which ensured they felt valued and respected. The childminder had introduced a photograph diary to record children's voices, views and comments in a meaningful way and to ensure they could take ownership of their play and learning when accessing the setting. These photographs were shared daily with parents to ensure they were involved and could chat with their child about their experiences.

Play experiences developed children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy. For example, we saw recent evidence of children engaged in miniature seat building activities in the garden. The childminder, through observations and assessment, identified and suggested activities to engage in with the children that supported their individual needs. The childminder added daily observations and regular updates to individual children's files which ensured information was up to date with next steps and plans to support development were being done actively and in collaboration with parents.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as very good, where performance had major strengths and supported positive outcomes for children.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder had created a warm, welcoming and homely environment for children. All areas used were well-maintained and visually risk assessed which meant they were safe for children. We asked the childminder to further develop their written risk assessments for the use of the trampoline and to reflect the procedures to follow. This would allow all risks to be identified and plans put in place to minimise these, ensuring the children were safe at all times.

Children used the designated playroom for play activities. The room also provided a warm, cosy space for them when they were tired or wished to relax. The layout of the room had been well considered to ensure children had sufficient space to engage in their play activities. Children could freely access toys and games that were suitable for their ages and stages of development. On the day of the inspection visit, the weather was warm so the children freely accessed the outdoor environment. They had fun with the mud kitchen that was well resourced and ensured children had plenty of opportunities to extend their play and learning. This showed children were listened to and allowed the childminder to support children's learning based on their interests.

We observed the childminder supporting a child to get ready in advance for their swimming session; it was clear that the childminder knew the child extremely well. These opportunities supported children to be aware of timescales and develop important life skills.

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.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A clear vision, values and aims had been created for the service which reflected the aspirations of the childminder, the children and their families. The ethos of children was at the centre of all play, learning and developments. This was evident in discussions with the childminder, when reviewing their processes and procedures and confirmed in feedback received from all families accessing the service.

Children and their families' views were actively sought through a variety of means such as face to face discussions, questionnaires and messenger feedback which ensured a holistic approach to quality assurance and personal planning was in place. For example, six monthly one to one review meetings with families ensured children's success, achievements, next steps and strategies were agreed through reciprocal discussions which enabled children to reach their full potential. All parents told us they had confidence in the childminder in helping their child grow and develop.

The childminder was driven and motivated to continue to develop and improve her service. The childminder engaged in self-reflection, self-evaluations and had created an improvement plan to continue to develop her setting in connection to the new quality frameworks. Adaptations had already been made in line with good practice guidance, feedback from children and their families as well as implementing learning from training. For example, families completed annual feedback questionnaires for the service, suggestions were then actioned by the childminder and reviewed. This told us the childminder had the capacity to support continuous improvement and ensure positive outcomes for the children in her care.

Documents, assessments and observations introduced by the childminder were linked to current legislation, frameworks and best practice guidance. For example, the Health and Social Care Standards and SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators. Processes established ensured policies, procedures and risk assessments were reviewed regularly which further supported quality assurances within the setting.

A complaints procedure was available to families providing accurate information about who to contact if they had concerns about the service provided. Families told us they would be confident raising any concerns with the childminder.

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.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder engaged positively and professionally in the inspection process and was responsive during any discussions. It was evident the childminder was highly committed to their role and they talked passionately about supporting children to reach their full potential by listening and respecting their views, wishes and wants.

The childminder had undertaken recent training in observation, assessment and planning with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) which we could see clearly in their practice. They had also engaged in several courses to develop their practice. For example, first aid, food hygiene and safeguarding children. The childminder advised us they kept up to date with best practice and legislation through their registration with SCMA, the Care Inspectorate provider updates and linking with their local childminding network. The childminder engaged with self-reflection after training, which was recorded in a notebook, and reviewed the impact of training on children's experiences and outcomes. For example, after self-study on loose parts play, the childminder reviewed and developed her resources to support children in extending their play and learning opportunities. The childminder then observed and evaluated the impact on children's play to ensure positive outcomes had been achieved.

The childminder proactively engaged in professional discussions online, and face to face, with other local childminders to discuss new guidance, documents and good practice ideas. They accessed a local community support hub to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding of childminding to ensure they continued to deliver a high-quality service to the children in their care.

The childminder was skilled, knowledgeable and experienced. They placed children and their families at the heart of their work and were committed to continual improvement of the service. The childminder engaged with children in a warm, responsive and respectful manner that supported their self-esteem and confidence. The childminder engaged in skilled questioning with children to support their curiosity and learning. They promoted positive behaviour by role modelling soft tones, kind words and friendly engagement with the children. We saw some lovely examples of this during our inspection visit.

The childminder was aware of their responsibility in safeguarding children in their care and had an appropriate child protection policy in place with relevant contact details.

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	6 - Excellent
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?	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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