

Montessori House Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
24 August 2022

Service provided by:
Sylwia Borowiak

Service provider number:
SP2020991207

Service no:
CS2020379842

About the service

Sylwia Borowiak, trading as Montessori House, provides a childminding service from her property in a residential district of Edinburgh. The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school, and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family.

Any other conditions unique to the service:

2. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate.
3. Overnight care may not be provided.
4. Ewa Szczerbinska is employed as an assistant.

Children are cared for in the ground floor rooms of the property, including school/work rooms, kitchen dining area, office area and toilet. Children have access to a large enclosed garden to the rear of the property. The property is close to local amenities and public transport links into Edinburgh city.

Montessori House follows the Montessori theory of children's development and corresponding educational methods. The service is in partnership with Edinburgh City Council to deliver primary education.

About the inspection

This was a short notice inspection which took place on 24 August 2022, between the hours of 11:30 and 13:30. 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 two people using the service and spoke with two parents on the telephone
- spoke with the childminder and her assistant
- observed practice and daily routines
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from the positive relationships the childminder had with them and their parents.
- Children benefitted from attending a service which was well organised and stimulating.
- Children enjoyed going to the service.
- Children physical health benefitted from spending time outdoors in the garden and on outings.
- Children benefitted from the childminder and her assistant following the Montessori method of hands-on learning.

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 aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We graded this quality indicator as very good.

Children benefitted from the childminder's warm and nurturing approach and were happy and content in her care. Interactions we saw were positive and the childminder listened to children's ideas and interests. This contributed to them feeling valued and respected. Parents we spoke with told us that their children are "happy" and "love it" there.

The childminder knew children well and was confident in describing how she supported their individual needs. Personal plans held all relevant information of children and included effective settling in procedures to support children's transition into the setting. Plans were reviewed regularly to ensure information was current and relevant. Parents received daily updates of children through verbal feedback at pick up times. This contributed to parents feeling included in their child's day.

Children experienced warm, fun and caring daily routines that recognised the opportunity to promote close attachments. For example, children's tendencies and sensitivities were supported as they grow and reach different ages and stages of development.

Healthy lifestyles were encouraged through daily active play and fresh air, for example yoga and dancing. Lunch was a positive experience and we saw children relaxed and chatting together with the assistant. They poured their own drinks and were encouraged regularly to stay hydrated throughout the day. Children had planted vegetables and once grown these would be included into cooking and baking. This helped to give children gain a sense of responsibility and achievement in growing their own produce.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We graded this indicator as very good.

Children were having fun playing with a range of activities which supported their play and learning. Resources were easily accessible which meant children were able to explore independently and lead their own play and learning.

The childminder followed the Montessori method which focused on nurturing children's interests and skills and fostering a love of learning. Children benefitted from freedom to explore their environment through the use of natural resources. This helped them develop their curiosity, imagination and critical thinking.

Observations of children's play and learning informed planned experiences to support their interests and extend learning. We saw these reflected in daily written observations. These were shared with children and parents and praised achievements, encouraged conversation and helped children to recall events through related activities.

Children benefitted from regular outings within the local and wider community to extend their learning and experiences. These had included parents on trips to museums and art galleries. For example, children were discovering the works of William Shakespeare and bringing him to life through art, listening to the written word and visiting museums.

Children benefitted from daily outdoor play in the large garden. They were learning life skills through caring for the natural environment and each other. For example, measuring trees, looking at birds, helping with the chickens, woodwork bench, art materials, climbing frame with tunnel and ropes and trampoline.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment. It was spacious, clean, well furnished and ventilated. Infection control practices in place minimised the spread of infection and supported a safe environment for children.

Resources were easily accessible and included a range of Montessori learning materials which children looked after and respected by ensuring materials were returned to where they belonged. Parents were happy with the range of activities the childminder provided and one parent told us the "environment is brilliant" and another told us their child got a "good education".

The ground floor of the property provided different zones for different types of learning. For example, school work room, area for movement, kitchen area with large table for meals and activities and smaller room for quiet independent play.

The secure enclosed large garden offered high quality learning experiences. Children were encouraged to absorb everything in the environment by experiencing it and being part of it. Parents commented children were "outside a lot" and "growing in confidence" with all that was on offer.

Children were kept safe as the childminder was clear about her responsibilities to look after children safely and supported them to learn awareness of risk in their play. Children were learning about road safety when we all went out for a walk as the childminder revisited procedures for crossing roads. This supported development, confidence and helped children learn about their own safety.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had a professional approach and a strong commitment to providing positive outcomes for children. She engaged well with the inspection process and was responsive to any suggestions given.

Effective communication from the childminder had built strong relationships with parents. They told us they always received information about their child's day and the childminder and her assistant were "phenomenal" at what they did. One parent told us they felt very confident in the way the childminder supported children's individual needs. Successes and achievements were communicated with families, which strengthened the partnership approach towards meeting children's needs. All parents informed us they felt included in their children's day.

Policies and procedures were in place to keep children safe and support their health and wellbeing. These were shared with parents prior to starting at the setting and were regularly reviewed. The childminder kept up to date with best practice guidance through a range of approaches. These included regularly accessing the Care Inspectorate Hub.

There was a strong ethos of continuous improvement which included a shared vision with parents and children. The childminder was aware her self-evaluation process promoted high quality of care and support which was tailored towards the needs of children and families. To further formalise her self-evaluation process the childminder should familiarise herself with the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged children'. On a Friday both ladies reflected on their week with the children in order to ensure positive outcomes for each child.

Improvement planning was shared and parents were asked for their thoughts and ideas. For example, a parent suggested walking with Alpacas and another making a solar oven. A solar oven was made and children enjoyed toasted marshmallows with it.

Children benefitted from the childminder's commitment to ensuring their knowledge was up to date. They were aware of the Care Inspectorate's Hub to access learning documents. This ensured they were well informed of updated guidance to support their practice. The childminder had high aspirations and confidence in her capacity to support children and families to reach their full potential.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.3 Staff deployment

The childminder had a professional approach towards her role as she was able to draw on life experiences and knowledge gained from relevant Montessori childcare training. We observed the childminder and her assistant to be skilled when incorporating their learning in practice. Both ladies used skilled questioning, supportive interactions and were responsive to children's natural curiosity, needs and interests. The childminder and her assistant had a good understanding of children's personalities, which meant their individual needs were met by her tailored approach. As a result, children were well supported in their play, learning and development.

The assistant had a clear understanding of the ethos and culture of the setting. Children were well known to them and they had good relationships with them all. They had attended training suitable for their role, for example Montessori methodology, child protection, first aid and food hygiene. The assistant was well liked by parents and one told us their child was "flourishing" in the setting.

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
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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