

Izzy's Den Child Minding

Ratho

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 September 2022

Service provided by:
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Service provider number:
SP2020991196

Service no:
CS2020379766

About the service

Izzy's Den is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, 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 children of the childminder's family.

The childminding service is located in the Ratho area of Edinburgh. Children have access to a spacious family room with kitchen/diner area, and a downstairs toilet. The service has an enclosed back garden. There is on-street parking outside of the service.

The service is close to local schools and nurseries. Other amenities such as shops, parks, and nature areas are nearby.

At the time of the inspection the childminder only provided care for school-aged children.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 22 September 2022 between 13:45 and 18:15. 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 previous registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with four children using the service and five of their parents/carers;
- Spoke with the childminder;
- Observed practice and daily life;
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children's wellbeing was promoted by the childminder's warm and responsive interactions.
- Children were able to be creative through a range of planned and spontaneous activities.
- Children's safety and wellbeing was supported as the childminder provided a warm, homely, well-maintained environment.
- Strong partnerships with parents helped the childminder to provide children with a continuity of care.
- To help evaluate the care and support children receive, the childminder should ensure personal plans are reviewed every six months, or when required.
- The childminder should improve their understanding of legislation and good practice relating to early learning and childcare to ensure they maintain the conditions of registration.
- The childminder should develop their knowledge and understanding of good practice guidance to further build upon the positive experiences children had at the setting.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing Care and Support

Children were nurtured and supported throughout their daily experiences because the childminder provided warm, attentive, and respectful care. One parent said, "Izzy is great with the kids!"

Children were sensitively supported through changes and transitions. The childminder understood the importance of nurturing children's emotional wellbeing. For example, they had developed positive strategies for them to manage situations such as disagreements between peers, or changes in routine.

Meal and snack times gave children a home from home experience. The childminder sat with children, which supported the flow of conversation. Mealtimes were an unhurried and social experience that promoted a sense of connection.

Children were supported to reach their full potential as experiences and interactions took account of their own ideas, wishes, and needs. Parents were included in their child's experiences through daily communications, regular discussions, and the sharing of photos on a closed social media page. The successes and achievements shared with parents strengthened partnerships and ensured parents felt involved in their child's experiences.

Personal plans were in place and held essential information that helped keep children safe. For example, medical needs and allergen information was recorded. To ensure consistency and to support the development of plans as holistic working documents, the childminder should develop the approach to reviewing plans regularly with parents and children. We signposted the childminder to Care Inspectorate Guidance: 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning: Early Learning and Childcare.' (Care Inspectorate, 2021).

Children must be cared for in a group size that meets their needs and reflects legislation. This is to maintain their safety and wellbeing. The childminder had on a few occasions cared for more children than the conditions allowed. When we alerted the childminder to this issue, they took immediate steps to address the concern. To support the provision of consistently safe and supportive care, the childminder must develop an understanding of the conditions of registration and childcare legislation. We have made an area for improvement in relation to this within the key question 'How good is our leadership?'

1.3 Play and Learning

Children's interests influenced the flow of the session and the experiences provided. During the inspection, children worked together to create short news bulletin videos. They had fun, problem solved, and shared their ideas in innovative ways. Children were able to explore their own talents and be creative.

Children's right to play was supported by the range of experiences and resources. Children were able to make independent choices about how and where they played. For example, some children chose to draw and craft while others engaged in role-play.

The childminder was supportive of children's play and they actively invited the childminder into their experiences. This showed children felt respected and valued. The childminder used skilful and supportive questions to extend and promote children's play. These interactions enabled children to have fun, problem solve, and learn new skills.

Planning for play was informal but took account of children's needs and interests, meaning their individual preferences were catered for. To further support children to explore different ideas and influence their experiences, the childminder could introduce tools such as floor books and mind maps. These tools can help children to reflect on their play and learning while generating new ideas and experiences.

The childminder recognised children's needs, achievements, and progress through observations and discussions. This was helping them to track and monitor children's needs and development. To further ensure children have the support and experiences that are right for them, the childminder should continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of making quality observations. These observations should allow the childminder to evaluate children's needs and interests, and plan support as needed.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The warm and homely environment met children's needs and interests. A secure garden promoted safety while supporting children to be active in the fresh air. The home was light, clean, and spacious, with a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Children's safety and wellbeing was promoted through effective infection prevention and control practices. Children were supported to wash their hands at key times. For example, before dinner and after visiting the toilet. This helped to limit the spread of potential infection.

To promote children's safety and ensure a comfortable environment, regular checks and assessments were conducted by the childminder. These measures were covered in the childminder's policies and procedures which helped to guide them on how to keep the home safe. For example, the childminder had developed a Covid-19 policy to manage the recent pandemic. Children received first aid and comfort if they had any accidents. To ensure parents are clear on how accidents or incidents are managed, the childminder should include clear information within their procedures, including outlining how accidents will be recorded.

Spaces in the home reflected children's current interests such as having a spacious area for arts and crafts. Children could move freely, relaxing, resting and playing as they wished. The spaces in the home were comfortable and promoted a family ethos. The environment gave children the message that they mattered and that their needs were respected.

The range and quality of resources supported children's enjoyment and the development of new skills. To further support children's natural curiosity and inquiry, the childminder should continue to develop the use of open-ended natural materials and loose parts. Open-ended materials can give children opportunities to be creative and explore innovative ideas.

Information was stored in a safe and effective way meaning the privacy of families was respected. Any digital communication was managed safely with sufficient permissions in place. For example, parents had agreed to the use of a closed social media page for information sharing.

The childminder's approaches to the use of digital technology safeguarded children. For example, children were supervised while using internet enabled devices, and suitable controls were installed. The childminder discussed the use of digital technology with parents so they were involved in the decision making around its use. Children were provided with positive opportunities in a safe way.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The vision and values of the service reflected the home from home environment. The childminder knew families well, and effective communication strengthened these positive relationships. A parent told us, 'We had an informative discussion before my child started going and we continue to do this on a regular basis.'

The childminder regularly consulted with children helping them to influence the service. For example, monthly menu planning enabled children to suggest meals and give feedback on what they liked. Feedback was also gathered from parents through the use of questionnaires and open dialogue. This helped the childminder to buy additional resources or make plans to help children settle in. Self-evaluation processes were informal and this was an area that the childminder had identified they would benefit from developing. To further develop the cycle of continuous improvement, the childminder should explore further ways to evaluate the service and implement a clear improvement plan based on this. We signposted the childminder to resources on the Care Inspectorate Hub to 'Support with improvement planning and self-evaluation.' (See area for Improvement 1).

The childminder had an awareness of best practice relating to early learning and childcare. For example, they used Covid-19 guidance to help them safely manage the service and adapted as the guidance changed. The childminder understood how engaging further with best practice resources could enhance the service. For example, they had identified that loose parts could be an area that needed developed. The childminder was receptive to guidance and advice provided during the inspection. We signposted to resources such as 'My World Outdoors' (Care Inspectorate, 2016), and 'Loose Parts Play: A toolkit' (Inspiring Scotland, 2019). To continue to develop the service and enhance children's experiences, the childminder should continue to build on their knowledge and implementation of best practice resources.

Children must be cared for in a group size that meets their needs and reflects legislation. This is to ensure their safety and wellbeing. During the inspection, we alerted the childminder to the conditions of registration for the service and an error they were making when planning sessions. The childminder took swift action to address this and liaised with families about the issue. To support the childminder to maintain conditions of registration and safely plan the service, they should develop their understanding of guidance and legislation relating to conditions of registration. This would be particularly in relation to how many children can be cared for at any one time. This will help to embed learning from this inspection about maintaining conditions. (See area for Improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To continue to improve outcomes for children, approaches to improvement planning and self-evaluation should be developed. The childminder should become familiar with best practice guidance and use this to support the approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

2. To ensure children are cared for in a size of group that is right for them, and to adhere to conditions of registration, the childminder should develop their knowledge and understanding of legislation and guidance relating to the 'Operating a childminder service.'

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state: 'If I experience care and support in a group, the overall size and composition of that group is right for me.' (HSCS, 1.8), and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS, 4.11).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder had a kind, caring and consistent approach which helped children to feel secure. The childminder had a good understanding of each child's personality and interests. As a result, their individual needs were met and their interests were supported. Respectful relationships were a key strength and children benefited from the childminder's warmth and encouragement.

Clear policies and procedures were in place to protect children from harm. The childminder understood the role they had in keeping children safe.

The childminder used information sent from the Care Inspectorate and professional support networks to inform their knowledge and practice. The childminder had completed child protection training and used this in their practice and policies. However, since registration, other training and learning opportunities had been more limited. This meant the childminder had missed opportunities to build on positive practice and introduce other current best practice into the service. To enhance experiences and outcomes for children, the childminder should engage in further opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge, and understanding through a range of different training and learning formats. (See area for Improvement 1).

The childminder would benefit from keeping a learning record reflecting on any training and learning, and the impact it can have on their practice. This would support the childminder to identify any gaps in their practice and also consider how learning can be implemented to enhance outcomes for children and families. Plans for professional learning should be based on self-evaluation, the needs of the service, and the children who attend.

Areas for improvement

1. To continue to improve the service and outcomes for children, the childminder should access training and learning to develop her knowledge and skills. This should include, but not be limited to, first aid training, early learning and childcare practice, and loose parts play.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS, 3.14), and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS, 4.11).

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

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

How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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