

Karen MacLennan Childminding Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 September 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2019990661

Service no:
CS2019376186

About the service

Karen MacLennan Childminding 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 the childminder's family.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the dining room, living room and have access to a downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 September 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with two people using the service and one of their family and had email contact with five families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Feedback was given by telephone on 29 September 2022.

Key messages

- The childminder was very good at developing meaningful relationships with children and their families.
- Children's interests were promoted through high quality play and learning opportunities.
- The childminder's home was a warm and welcoming place for children.
- Good use was made of the local community and places in nature.
- There was a clear vision for the service.

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?	4 - 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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to support their overall wellbeing. The childminder spoke with the children in a calm, respectful manner. Parents told us "Our child is always really happy to go and they have a warm and close friendship with Karen, who knows them very well. They love spending time with Karen" and "Our children love going as Karen is so friendly and kind and makes their experiences personal".

Parents provided meals for their children. They experienced a calm and sociable mealtime as the childminder sat with the young child and spoke about their home life. The after school children had opportunities to bake their chosen dishes and were offered opportunities for independence. A parent told us "They particularly like when they get to do baking and pizza making".

Children's overall well being was supported through effective use of personal planning which took account of the wellbeing indicators. Effective information sharing was used by the childminder to promote consistency and continuity of care. For example, we heard them sensitively discussing a change in a child's sleep routine with a parent. We reminded the childminder that personal plans should be updated every six months or sooner if there is a change in a child's needs.

Information was shared daily with parents through WhatsApp and verbally when they collected their child. This was confirmed by parents who said "We are kept well informed during the day through Whatsapp, our agreed method of communication. We always get a verbal update at the end of the day too" and "Communication through dialogue, texts and photographs".

The childminder had only administered medication once. The safe administration of this medication had been recorded and signed by parents in line with best practice guidance.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were meaningfully and actively engaged in leading their own play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned high quality experiences. The childminder spoke about the children's age and stage of development, their interests from home and how she used this information to plan quality play and learning experiences. A parent told us "Karen takes our child on at least one activity every day. She takes him to a wide variety of interesting things. She seems to make a special effort to take him to places she knows he will enjoy".

On the day of the inspection the children had visited the local toy library to return toys. This allowed toys and resources to be changed in line with children's interests. There were a wide range of toys attractively displayed in the living room for children to choose from, based on the children's interests. The childminder was going to include dolls for role play, as a child was due to have a younger sibling. This would provide an opportunity for the child to role play and enable them to express themselves in their new role as an older sibling.

All children had individual folders with high quality observations and photographs of them engaged in activities. These observations combined with the childminders skilled interactions promoted children's creativity and curiosity. When looking at the photographs, a young child excitedly told us about the trip to Boness and Kinneil Railway when Thomas the tank engine had parked beside them whilst they had their lunch. This trip had been planned to support and extend a child's interests in trains.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections to their own and wider community. For example, children spent a lot of time outdoors in nature, visiting the local river to splash about and use their fishing nets, collecting shells at the beach, visiting Vogrie and Dalkeith country parks.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The childminders home was clean, well maintained and comfortable. There was plenty of natural light and ventilation. It was a warm and welcoming place for children to be and had ample room for their needs.

The indoor and outdoor environments took account of the children's stages of development and learning. They reflected children's current interests with appropriate resources to support play and learning. The garden had a trampoline and football goals which the childminder said was used a lot by the after school children.

Parents told us "Karen has a warm environment, a garden and is always organising things outside" and "The environment is good, there is adequate space to place indoors and outdoors".

Infection prevention and control practices followed by the childminder provided high levels of safety for children. Appropriate use of gloves and aprons was made when changing children's nappies. Children washed their hands at appropriate times to prevent the spread of infection and keep themselves safe.

Children's personal information was securely stored and complied with best practice legislation. The childminder was informed about her responsibility in the protection of children's personal information. This contributed to keeping children safe.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder was aspirational and wanted to provide quality care and outcomes for children. She was keen to receive feedback on how she could improve her service.

The childminder had a clear vision for her service, which included introducing more loose parts and natural resources and expanding the outdoor activities. She had recently found an outdoor toddler group which she planned to visit with children. This would further extend the children's interest in the outdoors.

Children's and parents views had been gained through the use of questionnaires. The responses had all been very positive and the childminder asked about different ways of asking for feedback so that she receives more suggestions and ideas of how to improve her service.

We told the childminder about the 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' (PDSA) cycle of improvement and signposted her to the care inspectorate website The Hub.

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/>

The childminder's policies reflected her vision for the service of providing a caring and respectful environment for children. For example, the 'Positive behaviour policy' stated 'children gain respect through interactions with caring adults who show them respect and value their individual personalities'. This demonstrated how the childminder's values inform her practice.

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.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder had previously worked in a childcare setting and had a Scottish Vocational qualification (SVQ) 3 in childcare. This contributed to her knowledge about child development and the experience she brought to her service.

Good use was made of continuous professional development opportunities. She had attended training in outdoor play and child led planning and discussed the positive impact this had on how she provided her service. For example, taking the lead from children when planning experiences and furthering the interests of younger children.

The childminder's warmth, kindness and compassion enabled children to feel valued and loved. She recognised the importance of nurturing, warm responsive attachments and interactions. We saw the strong bonds she had with the minded children and that they felt safe and secure in her care.

Comments from parents were very positive and included:

- "It is clear that our child feels happy, secure and confident when he is around Karen and that Karen is able to comfort him if he feels distressed".
- "My child always runs straight in and doesn't even look back to say bye. He is very comfortable and feels safe with Karen".
- "Karen is like a home from home for my children. They love going as Karen is so friendly and kind and makes their experiences personal".

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the registration of the service. 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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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