

Craigie, Karen Child Minding

Carnoustie

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 January 2023

Service provided by:
Karen Craigie

Service provider number:
SP2003901231

Service no:
CS2003002740

About the service

Karen Craigie provides a childminding service from her home within the area of Carnoustie, Angus. Children are cared for on the ground level of the home within a dedicated playroom at the rear of the property. Children have access to a rear enclosed garden, dining space and bathroom. The service also benefits from being close to local amenities such as schools, greenspaces, shops, and parks.

The setting is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 8 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family and household.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 January 2023 between 09:15 and 12:30. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice and children's experiences;
- reviewed documents; and
- reviewed email feedback from parents / carers.

Key messages

- Children were helped to feel safe and cared for as the childminder provided warm and nurturing interactions that supported their overall wellbeing.
- The childminder had developed strong relationships with parents, carers and children. Information was routinely shared about children to ensure their care needs were met.
- A wide range of rich, learning experiences was provided which supported children's literacy, numeracy, imagination, creativity, and critical thinking skills.
- The childminder demonstrated and maintained a professional attitude to learning and development to enhance outcomes for children.
- The childminder used feedback from families and best practice information to guide their practice. A formalised self evaluation process and quality assurance systems were at an early stage of development.

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

There were three young children present on the day of the inspection who were all very happy, confident and relaxed in the care of the childminder. We found that the childminder provided very good care and support for the children. Parents told us the childminder was attentive, supportive and caring.

Children had strong attachments with the childminder who was very responsive, respectful and nurturing to their individual needs. For example, we observed the childminder to be down at the children's level, offering reassurance when required and promptly responding to children's requests. This supported children to feel safe, secure and nurtured whilst in the care of the childminder.

The childminder knew each child in her care along with their family. She confidently shared key information about each child's care and routine. We discussed how personal plan information could be expanded as these were found to contain basic recorded information. We encouraged the childminder to develop these in partnership with families, to include children's current likes, dislikes, and capture how the childminder could support children to achieve and progress. Personal plans should be reviewed at least six monthly to ensure the childminder holds current information, to further support her to fully meet each child's needs. We directed the childminder to the Care Inspectorate document, 'Guide for providers on personal planning'.

The childminder was considerate towards children during nappy changing. For example, we observed her engage with children through positive interactions, take account of the potential spread of infection by using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and demonstrate kindness during the nappy change. As a result, children's needs, rights and dignity were respected.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were free to lead their own play and learning and were able to independently choose from a range of resources and toys. Resources were age and stage appropriate and stored effectively to promote choice.

We observed children supported by the childminder to be involved in activities that supported language, numeracy and literacy. For example, stories were read on the request of children, experiments were carried out to support and extend the interests of children and the childminder used effective questioning which included counting and measuring to support fun and stimulating experiences. Parents shared with us that 'Karen actively finds out what my child is interested in and tailors their experiences as necessary'. And 'My children always come home and tell me about the fun they have had'.

The local community and surrounding areas were used by the childminder. Outings and visits included trips to beaches, art classes and play parks which supported and promoted physical, creative, and social development.

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 setting was well-furnished, visibly clean, comfortable and homely, giving children a home from home environment. Children had a spacious area to play and were able to relax through the access to sofa, tent, cushions and well-maintained spaces. This supported rest and emotional wellbeing for children.

The childminder had a very good understanding of the importance of children having opportunities to play outdoors. Children benefited from an easily accessible garden space which led directly from the kitchen. The garden offered opportunities for children to develop their senses in a natural environment. The barked and grassed area offered spots to practise physical skills such as climbing and running. The paved area allowed children opportunities to play on bikes, scooters and cars. A mud kitchen, swing set, quiet enclosed cosy space and a range of loose parts formed part of the garden resources. This supported children with problem-solving and decision-making skills.

A positive approach to risk and control measures were considered. For example, risk assessments were in place which covered the childminder's environment. Children were kept safe as the childminder had suitable equipment such as a strap in dining chairs and a travel cot.

Children had access to a downstairs toilet. The area was clean and soap was available for handwashing, meeting infection prevention and control procedures. The use of a step encouraged independence for children when using the bathroom. This contributed to children's overall health and installed good personal hygiene habits for the future.

Children's information was secured securely, and the childminder always ensured confidentiality.

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

Children and families were involved in the service and the childminder had developed positive relationships with parents and carers. She used daily conversations and communication apps to build relationships and support consultation and the sharing of information. Parents told us 'Karen always answers messages and shares updates'. And 'Karen gives support to my children through routine questionnaires, regularly updating children's files and through communicating with us at drop off and pick up'.

The aims of the service reflected the loving, safe, home from home and stimulating environment where children can play and learn. Parents shared they had detailed parents' packs that clearly outlined the service's aims. The aims included to provide a safe environment for children to feel happy and secure. This was observed in practice and recognised as a key importance to the childminder.

The childminder outlined her commitment to bringing about further positive outcomes for children through applying a self-evaluation plan and a quality assurance process. To do this she had recently begun to benchmark her service using the Care Inspectorate guidance A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school aged childcare (Care Inspectorate, 2022). However, this was at an early stage and the actions and impact had yet to be started.

Policies and procedures were in place to support practice. Policies and procedures should be regularly reviewed and dated to reflect changes to best practice and legislation. The quality assurance system should continue to be developed to support the childminder to further enhance the quality of service for children and families. We discussed how key tasks; review dates and updates can form part of this process.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values

The experienced childminder had created a positive ethos where children's rights were respected through nurturing care and support. The childminder had a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) that supported her knowledge and practice. Since the last inspection, she had taken part in training relevant to her role to ensure she was well-trained, competent and skilled. For example, training undertaken included high quality interactions, provocations, observing children learn and updating her first aid skills. To further support the childminder, we discussed how she should continue to keep a journal of training and include reflections on how learning would be used in her practice.

The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's office, Scottish Childminding Association and ensured she received updates from the Care Inspectorate. This supported the childminder to keep up-to-date with new developments and changes in guidance.

Children and families benefited from the childminder having a clear understanding of her professional responsibilities. She worked within her conditions of registration and ensured children's safety by gaining insurance, keeping registers, and maintaining the premises to a high standard.

Children's wellbeing was considered through a calm approach which supported compassionate and responsive care. The childminder demonstrated respect towards children's different personalities and ensured they were made to feel secure by gentle interactions.

The childminder had built strong positive, caring, professional relationships with her families. Parents comments included:

- We feel very lucky to have Karen as our childminder.
- Karen is so caring and focused on the children.
- She caters for all ages and stages and makes sure the children are experiencing real life learning opportunities.
- Karen is an incredible person who cares for our children as if they were her own.

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?	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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