

Emily Fraser Childminding Child Minding

Muir of Ord

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
30 November 2022

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2016988396

Service no:
CS2016350360

About the service

Emily Fraser is registered to provide a childminding service to care for 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.

From 7 November 2022 to 30 June 2023, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, during term time, between 15:30 and 17:00, the childminder may care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time, up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than 4 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/household.

The service operates from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area on the outskirts of Muir of Ord. She makes use of the kitchen/dining room, lounge and toilet. There is also a large fully enclosed outdoor area which is very well used. The childminder also makes use of various local facilities including parks, walks and activity groups to offer the children the opportunity to be healthy, active and have access to fresh air and exercise.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 30 November 2022, between 11:30 and 13:15. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, 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
- reviewed feedback from five parents
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were very happy, relaxed and enjoyed spending time in the care of the childminder.
- Positive attachments contributed to the children feeling valued, supported and loved.
- The childminder was aware of and responsive to the individual care needs of the children.
- The childminder had established strong working relationships with families.
- There was a very good range of resources, including loose parts and open ended resources, which the children could independently access.

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

1.1 - Nurturing care & support

There were two young children present on the day of the inspection who were both very happy and very comfortable in the care of the childminder. They had secure attachments with the childminder who was very responsive to their individual needs. We found that the childminder provided very good care and support for the children which ensured positive outcomes for them. Loving, caring and warm relationships provided support to children, helping them to build resilience and promote their emotional wellbeing.

During the visit the childminder was very attentive and responsive to the needs of each of the children. We saw lots of warm and nurturing interactions, chatting, smiles, praise and encouragement. Each child had a 'My special book' which the childminder had created. It contained photographs of people and things important to the children which they could look at any time if they perhaps needed any reassurance. Listening to children, reading their cues and taking account of their choices was a priority for the childminder and made the children feel included and valued.

From our observations and discussions with the childminder, it was clear that she knew each of the children in her care very well which ensured that she was able to respond to their individual care needs. The childminder had put in place personal plans for each child, which contained relevant background information and details of the child's routine. The plans were completed with parents and carers and routinely reviewed to ensure that they continued to meet the changing needs of the children.

Working in partnership with parents was a priority for the childminder. She understood the importance of ensuring that children experienced regular routines and consistent care. Having close working relationships with the parents allowed for open communication and information sharing. Comments from parents supported this - "Emily's communication with us cannot be faulted, we are kept up to date, she sends us a breakdown of what they have done throughout the day, along with photos which we look forward to looking at every Wednesday night" and "we are in complete awe of Emily and how she carries out her day to day duties, the relationships she carefully fosters with each of the children and their families." As well as offering informal feedback at drop off and pick up times each day, she completed detailed daily diaries for each of the children which parents greatly appreciated. Parents commented on how much they valued the diaries and the level of information provided about their child's day. The childminder also made use of photographs and messaging services to keep in very regular contact with families.

The childminder was very aware of her responsibility to safeguard children. She had completed relevant training and had a good understanding of child protection. We were confident that the childminder was committed to her role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm.

1.3 - Play and learning

Children had fun taking part in a wide range of play experiences which reflected their interests and stage of development. She offered children opportunities for both planned experiences and spontaneous play activities. These enriched children's play and learning and stimulated their natural curiosity. The childminder was responsive to children, encouraging and extending their imagination and learning. Sensitive and skilled interactions were used to extend children's thinking and learning.

Children were free to lead their own play and learning. They were able to independently choose from a range of resources and toys which were age and stage appropriate. There was a wide range of natural and loose parts that can develop children's curiosity, creativity and imagination. Parents described how the childminder had created "a natural, relaxed and fun learning environment."

Outdoor play experiences were provided to children every day which allowed them to be active and explore the world around them. The outdoor play area contained a very good range of resources which offered children opportunities for challenge, creativity, developing independence and imagination. The childminder also made good use of the local community for walks and visits to the local woodland, which provided children to have access to fresh air and physical exercise. Parents strongly appreciated the opportunities for their children to take part in outdoor play and learning.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

We found the environment to be very good. The premises were homely, well maintained and welcoming which supported children to feel safe and secure. The children enjoyed the freedom to play and explore their surroundings. The environment offered children a fun and enjoyable experience and supported positive outcomes. A parent commented that the childminder "could not make the environment any safer or more nurturing for the children in her care."

There was a very good selection of resources which captured the children's interests and supported their play and learning experiences. The childminder recognised the benefits of having open ended and natural resources to extend the children's learning through play. Children were able to direct their own play and activities, choosing and freely accessing age appropriate and interesting resources to support their learning. Parents all agreed that the childminder created "a natural, relaxed and fun learning environment" and did "fantastic activities both indoors and outdoors."

Being outdoors was popular with all the children who attended. Children had direct access to the large garden where they could engage with a wide range of resources. The childminder also made good use of the surrounding area for walks and visits to the woods to allow the children to explore and investigate their local environment and community. The childminder recognised the benefits of supporting children to safely engage in play to push their own boundaries and build self confidence. Parents appreciated their children getting outdoors each day to play, take part in active play and have access to fresh air.

We found that the childminder was vigilant in her care of the minded children. Children attending the service were kept safe through the various systems the childminder had in place. The childminder explained that she completed daily visual checks before the children arrived as well as at the end of the day. The spread of infection was minimised by effective cleaning measures.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

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

3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are well led.

The childminder was committed to the development of her service and routinely reflected on her practice to ensure that she provided improved outcomes for the children in her care. She had established very good working relationships with families and valued parental feedback and encouraged families to give feedback informally. She had also previously circulated parental questionnaires. Taking account of their views and suggestions contributed to families feeling valued, included and respected.

The children were very much involved in the day to day running of the service and deciding what they would like to do while they were there. The childminder listened to any feedback the children made about the activities they took part in and took this into account when reviewing her service.

The childminder reflected on her daily practice to assist her to improve the experiences for children and families. She reflected on what was working well in the service and what needed to be improved. This supported positive outcomes for children. We suggested that the childminder becomes familiar with and make use of best practice, including 'A Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare,' to support self evaluation and reflection on practice leading to continuous improvement.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

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

4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children had established very strong attachments with the childminder. There were two young children present on the day of the inspection who were very happy, settled and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder was warm and caring in her approach which supported the children to feel nurtured, loved and secure.

The childminder was aware of and responsive to the individual needs of the children who attended her service. We saw lots of warm and nurturing interactions, chatting, smiles, praise and encouragement. Children were encouraged to be independent and supported when this was needed.

The childminder recognised the importance of ensuring that she had the appropriate knowledge and skills to offer high quality care and experiences for the children. The childminder was reflective and was able to identify areas for development to support individual children in her care.

She had attended a range of training to support and improve her practice. The childminder was able to tell us how she had used what she had learnt to develop the service to ensure that she met the individual needs of the children. She explained that she was hoping to complete further training as it became available.

The childminder had accessed useful websites such as the Scottish Childminding Association hub and other childminding forums to keep up to date with current best practice guidance to support her in developing her service. We directed the childminder to the Care Inspectorate hub where she would be able to access a range of best practice guidance and other relevant publications.

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
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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