

Hatcher, Nicola Child Minding

Tillicoultry

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 April 2023

Service provided by:
Nicola Hatcher

Service provider number:
SP2010977101

Service no:
CS2010237524

About the service

Nicola Hatcher provides a childminding service from the family home in Tillicoultry. Facilities for children are mainly on the ground where children play in the lounge. Toilet facilities are on the first floor. The home is well located for schools, nurseries, parks and other community facilities.

The childminder works in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council to deliver funded placements.

Nicola Hatcher is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 8 children at any one time, under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years, of whom no more than 3 are of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is less than 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family and household.

Any other conditions unique to the service:

2. Overnight care is not provided.
3. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 26 April 2023 between 09:30 and 12:40. 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 inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children and received seven questionnaire responses from their parents/carers
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and how children were supported
- reviewed documents
- spoke with a visiting professional.

Key messages

- Children were supported in kind, caring and supportive ways that ensured they felt nurtured and had a sense of belonging.
- Effective partnership working with parents and carers was in place as strong relationships had been developed.
- The childminder knew children very well and supported their individual needs.
- Quality assurance could be further developed to show how children have benefitted from changes made.
- The childminder should identify learning that will build on her skills and knowledge. This should be evaluated to show how it has been used in practice.

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?	4 - 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 major strengths impacted on positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children had a sense of belonging as all interactions were caring, nurturing and kind. This meant they felt secure and safe in the childminder's care. Children's emotional well-being was supported as the childminder responded to their cues for affection and reassurance. As a result, they received cuddles and comfort in a positive way which helped them build resilience. One parent said "Nikki is a caring, nurturing person who truly adores the children she minds. My little one loves going to Nikki's house and has the best time when there".

Effective communication with families meant partnership working with parents was well established. Parents felt included and involved in shaping their child's care, as they regularly shared information with the childminder. This promoted continuity of care as their changing needs were met. One parent said "Nikki not only makes our son feel completely at ease, but us as parents too. She is communicative, reassuring and kind".

The childminder was aware of the well-being indicators and this was reflected when supporting children's care, learning, development and routines. Information was gathered, reviewed and used to meet the changing needs of children. Regular reviews showed children's progress. These could be further developed by including parents views when agreeing 'next steps'.

Children benefitted from the childminder working with other professionals. Sharing relevant information, meant everyone had a good understanding about children's individual needs. This resulted in plans being developed and implemented in a consistent way that supported positive outcomes for children.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefitted from activities that were suitable for the age range of children, met their needs and interests. As they had access to a variety of toys and activities that promoted different play experiences, children were making progress in their development. Because the childminder understood the needs of children, she was responsive to and supported their choices. This child centred approach meant children spent time at activities as they were interesting. One parent said "Nic has helped making learning fun for my daughter and has helped her with her writing and has come on so well".

Children's play and learning was supported by the childminder's positive interactions. For example, talking to younger children about what they were doing supported their language development. One parent told us "She always tries to get the kids outdoors and exploring the world around them, and constantly has activities and crafts set up for them too". And "He (child) loves playing with her and the other children and Nikki has created an environment that feels comforting while also providing learning opportunities for the children. My son came home telling me how we can help the bees and all the games they played".

Summaries captured children's personalities and abilities. Some of this could be further developed by recording observations and including examples of children's achievement. This will enable responsive

planning to support children's continued learning and development and ensure previously identified 'next steps' identified had been achieved.

The local community was well used to extend children's experiences. Freedom to run around or play on large equipment supported their health and well-being. Photographs showed the range of activities children were involved in, and we talked about how they could be used to support effective planning. For example, noting why the activity was offered and the benefits and outcomes for children. Children told us "My favourite is the fairy garden. We look for bugs".

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.

The childminder had created a warm, welcoming and homely environment for children. All areas they used were well maintained and visually risk assessed which meant they were safe for children. Parent's said "Great setting, very clean and safe. Nicola always keeps her home and gardens lovely with all up to date safety measures". And "Nikki gets the children outside and exploring as often as possible, and her home is safe and comfortable and our son feels relaxed there".

The availability of toys and games were suitable for all ages of children being cared for. They had space to play by themselves or together. As a result, they had opportunities to use their imagination and explore sensory toys. Children had fun and positive experiences as the childminder supported their play.

Importance was placed on being outdoors which extended children's interests by using community resources. Going to local parks and woods meant they benefited from exploring the natural environment. They learned about risk, had freedom to run around and played on large equipment which developed their physical skills and confidence.

Children's safety was promoted as the childminder ensured all equipment used suited the needs of children. For example, low chairs for younger children ensured they were safely seated when eating. She ensured they were safely strapped in buggies when being taken out in the community.

We were satisfied that the spread of infection was minimised as effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. Children were encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The childminder's values were evident in the warm, sensitive interactions observed throughout the inspection. This enabled children's individual needs to be supported and met. For example, to help children

have a positive introduction to the childminder, the settling in process was changed to suit their individual needs.

We saw that children were listened to as the childminder involved them in planning as she asked their views. They were able to choose activities and outings which supported their interests, learning and development. For example, when planning outings, children decided where to go and what they would do at the visit. One child said "We can look for bugs and have a picnic". To further develop this, children could be asked for feedback about their experiences.

Through discussion we found the childminder had formal and informal ways to evaluate the service. For example, to support meaningful communication, questionnaires were used to ensure parents' preferred way of sharing information was used. This meant they felt involved as they were active partners in their child's care. One parent said "Nikki is well organised and communicates effectively. She is open to discussions about what our daughter needs and works in partnership with us".

To ensure her practice was supported by current guidance, the childminder had identified policies and procedures that needed to be updated. She was familiar with best practice documents for early years settings and would reflect this in the updates.

We asked the childminder to capture evaluation in a more formal way so the impact and outcome of change for children is assessed. We talked about best practice guidance that would support this process. In addition to best practice guidance, the childminder should obtain a copy of A quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare. This will help her to reflect what is going well and identify areas to further develop. See area for improvement 1.

Areas for improvement

1. To improve outcomes for children and families, the childminder should continue to develop quality assurance and self-evaluation. Implementing more formal systems would show what is going well and areas that need to be developed. Gathering parents and children's views should be part of this process. This will help identify the benefits from any changes made.

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

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values.

The experienced childminder was knowledgeable about children's development and how to support this. The also had a good understanding of children's personalities, which meant their approach and interaction suited each child. For example, opportunities for social experiences meant that children were growing in confidence as they explored new environments and developed friendships with other children. Due to these positive experiences and a consistent approach, children were making progress in their development and learning.

The childminder recognised the importance of partnership working. She was skilled at building positive relationships with families which had created a warm and welcoming ethos within the service. Parents valued her approachable manner as they were able to share information that resulted in children's individual needs being met. Parent's said "Nicola has a very caring, calm and loving personality. She cares for children with respect and dignity" And "Nikki is knowledgeable and experienced and we trust her as parents, and so does our child".

To keep up to date with practice, the childminder had renewed her First Aid certificate. They had also sourced information to ensure that children's individual health and well-being needs could be met. The childminder had identified further learning they would benefit from such as attending refresher training for child protection. We talked about best practice guidance and how this supported professional development and helped develop the service. Moving forward, we asked the childminder to keep a record of their training and learning. It should be evaluated to show how it has been used to improve outcomes for children.

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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.