

Louise's Childcare Child Minding

Galashiels

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 May 2023

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2013984882

Service no:
CS2013317267

About the service

Louise Dalglish, trading as Louise's Childcare, provides a childminding service from her property in a quiet residential area of Galashiels, Scottish Borders. 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 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 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 is close to local amenities, including a primary school. Children are cared for in the designated playroom, kitchen/diner and spacious hallway. Children have access to a downstairs toilet and enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday, 4 May 2023 between the hours of 09:30 and 12:00. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service and we received written information from seven parents
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily routines
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were loved, nurtured and supported by the kind and caring childminder who clearly had children's best interests at the heart of the service provided.
- Effective communication between the childminder and parents resulted in strong partnerships with families.
- Children experienced daily outdoor play experiences, which kept them active and allowed them to have regular fun, playing outdoors.

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 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 were very happy and confident in the childminder's care. They benefitted from secure attachments and enjoyed positive and nurturing interactions. Children were valued as individuals as the childminder took time to build relationships with each child and their family members. Parent's comments were all positive about the relationship they had with the childminder.

Children's needs were met by a childminder who understood the importance of nurture and how this provided an environment for children to thrive and grow. Loving, caring and warm relationships provided support to children, helping them to build resilience and promote their emotional well-being.

Partnership working and information sharing was well established. Parents felt included in their child's care through regular updates. This included face to face conversations and through social media platforms. One parent told us "Communication with Louise is great, I am kept well informed". Children's individual needs were supported by effective personal planning. Information on children's routines, wellbeing and learning needs were well documented and showed how children were achieving and progressing. Information was regularly updated and showed how the childminder would provide relevant support for each child.

Mealtime and snack times were a positive experience for children. Healthy and nutritious food was served and they were provided with a drink to keep them hydrated. The childminder supported the children during this time, whilst promoting their independence. This included children making their own sandwiches and helping to prepare meals. Children could choose to have their snack and meals outside if they wanted and enjoyed picnics on outings. One parent told us "they have set meal times and are provided with healthy snacks too".

Children were protected by systems which accurately recorded any administration of medication, accidents and incidents. Clear policies and procedures were in place to protect children from harm. The childminder understood the role they played in keeping children safe and had developed this by undertaking Child Protection training.

1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun taking part in a wide variety of play experiences that reflected their interests. The childminder was enthusiastic about enabling children to choose their own play experiences, toys and resources. Sensitive and skilled interactions were used to extend children's thinking and learning. One parent told us their childminder "is very knowledgeable about how to develop the children's learning or to help you if you have something with your child you're not sure how to deal with".

The childminder placed an emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. There was a wide range of books which children could independently access. The wide range of resources were age appropriate, interesting and attractively displayed and meant children were engaged and having fun. The childminder had a good supply of loose parts materials to support children during play. These were natural

materials that could develop children's curiosity, creativity and imagination. These were easily accessible and were regularly reviewed to ensure they were meeting the needs of the children. To extend play children could take items with them when they went out for walks, for example taking a cooking pot to the woods to make potions in.

The childminder regularly observed children to assess their ideas and stages of development. Photographs and evaluations were widely used and shared with parents to show children's learning and achievements. These were very outcome focused and highlighted a child's progression. One parent told us "my baby is exposed to so many different environments (park, woods, countryside etc) sensory play and lots of learning experiences".

Children experienced daily outdoor play experiences, which kept them active and allowed them to have regular fun playing outdoors. Children had free flow access to the garden area which provided them with a range of fun experiences. One child found a spider in the playhouse and the childminder gave them a long handled duster as they wanted to clean the cobwebs away. The local area was very well used and this gave children a sense of belonging in their community. One parent told us their childminder "often does activities with a fellow childminder which I think is great as together they are able to plan special activities and if out and about together there is a second adult to help and support. It's also great for the children because being surrounded by more children they are developing their social skills further".

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.

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a warm, friendly and welcoming home from home environment. Children used the playroom for play and comfort, eating and undertaking arts and crafts. One parent told us their childminder "has a fantastic set up - I don't think it could be any nicer! She has lots of fun, developmental and educational toys to suit all ages. It is always, clean and warm. There is plenty of space for the children to play both inside and outside".

Resources were in good condition and reflected the needs and interests of all ages of children. Children were confident in accessing what they wanted to play with. One parent told us the environment was "homely, nice range of activities and toys which are rotated and themed to learning".

Children benefitted from an inclusive environment that was well organised for them. All areas of the home were well maintained and risk assessed which promoted children's safety. One parent commented "my child feels very much at home at Louise's house often not wanting to leave as she's having so much fun. The toys and space is always clean and safe."

The spread of infection was minimised by effective cleaning measures that were in place. Well established routines were in place for handwashing which children were familiar with.

The childminder's dog was friendly and we saw children were comfortable and relaxed around it. An appropriate pet policy was in place and had been shared with parents. The benefits of caring for pets was promoted by the childminder and helped children to learn about kindness and responsibility.

How good is our leadership?

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.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder knew families well and had formed caring, professional relationships with parents. The childminder was a skilled practitioner and routinely reflected on her practice to make improvements. She consulted meaningfully with children and their families to support improvement. As a result, parents told us they felt safe and happy to leave their child in the care of the childminder.

Parents were very complimentary about the service and comments included "Louise is a 5 star childminder and I couldn't speak more highly of her" and "we are fully satisfied with the service that Louise provides".

The childminder had not developed a formal improvement plan which would support the continuous development of her service. However, she continued to reflect and undertake further professional learning and reading to further develop aspects of her service. The childminder followed good practice guidance: 'A quality framework for daycare, childminding and school aged children' (Care Inspectorate, 2022). She used to this to reflect and document any improvements made to the service.

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.

Quality Indicator: 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values

The childminder was professional and had used her knowledge, experience and understanding around child development to provide a very good service. She was motivated and placed great importance on developing respectful relationships with families and children. Throughout the inspection she consistently showed that children were respected, loved and safe. We observed the childminder using her skills and knowledge to support high quality outcomes for children. This included the detailed information she held to support children's well-being, the range of resources and the value she placed on play. Parents were very grateful for the support and care she provided. One parent told us their childminder was "great with all the children in her care. She has a real fun energy and warmth to her which they all love. I feel that she is helping shape them into becoming caring, helpful and polite individuals".

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and often engaged with other childminders to share learning and best practice. This provided opportunities for the childminder to gain ideas, develop knowledge, and reflect on practice, contributing to very positive outcomes for children. Regular training and learning was embedded in the childminder's practice. This helped her to ensure children and families were supported and evaluate the quality of the service she provided.

The childminder should continue to make effective use of professional development opportunities that link directly to enhanced outcomes for children. We signposted them to the range of best practice documents available on the Care Inspectorate 'Hub' to enhance their knowledge. This included the Care Inspectorate practice note to promote important aspects of high-quality provision for younger children, 'Growing my potential' (Care Inspectorate, 2022). This practice note would support the childminder to focus on extending

specific play experiences for children under three. This would create opportunities for them to explore and discover as they grow and develop.

The childminder had a very good 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.

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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