

Seymour, Sally Child Minding

Banchory

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 July 2023

Service provided by:
Sally Seymour

Service provider number:
SP2003900575

Service no:
CS2003001953

About the service

Sally Seymour provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Banchory. The childminder is registered to provide a service to care for a maximum of eight 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 in the childminder's family.

The service is close to local primary schools, parks, woodland areas and other local amenities. The downstairs area of the property is used for the purpose of childminding. Children have access to the living room area, kitchen, downstairs toilet and a fully enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 July 2023 between 09:00 and 13:15 hours.

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 and information submitted by the service.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- received feedback by email from two families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were nurtured by a kind and caring childminder who knew them very well.
- Children are cared for in a welcoming and nurturing environment.
- Effective communication supported families to be involved in their child's care.
- Children had regular access to fresh air and exercise as they had fun exploring the local community.
- To support continuous improvement, the childminder should continue to develop robust approaches to self-evaluation.

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 these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children were happy, confident and relaxed in the care of the childminder. Sensitive, nurturing and caring interactions ensured that children's needs were met, which meant they felt loved, safe and secure. A parent told us, "Sally has a wonderful relationship with our daughter. They get on so well and she loves going."

The childminder knew the children well and spoke confidently about their needs, routines, and interests. Personal plans were used to gather information relevant to support their health and wellbeing. The childminder had considered the wellbeing indicators 'SHANARRI' (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, and responsible). This ensured a holistic approach and allowed the childminder to track children's progress. These were completed with parents and reviewed as a minimum every six months. This supported the childminder to provide a continuity of care and meet children's individual needs. All parents strongly agreed that they are fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan.

Mealtimes were calm, unhurried and relaxed. The childminder recognised the importance of supervising snack and mealtimes. They sat with children and spoke to them as they all ate together. Meals were homemade and children's preferences were considered which meant they ate nutritious food that they had chosen. Children were offered drinks throughout the day, which included diluting juice. We suggested this should be limited to milk or water and signposted the childminder to 'Setting the Table' on the Care Inspectorate Hub.

At the time of inspection, no children required medication. We were satisfied that appropriate procedures were in place to safely administer and share information with families when needed. We suggested methods for recording medication could be updated to ensure all relevant information is recorded. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate document 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'.

Nappy changing respected children's privacy. This was a nurturing experience for the child, as they were spoken to throughout and praised. Effective handwashing and cleaning procedures supported children to be safe from infection. The childminder had appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available and we suggested that these are used at every nappy change.

Children were protected from harm by a childminder who understood their responsibility in relation to safeguarding. The childminder had completed child protection training and was confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns about children's welfare.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were provided with a range of activities that supported their play and learning. They were able to choose from a selection of toys and play equipment, that met their stage of development and interests. For example, children had access to various resources to support their curiosity and problem-solving skills.

These included construction materials, small world toys, books of interest and jigsaws. An older child had drawn a picture of a dragon and was keen to share this with everyone. The childminder supported children sensitively and celebrated their achievements. This allowed children to feel valued and respected.

Children's learning was supported by the childminder's knowledge of child development and their responsive, natural interactions. They listened to children, encouraged them to express themselves through language, sharing views and asking questions. This helped develop children's communication skills and allowed them to feel valued. One child told us, "She is kind and respectful. She teaches us new stuff and lets us explore."

Play experiences linked to children's interests. The childminder used observations of play alongside daily chats with children and their families to identify children's interests. As a result, the childminder could forward plan activities and be responsive to children's ideas and interests, aware of their differing developmental needs. Children were supported to reach their full potential.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted with daily access to the outdoors. The childminder recognised and valued the importance of going on walks to green spaces, parks and swimming pool. This supported children to be included within their community. All parents strongly agreed their child has access to daily outdoor play, supporting children's health and wellbeing.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and 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 were cared for in a safe, welcoming and homely environment contributing to children feeling happy and secure. The environment had been organised to allow children to move around freely with space to play on the floor, choose their toys or relax using soft furnishings. Children's artwork was displayed throughout areas of the childminder's home. As a result, children were made to feel welcome and at home within the service.

Children's stages of development, interests and curiosities were well considered and reflected in the selection of resources on offer. The toys and resources were easily accessible, which promoted choice and enabled children to be independent in their play and learning. We discussed how children would benefit from having more opportunities to play with open-ended and natural materials to encourage a sense of wonder.

The outdoor area at the rear of the property was fully enclosed, secure and offered children a safe space to play and enjoy fresh air. Children also had regular access to fresh air and exercise as they had fun and made use of outdoor spaces in the local community.

Risk assessments ensured that children's safety was promoted as potential risks had been minimised. The childminder had used a risk benefit approach to assess the risks and minimise dangers to children. As a result, children were supported to take safe risks in their play.

Information about children was kept securely. Sensitive information was only shared with those who

needed it to meet children's needs. As a result, children's information was protected, and storage complied with relevant best practice.

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurances and improvements are well led.

The aims and objectives of the service were in place to promote a shared vision between the childminder and families. These were shared with families as children enter the service. We suggested when reviewing these in future, the childminder consults with the children and families using the service, supporting them to feel valued and included.

Positive and open partnerships with families was a particular strength of the service. The childminder had created a warm and welcoming ethos that helped all families to feel valued and included. Children's successes and achievements were shared with families, contributing to children's confidence and self-esteem. One parent told us, "Sally is a great childminder who always has our daughter's best interests at heart, she teaches her how to swim, manners and how to have fun." Opportunity for parents to comment meant they could offer up any suggestions for improvement. This helped to develop positive relationships with families. Both families who responded to our questionnaire strongly agreed they were involved in a meaningful way and could offer suggestions.

Although the childminder reflected informally on a regular basis, self-evaluation to plan for improvement was at an early stage of development. Further development of self-evaluation practices will support the childminder to reflect on how the service can improve, whilst offering opportunity to recognise what may be working well. This will support improvement planning whilst considering families' and children's views and ideas. We discussed the use of supporting documentation and best practice guidance, such as, 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' which can be accessed on the Care Inspectorate HUB. (See area for improvement 1.)

Policies and procedures were in place which underpinned and supported a high quality service. Some of these required updating to reflect current legislation and best practice guidance.

Areas for improvement

1. To support high quality outcomes for children and families, the childminder should introduce clear systems in place to evaluate the service provided. This should include, but not be limited to, using best practice guidance documents, including 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare' to assess the service they provide and identify areas for development.

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

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.

Children benefitted from the childminder's warm and responsive approach, and we saw positive interactions which helped children to feel valued and included. All parents strongly agreed with the statement, 'I am confident that staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to care for my child and support their learning'. The childminder was kind and caring, which ensured children felt loved and respected.

The childminder used transferable skills and knowledge obtained through girl guiding to support children's experiences. For example, the childminder's knowledge of plants and mushrooms supported children to forage in the nearby woodlands. Children were confident in knowing which mushrooms could be picked, what could happen if they collected the wrong ones and were well supervised whilst doing this. As a result, children were learning about potential dangers in their environment.

The childminder recognised the importance of maintaining their skills and knowledge in keeping children safe and protected. They had attended training in child protection, and food safety, as well as practical paediatric first aid and infection prevention and control. In addition to core learning, they had completed professional learning supporting them to reflect on practice and improve experiences for children. Evaluations of learning from training would enable the childminder to revisit and reflect on their practice and outcomes for children.

Children benefitted from good supervision which ensured they were safe at all times.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The provider should review and develop personal plans for all children in line with legislation. This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 25 September 2018.

Action taken since then

Care and support plans have been reviewed and have GIRFEC considered in the 6-monthly reviews. Children's 'All About Me's' are reviewed with children and contain information supporting their interests, likes and dislikes and information that the childminder might need to know.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The provider should consider accessing further training including GIRFEC and Building the Ambition. This would help to enhance the childminders existing knowledge and skills. This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 25 September 2018.

Action taken since then

The childminder has accessed GIRFEC and Building the Ambition training. They have used it to support the development of their service and the procedures. GIRFEC is now used throughout children's personal plans.

This area for improvement has been met.

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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