

Harvey, Helen Child Minding

Dundee

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 August 2023

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2014985704

Service no:
CS2014323991

About the service

Helen Harvey provides a childminding service from her home in Dundee. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of four children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than four will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. Overnight service will not be provided.

The service is based in a residential area of Dundee and is close to local parks, schools, shops and countryside.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 August 2023 between 11:15 and 14:30. Feedback was shared during the inspection visit. The inspection was carried out by an inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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 one of their family members
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- The childminder had formed positive relationships with the children in her care.
- Children were leading their own play and developing their independence by making choices.
- The childminder made good use of her local community to provide children with a wide range of learning experiences.
- Parents were now being consulted on the daily life of the service through the sharing of feedback and suggestions.
- The childminder had a safe, secure and well-equipped outdoor play space for children to access.
- Children took part in a range of play experiences to develop their imaginations, curiosities and creativity.

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?	4 - 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?

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 1.1 Nurturing care and support

The childminder had developed positive attachments with the children in her care and they experienced warm and caring interactions. A parent shared that the childminder 'was like another granny'. Settling-in was being well managed and the childminder was proactive in relation to getting to know children who had recently started attending her service. The childminder was responsive to routines from home and children were nurtured and supported to sleep and rest when required.

Mealtimes were positive and relaxed experiences during which independence and life skills were developed. Children helped to set the table and then clear away and wash plates once finished. The childminder encouraged children to feed themselves independently and offered support when required. Nice discussions and interactions took place which supported and developed language and communication skills. This social experience promoted children's independence and life skills which developed their confidence.

Personal plans were in place for all children which supported the childminder to fully meet their needs. All about me forms were still to be completed and put in place for all new children who had recently joined the service. The childminder should also ensure that all reviews of these plans are clearly dated to show when changes or updates had been made. This would ensure that the childminder knew which information was current and up to date within all plans.

Children were encouraged to independently access the toilet using a step. Privacy was maintained during toileting and nappy changing. Children accessed the bathroom to have their nappies changed and infection prevention and control measures were followed throughout. Nappies were disposed of appropriately. The childminder and children washed their hands after toileting and nappy changing to minimise the risk of spread of infection.

Children were nurtured and offered cuddles when they became tired and needed to sleep. They were offered comforters and they lay on the childminder's sofa with a blanket to fall asleep. Children were always supervised while sleeping to ensure their safety.

Quality Indicator 1.3 Play and Learning

Children led their own play, made choices and asked for more resources when required. For example, one child saw the childminder with a notepad and asked for paper out of it to draw. The child began to be creative by drawing pictures of fish and the childminder introduced stickers to extend this play. The stickers encouraged the development of the child's language skills through discussions about what each sticker was, and where it would be placed within her artwork. There were also discussions about their visit to the fishpond that morning, one child said 'I caught a shark'. The childminder shared the photographs of their trip with them and they became excited about sharing what they had been doing and what they had seen. The sharing of photographs provided the children with ownership of their play and encouraged them to share their learning and achievements.

Children chose whether to play in the playroom, living room or outdoors. They moved toys and resources between these areas to support their play. Children were matching and sorting using wooden puzzles and began to identify items of food. Children worked collaboratively during this activity and asked the childminder for support when required. Children asked for a story to be read to them. The childminder supported them to choose a book and they sat on the childminder's knee and joined in with this interactive story sharing experience. These experiences developed children's choice making skills and supported language and literacy.

Observations of children's play and learning were recorded within a learning section within their personal plans. Some of the children's learning logs needed to be updated to keep them current and up to date. Each child also had their own book which shared photographs of their play and learning experiences. These were shared with parents to involve and include them in their child's play experiences. These were being put in place for the children who had just started to attend the service.

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

The childminder's home was safe and secure for children to play both indoors and outdoors. A fully enclosed and secure back garden provided a safe space for children to explore, be active and develop their imaginations. A playhouse offered a quiet space for children to access. A range of active play resources supported children to be healthy and develop their gross motor skills. Children took part in planting and growing and used water sprays to water their plants and care for them. One child showed an interest in the soft balls and began to kick and throw them around. They were then supported to explore the ramp and develop their critical thinking skills to move the ball up and down the ramp and watch the speed of the ball change. All resources outdoors were easily accessible for children to support and extend their play.

The playroom was welcoming and inviting and had recently been decorated to provide a calm and relaxing space for children to play and learn. Child height furniture provided the opportunity for tabletop activities as well as floor play. Children used the low table and chairs when eating their meals and snacks. Child height storage systems also ensured that children could easily access the wide range of toys and resources on offer to them to support their play and learning. Photographs of children were displayed along with their artwork which ensured they felt valued and respected.

Risk assessments were in place for resources, activities, trips and outings to ensure a safe environment for children. Safety gates were well positioned throughout the childminder's home to keep children safe. Smoke alarms were checked monthly and children were included in these checks to make them aware of the sound that came from the alarms when triggered. The childminder's home was well maintained and all safety checks were carried out and completed.

The childminder made effective use of her local community to extend children's play and learning experiences. Children attended a local playgroup three mornings a week to support them to develop their social skills and to provide them with a different range of play experiences. Children frequently visited local parks, a local pond, woodland areas, and country parks. A parent commented 'there are lots of outings each week'. This provided the children with a wide range of play and learning experiences and developed their awareness of what was available to them within their local community.

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 assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had a vision and values in place to share the aims of the service. These were shared with all families when they started attending the service.

The childminder now regularly consulted with children and their families. Questionnaires had recently been shared with parents to gain their feedback and suggestions on the service provided. One parent highlighted 'Helen always asks us about her service and asks us for feedback'. This ensured that families were fully involved in ongoing changes and improvements. Children were consulted daily and were asked for suggestions and ideas to develop their play opportunities. This ensured that the child's voice was evident and children were included in the daily life of the service.

The childminder did not use a formal approach to record improvements or self-evaluations of her service. However, she was able to confidently discuss changes and improvements that had been made to her service. The childminder had reflected on the environment within the playroom and had recently refreshed the décor and improved the environment to support children's play and learning. The childminder had also reflected on other aspects of her environment and had made changes to support her practice and improve outcomes for children.

A wide range of policies were in place to support safe practice within the service. These were reviewed regularly and updated when required. A missing child policy had been developed and put in place since our last inspection visit.

How good is our staff team?

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 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values

Nurturing, warm and caring interactions took place between the childminder and children. The childminder had a good knowledge of children in her care and was now developing attachments with children who had recently joined her service. The childminder had a lot of experience of caring for children and a good knowledge of child development. She used this knowledge and experience to provide a homely and inviting environment for children to play and learn.

Effective communications took place between the childminder and families. Each child had a daily diary that was completed and shared with parents at the end of the day. The childminder shared daily photographs and messages with families to maintain the regular sharing of information. This ensured that parents had all the information they required about their child's day and it supported the childminder to fully meet the needs of children in her care. A parent shared that 'communication was good and a diary was shared each day'.

The childminder had not completed any recent formal training; however, she had read books and documents to keep her up to date with current information and best practice. The childminder was due to undertake paediatric first aid training within the next two weeks and was also currently in the process of refreshing her knowledge of child protection.

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

To support self-evaluation and ongoing improvement within the service, the provider should reintroduce methods of consulting with and involving parents within the service.

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

This area for improvement was made on 26 October 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder has now re-introduced questionnaires to gain feedback and suggestions from families. Questionnaires were recently shared with all families and feedback received was positive. The childminder also speaks to parents verbally to gain feedback from them in relation to her service.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support the childminder's practice, the provider should ensure that she accesses core training including child protection and first aid. The provider should also increase her knowledge of current best practice documents.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 26 October 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder is booked on to paediatric first aid training in two weeks time and is currently refreshing her knowledge of child protection. The childminder has been reading books and documents to support her practice, knowledge and skills.

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - 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

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