

Bain, Elizabeth Child Minding

Wick

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 August 2023

Service provided by:
Elizabeth Bain

Service provider number:
SP2003907691

Service no:
CS2003007862

About the service

Elizabeth Bain is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 7 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 7 will be under 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The childminder lives in the town of Wick in Caithness. Children have access to the living room, kitchen and family bathroom. They also have access to an enclosed garden. The childminder makes very regular use of various local resources including trips to the forest, walks to the riverside and playparks.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 and 25 August 2023. 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 one child using the service
- reviewed electronic questionnaires from two parents
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from the childminder who supported their care needs.
- The childminder knew children in her care very well.
- Children were provided with a wide variety of exciting opportunities which met their developmental needs, interests and curiosities.
- The premises were homely and welcoming which allowed children to feel safe and secure.
- Families had strong communication and relationships with the childminder which resulted in effective partnership working.
- The childminder was skilled and used her knowledge to support children and their families.

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.

Quality indicator: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions from the childminder who supported their care needs. She was very responsive to their emotional and wellbeing needs. Comfort and cuddles were offered when needed, which gave children reassurance. This supported children to feel safe, secure and loved during their time with the childminder. This was highlighted as a strength by parents who told us about the positive relationships developed between the childminder and children. One parent said: "In my child's words 'Liz is the best childminder in the world' which I agree with 100%."

The childminder knew children in her care very well. This enabled her to respond to their individual needs and ensured they were being supported to achieve their full potential. Continuity and consistency in care was well supported through the use of personal planning information. Plans developed in consultation with parents and carers identified individual care needs and routines. These were reviewed with parents to ensure that the childminder continued to meet the changing needs of children in her care. This meant children received individualised care and support that was right for them.

The childminder also made very good use of photographs to illustrate and track children's progression and routinely shared these with parents. As well as offering informal feedback at drop off and pick up times each day, she made use of messaging services to keep in very regular contact with families. This contributed to the development of effective communication and strong relationships and partnership working with families.

Quality indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children had a wide variety of exciting opportunities which met their developmental needs, interests and curiosities. These experiences offered children rich play and learning which included exploring, experimenting, being creative, taking risks and problem solving. These opportunities were highlighted as a real strength by parents who told us their children were progressing very well and had benefited from a range of opportunities including trips to the park, baking, crafts and nature discussions. These experiences contributed to the development of skills for life and resulted in happy, confident individuals.

The childminder was playful in her interactions with the minded child and there was lots of chatter and laughter. She took time to listen to the child and used careful questioning to promote curiosity and creativity. She valued children's interests and supported their play, learning and development through following their line of enquiries at their own pace. Children's perspectives were listened to and taken account of. This contributed to children feeling valued and respected.

Day-to-day routines and experiences were utilised to support children's learning and development. For example, the childminder created natural opportunities to develop and consolidate early numeracy skills, including counting, size and money through role play. While supporting play, the childminder commented on objects and labelled new vocabulary to children which they then repeated and used in conversation.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported with regular opportunities for outdoor play. They participated in visits to local play parks and woods. The children had access to the childminder's enclosed back garden which contained a range of resources including loose parts to promote children's creativity and curiosity. The outdoor spaces also provided areas to climb, run and play football which supported children's physical development and overall wellbeing. One child told us their favourite thing to do was playing outside.

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.

Quality indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children benefited from a service that was homely, warm and welcoming. The childminder's home was clean, tidy and furnished to a high standard. There was ample space for children to play, rest and explore. This demonstrated to children that they were valued. Parents told us the service was "a true home from home for my child" and "Liz provides a safe, very clean, fun and interactive environment for my child."

Children were able to direct their own play and activities, choosing and freely accessing age appropriate and interesting resources to support their learning. There was a very good selection of resources which captured children's interests and supported their play and learning experiences. The childminder recognised the benefits of having open ended and natural resources to extend children's learning through play. These provided very good opportunities for children to develop curiosity, enquiry and problem solving skills.

Comprehensive risk assessment procedures were in place as the childminder ensured that the environment was safe and secure for the children in her care. She undertook regular risk assessment of all areas accessed by children.

The childminder kept professional records for all aspects of her childminding service. Information was stored confidentially in an organised manner. This meant that children and families could be confident that their personal information was stored in line with relevant best practice.

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.

Quality indicator: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and their families. Vision, values and aims had been shared with families which reflected the service offered. Involving parents and children in the day-to-day running of her service was a key priority. The childminder ensured that parents were involved right from the beginning through the settling in period and promoted an open door policy to enable families to feel confident to inform developments of the service.

Children's views were sought through observations and informal conversations. The childminder recognised the importance of knowing the children in their care well so that they could build relationships and rapport with them. This contributed to children having fun and progressing because their opinions and views mattered.

Parents were involved in the cycle of self-evaluation. This contributed to the strong relationships families had with the childminder as they felt valued and respected. She encouraged the children and their families to give feedback informally. She had also circulated short questionnaires for parents to complete on a regular basis. The parents who provided feedback told us they felt fully involved in deciding how the service could be developed further and that their views and suggestions were used to influence change.

The childminder was enthusiastic about the care she provided and the impact this had on the children and wanted the best outcomes for them. She worked closely with other local childminders, sharing information and good practice between them. The childminder told us this provided her with a network of support, which ensured high quality practice and experiences for children.

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.

Quality indicator: 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder had kind and nurturing interactions with the minded child. This contributed to them feeling loved and supported in their care. We found that the child responded positively to the support provided by the childminder, and they were given an appropriate amount of time to listen and respond to instructions.

The childminder was very knowledgeable about children's development and aware of the individual needs of each child. She used her knowledge to respond to their needs and interests. This resulted in children receiving care and support that was right for them.

The childminder was passionate about providing the children in her care with high-quality experiences. She was aware of the importance of ensuring that she continued to develop her knowledge and skills. The childminder had undertaken a wide range of training, as well as keeping up-to-date with core training. This meant that children experienced positive outcomes based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice. One parent told us "Liz is very capable and I don't have to worry about my child when I am at work. I have complete peace of mind when my child is in Liz's care."

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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