

Wild Wellies Outdoor Kindergarten - Childminding Child Minding

Stirling

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 August 2023

Service provided by:
Alison Banks

Service provider number:
SP2016012784

Service no:
CS2016350500

About the service

Wild Wellies Outdoor Kindergarten is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 10 children under the age of 16 at any one time, of whom no more than 9 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 2 is under 12 months when working together with two assistants. Where the childminder is working with one assistant, they may care for a maximum of 6 children up to 16 years of age of whom no more than 6 are not yet of an age to attend primary school and of whom no more than 2 are under 12 months. When the childminder is working on their own they may care for a maximum of 6 children of whom no more than 3 are not yet of an age to attend primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

Alison Banks is the registered childminder and will be known as 'the childminder' throughout this report.

This service mainly operates outdoors, within a large paddock to the side of the childminder's home.

Children also have free access to a summer house solely used for the purpose of childminding, this is based within the paddock. A toilet and hand washing facilities are available in the summer house when using the paddock.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23 August 2023 between 12:30 and 18:30. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. Feedback was given on Friday 25 August 2023.

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:

- spent time with the children using the service
- spoke with or received emails from three parents
- spoke with assistants and the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced compassionate care and nurturing interactions.
- Strong relationships with families meant the children received care that was tailored to their individual needs.
- Children benefitted from a well developed environment outside that allowed them to lead their own play and explore real meaningful resources.
- A very good understanding of risk benefit allowed children to develop their real life skills and confidence through play.
- Children benefitted from a passionate childminder and assistants that were committed to providing quality care for children.
- Medication should be labelled appropriately and updated regularly to ensure it is safe for children.

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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant, positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced compassionate care. Positive relationships with the childminder and assistants supported children to feel safe. Nurturing interactions showed children they were listened to. This contributed to children remaining happy and settled in a trusting care environment.

Children received reassurance when needed and were supported well to explore their emotions. Regular discussions and tools such as books, meditation and a mirror box encouraged calmness and an understanding of the needs of themselves and others. This supported children to feel secure.

Personal care was sensitively supported, promoting children's privacy and dignity. Encouraging independence during personal care routines enhanced children's confidence and learning of self-care.

The childminder and assistants knew the children well. Continually gathering important information about children enabled them to provide individualised care and support. Successful working with children, parents and other professionals helped to develop specific strategies when additional support was needed. This ensured continuity of care and supported children to flourish and remain settled in the setting.

Children were encouraged to respect each other's differing views, interests and personal beliefs. Recognising what was important to children and families promoted a strong sense of self identity and demonstrated an inclusive care setting; for example, working with families to enjoy various celebrations of different cultures.

Mealtimes were an inclusive and social experience. Children were given time to enjoy their meals in a relaxed environment. Children's independence and learning of important life skills were supported well with some opportunities to enjoy preparing and cooking meals outside on a campfire.

During lunch time the childminder sat with the children offering encouragement and help when needed. Both assistants were on breaks during lunch time. As a result, when children needed support with personal care others were left unsupervised. This meant that children who were sleeping during this time were not able to have the appropriate checks. We asked the childminder to review the lunch time routine to ensure all children's individual needs could be met (**see area for improvement 1**).

Medication was stored out of reach of children. It was not clear that medication held in the service matched information recorded. Also, not all medication was appropriately labelled. For example, some were not in the original packaging and the label on a bottle of medication was faded, therefore the administration instructions and other important information was not visible. The childminder told us about the action they would take to support a specific child's health needs. This did not meet the stated medical plan. During the last inspection we raised concerns about the storage of medication and a requirement was made. We acknowledge some action had been taken to address the requirement. However, issues raised during this inspection had the potential to cause confusion and have a negative impact on children's health. The requirement remains outstanding (**see requirement 1**).

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Experiences were very well considered for children's different ages and stages. Children were engaged in their play and having fun. Staff laughed and had fun with children as they explored and learned together. As a result, children remained interested and focused in meaningful play.

Children led their play throughout the visit. This was encouraged through a balance of spontaneous and planned, high quality experiences that promoted children's choice and independence. The opportunities in the setting for children to explore were very well considered. This meant that children were leading their own learning.

Staff knew children very well and had identified their proposed next steps in learning. Staff confidently supported children and had developed clear plans and strategies for them. One parent told us, "Confidence, empathy and communication have really been prioritised. They have nurtured them in exactly the way that we hoped for when looking for an early year's provider. I believe they should be shouted about from the rooftops as a model for the environment they provide for the children". As a result, children were supported to reach their full potential.

The childminder and assistants demonstrated a very good understanding of child development. Their practice was child-centred and responsive to the interests of the children. Children were carefully listened to and their individual voices, ideas, and suggestions were valued. This supported children to feel valued and respected.

Children celebrated their achievements and were confident to share their learning with us. One child told us, "Come see me climbing a tree". This further enhanced experiences for children and highlighted that they were supported to reach their full potential.

Children were fully empowered to lead their own play. The childminder's skilled approaches extended children's learning based on their individual interests. The childminder and assistants had a very good understanding of opportunities to develop children's creativity and problem solving. A range of natural resources throughout the environment supported this well.

Requirements

1. With immediate effect, the childminder must ensure assistants can safely meet children's individual health and wellbeing needs. The childminder must ensure that medication procedures and storage are in line with best practice guidance. Medication must be stored and labelled appropriately, and documentation completed and reviewed regularly.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a): A provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's wellbeing and safe sleeping practice, the childminder should review the procedures for the monitoring of sleeping children throughout the day. This is to include regular checking and monitoring of the temperature of the inside sleeping area.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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 benefitted from a well-developed and considered environment. There were dedicated spaces which allowed children to choose from a wide variety of age-appropriate resources, activities and books. Resources were very well presented and supported children's developing curiosity and problem-solving skills. Real and natural resources in the environment were well developed based on children's interests. This showed children that they were listened to and valued.

The childminder and assistants had a very good understanding of the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed and secure. It had been thoughtfully planned and adapted to encourage children's curiosity and free play. There were clear opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in the outdoor learning environment. As a result, children were supported to reach their full potential.

The childminder and assistants had a very good understanding of risk benefit. For example, children had opportunities to climb trees, play in a mud area or pick herbs to enhance their play. As a result, children felt listened to, interested and were learning how to assess risk themselves. Risk assessments were in place which ensured that children's safety was promoted. As a result, hazards had been identified and potential risk to children and staff was minimised.

All information about children was kept in a secure manner. Sensitive information was only shared with those who needed it to meet children's needs. This meant that children's information was protected, and storage complied with relevant best practice.

Children were encouraged to wash their hands at key times and effective cleaning procedures meant that the spread of infection was kept to a minimum. The childminder should review the storage of children's bedding and the nappy change area to ensure it reflects best practice guidance. This will ensure that infection risks are minimised for children **(see area for improvement 1)**.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and adhere to infection prevention and control procedures, the childminder should review their nappy changing area and the storage of children's bedding to ensure they adhere to best practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.17).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant, positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder provided a warm and welcoming service, helping children to feel loved, safe and secure. They had developed an aspirational vision for the service, which supported children to fully embrace outdoor learning. The vision statements were, "Be kind" and "Be brave". Children's daily experiences and interactions reflected the shared ethos and objectives of the service. As a result, children were at the heart of the service.

Effective self-evaluation was in place which involved all stake holders. This highlighted the improvements that had been made in the setting and the impact this had on outcomes for children. The childminder and assistants were confident to use relevant guidance to evaluate their service and inform their improvement priorities. Evidence of previous improvements actioned meant that we were confident the setting had capacity to continue to improve. As a result, improvements were manageable, well-led and guided by improving outcomes for children.

Quality assurance systems were in place which focused on a variety of ways to evaluate the service. This included reviews with assistants to highlight their own individual strengths and support them with any areas they would like to further develop. The service had worked hard to further improve their quality assurance work. There was significant improvement in this area following the previous inspection, such as accurate registers were kept to ensure that the childminder was working within their registration conditions. As a result, quality assurance was ensuring that children experienced consistently good quality care.

A previous requirement was made regarding recruitment of assistants. We asked the service to ensure that all staff had relevant checks before commencing employment in the service. No new assistants had started since the previous inspection. It was not clear that these checks would be made prior to the successful candidate commencing employment in the service, therefore the previous requirement will remain. The provider should ensure that there are clear policies and procedures in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff (**previous requirement 1**).

Requirements

1. By 14 November 2023, the provider must ensure that all children are cared for and kept safe by safely recruited and fit to be employed staff. To do this, the provider must ensure all staff have obtained relevant checks before beginning employment.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 9(1) (Fitness of employees) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant, positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator 4.3: Staff Deployment

The childminder and assistants were passionate about their role supporting children in an outdoor setting. They had a very good understanding of the importance of strong connections with children and their families. Their kind and nurturing approach ensured that children felt safe and their families were valued and respected.

Staff were mostly proactive during busier times of the day to ensure good supervision and quality interactions with children. The staff team worked effectively together to ensure that children's needs were met. At times, some staff breaks were observed to effect the quality of engagement with children at mealtimes. For example, two assistants took a break at the same time and this meant children's mealtime experience was less positive. We encouraged the service to review the times that staff have breaks to ensure continuity of care for children across the day. This will minimise the impact on children's experience while ensuring staff have the opportunity to rest or carry out routine tasks.

There was a positive, enthusiastic ethos developed between the childminder and assistants. Assistants were empowered to reflect upon their practice and contribute to ongoing improvements. As a result, children consistently benefitted from high quality care and support.

There was a wide range of regular opportunities for training. The childminder and assistants spoke confidently and passionately about their recent training.

They spoke to us in depth about the impact this had on their practice and on outcomes for children.

Staff were enthusiastic about providing high quality care for all the children and developing their practice. Assistants took part in regular reflective discussions with the childminder which provided opportunities for them to talk about their development needs. The childminder and assistants should continue to actively engage with best practice documents to further inform practice. This would further ensure that children benefit from a knowledgeable and skilled staff (**see area for improvement 1**).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children benefit from a knowledgeable and skill staff, the childminder should ensure that assistants access best practice guidance regularly to inform their practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

With immediate effect, the childminder must ensure assistants can safely meet children's individual health and wellbeing needs, the childminder must ensure that medication procedures and storage are in line with best practice guidance. Medication must be stored and labelled appropriately, and documentation completed and reviewed regularly.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a): A provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This requirement was made on 17 March 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has been partially met. Action taken on this requirement has been written in the report. This will remain an outstanding requirement.

Not met

Requirement 2

With immediate effect, the childminder must ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children is maintained by delivering their service within the constraints of the conditions of registration as stated on the service Certificate of Registration.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This requirement was made on 17 March 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 3

By 29 April 2023, the provider must ensure that all children are cared for and kept safe by safely recruited and fit to be employed staff. To do this, the provider must ensure all staff have obtained relevant checks before beginning employment.

This is in order to comply with Regulation 9(1) (Fitness of employees) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/ 210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which states that: 'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

This requirement was made on 17 March 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has not been met. Action taken on this requirement has been written in the report. This will remain an outstanding requirement.

Not 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
4.3 Staff deployment	4 - Good

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