

Giraffe Childminding Child Minding

Newmilns

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 January 2024

Service provided by:
Ann Bloor

Service provider number:
SP2022000230

Service no:
CS2022000346

About the service

The childminder provides a childminding service from their home in Newmilns, East Ayrshire. They provide care for maximum of 6 children aged up to 16 years of age of whom no more than 6 will be under 12 and of whom, no more than 3 may not be attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be under 1 year of age.

The service is close to the local primary school and early childhood centre, parks and other amenities. Children have access to the living room, kitchen, bathroom and back garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 January 2024 between 13:00 and 17:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. This was the first inspection of the service.

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 service registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed five children using the service
- received completed questionnaires from seven families
- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were at the heart of the service and were cared for by a childminder who knew them and their families well.
- Children were supported to lead their own play, based on their interests.
- Children were cared for in a warm and welcoming indoor environment. The childminder should develop and maintain their outdoor environment.
- The childminder made good use of local facilities, and this helped children feel included in their local community.
- The childminder should embed self-evaluation processes to develop their service.

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?	3 - Adequate
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

Children attending the service were confident, happy and relaxed. We observed children having fun with the childminder and heard them laughing and enjoying the time they spent there. Children's needs were being met through kind and warm interactions. The childminder responded to them sensitively providing reassurance when they needed it. This meant children felt cared for, safe and secure.

The childminder knew the children well, including their needs and preferences. We observed the childminder supporting and encouraging respectful friendships between the children in their care. This ensured all children felt included. The childminder worked with parents to support children's routines. All children had personal plans in place that contained meaningful information and appropriate next steps. These had been reviewed regularly with families through shared observation, photographs and digital technology. A parent told us, 'the childminder is great at providing feedback and information about my child's day including what they eat, what they've done and learned.' As a result, children's current health, wellbeing and developmental needs were well-supported by the childminder.

Children experienced a relaxed, unhurried and sociable mealtime. The childminder and children sat together at the kitchen table enjoying a healthy snack. Children's independence was promoted. They were encouraged to chop their own fruit and cheese and clear their plates when they were finished. The childminder was immediately available should choking occur and engaged in meaningful conversations. This ensured that mealtimes had a positive impact on children's learning, development, health and wellbeing.

Children were respectfully asked if they needed their nappies changed and interactions during personal care were warm and caring. This meant that children felt comfortable and relaxed. The childminder did not use full personal protective equipment when changing children's nappies on the day of the inspection. The childminder should ensure that practice during personal care reflects Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings) guidance. This would minimise any potential spread of infection.

There were comfortable areas for children to rest and relax, and safe places for children to sleep if required. As a result, children were relaxed and happy. The childminder told us that young children were sleeping in the car for an hour, one day per week due to pick up times. The childminder had attempted make adjustments to their routine to prevent this. The childminder should ensure that children spend as little time as possible sleeping in the car.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Throughout our inspection, children were happy and engaged in play and learning opportunities. Children had independent access to a large range of resources that the childminder rotated responsively based on their interests and levels of engagement. Children particularly enjoyed building structures with magnets, listening to music and creative play with a large variety of arts and crafts materials. This meant that children could lead their own play based on their interests. Children would benefit from the childminder developing their knowledge of child development and effective questioning. This would extend play and learning experiences for children.

We observed good opportunities for children to develop their numeracy and literacy skills. The childminder had developed a 'giraffe lending library' that was used regularly by children and families. We observed the childminder supporting a child to extend their letter recognition after the child displayed an interest in finding the letters in their name on a laptop. The childminder also supported the children to tell us their ages using their fingers to count, read stories and sing songs. As a result, children were developing their numeracy and literacy skills meaningfully through play.

Children had regular opportunities to play and learn in the community. Children had been on outings to parks, toddler groups and visits to Lanfine Estate. A parent commented, 'the childminder lets my child explore and they are always happy when I pick them up.' This supported children to develop strong connections with their local community.

How good is our setting?**3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in an environment that was warm and bright. Children had comfortable places to play and relax. Parents felt that the environment was 'very homely, welcoming' and 'felt right at home.' As a result, children were settled and given the message that they mattered.

The childminder understood the importance and benefits of play experiences that took account of children's interests and stages of development. Resources were easily accessible for children and were rotated based on the children's interests and levels of engagement. They were appropriate to the children's ages and stages of development. As a result, children were relaxed, confident and having fun. Some loose parts and open-ended materials were available, these should continue to be developed to support children's imagination and curiosity.

Children did not have access to the back garden during our inspection. The childminder advised that recently they had not maintained their garden and that children had not accessed the garden for a few months. The childminder agreed that it was not currently fit for children to play in safely (see area for improvement 1). Experiences outdoors, particularly in the childminder's back garden should be improved to enable children to have daily opportunities to play outside. This would support children to be healthy and active.

The childminder was aware of their responsibility to keep children safe. The childminder had considered some potential risks and had put measures in place to ensure children were protected from harm. We asked the childminder to develop and personalise their risk assessments and daily checks to ensure that all potential health and safety risks in their service had been considered, in particular, the back garden and the childminder's pets (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should provide children with a safe, well-maintained environment to play outdoors. This should include, but not be limited to, ensuring that the back garden is always clean, safe and well-maintained; and making sure that children have access to a good range of experiences and resources in the outdoor environment throughout the year.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment' (HSCS 1.32).

2. To support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should develop and personalise their risk assessments to ensure that all potential risks have been considered. These should include, but not be limited to, the outdoor environment and the childminder's pets.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

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 engaged well with the inspection process and had a positive outlook on change and improvement. The childminder began making improvements suggested during the inspection before the inspection was completed, these included creating a written consent form for their pets, cleaning the garden and buying new resources. A vision, values and aims had been developed that was representative of the service provided.

Families felt valued and included in their children's care and service development. The childminder was in the early stages of self-evaluation and had consulted with parents on various aspects of the service through paper questionnaires. A parent told us, 'the childminder asks for feedback and ideas from parents to keep us involved.' The childminder should now develop methods of consultation with children, this would ensure that children's voices are also included in service planning and development.

The childminder should continue to develop processes for self evaluation and meaningful consultation with children and families. The childminder should then use these processes to plan for change and development. This would create a cycle of continuous improvement. We signposted the childminder to the self-evaluation guidance and bitesize videos available on the Care Inspectorate Hub.

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

The childminder was kind and caring. This ensured that children felt happy and comfortable in their care. The childminder was responsive to the individual needs of children and it was clear that they had formed attachments with children, and positive partnerships with families. Parents' comments included, 'You couldn't meet anyone nicer than the childminder. They are caring not only to my child but to me.' The childminder was also described as 'a lovely person, who strives to do what they can for the kids.' As a result of these positive relationships, children felt secure and families felt included.

The childminder was developing their skills and knowledge and had gained confidence in their role. The childminder had completed a childminding induction course, paediatric first aid training and was undertaking a childcare qualification. The childminder demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of their recent learning, and was keen to engage in further development opportunities. It was clear to us that the childminder valued children and families and was motivated to improve their skills and knowledge to benefit their service.

We advised the childminder to keep a training record to help to consider the impact of training courses and professional reading on their practice and service development. This would support the childminder to evaluate their skills and knowledge, and identify further training opportunities that could improve outcomes for children and families.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the service registered. Details of any 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	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
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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