

Sandra Isles Childminding Service

Child Minding

Falkirk

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
12 February 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2011982833

Service no:
CS2011300877

About the service

Sandra Isles, trading as Sandra Isles Childminding Service, provides a childminding service from the family home in Polmont, Falkirk.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age, these numbers include children of the childminder's family. Of these six, no more than three are not yet attending primary school; of those three no more than one is under 12 months.

The service is close to local amenities including green spaces and the local nursery and school. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home with children accessing the kitchen/dining/family room and a downstairs toilet. Children benefit from outdoor learning experiences through access to an enclosed rear garden, and the local community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that took place on 12 February 2024 from 12:30 until 15:45. 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, 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
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice
- reviewed documents
- gathered feedback about the service from families.

Key messages

- Children felt valued, loved, and respected because their care and support was delivered in a warm, kind, and compassionate way.
- The childminder tailored children's routines, care, play, and learning to meet their individual needs, promoting positive outcomes for all.
- Children's individual needs, and their progress and achievements at key points were captured within their personal plans.
- The childminder was committed to offering children a high-quality experience by keeping up-to-date with best practice and using their learning to improve the service.
- The childminder had developed an effective structure around self-evaluation. Continuing to demonstrate the culture of continuous improvement in the service will show how high quality performance is maintained.

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 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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were nurtured and supported throughout their daily experience to a high level. Children felt valued, loved, and secure because their care was delivered by a highly skilled childminder. Children were supported to explore and chat about their feelings and emotions. This supported them to build resilience. The childminder recognised that secure attachments and quality interactions nurtured children's security, confidence, and positive relationships. A parent said, "I know she loves Sandra from the way they are when I see them together. She always has a big smile for Sandra, and settled in very quickly."

Children's overall health and wellbeing was supported through their care and routines. Children's individual needs, and their progress and achievements were captured at key points within their personal plan. The importance of involving families and linking with professionals in making decisions about children's care and support was recognised. Detailed care plans, that were reviewed regularly, supported children to achieve their potential. A parent said, "We have regular reviews of learning plans with feedback and I am happy Sandra is actively supporting my child's development."

A child enjoyed an unhurried and sociable lunch during our visit. Suitable sized furniture supported the child's safety. They were learning to follow routines that supported their independence. The childminder created a positive social experience which provided a rich opportunity to promote close, secure attachments.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The childminder understood the importance and benefits of play experiences that took account of children's interests and stages of development. They were skilled in extending children's thinking helping them to develop life skills. For example, songs, nursery rhymes, and storytelling were integral in promoting positive outcomes in literacy from a young age. The child present danced and laughed as they enjoyed some music. Play and learning supported children to have fun. A parent said, "She gets involved in a wide range of activities and games, there are varied outings and interaction with other children."

The childminder engaged families in the service so they felt included. Daily chats, a digital floor book, and child observations provided opportunities for sharing information about children's experiences and their learning and development. Sharing information about outcomes for children as a result of their experiences highlighted how play supported children's development. A parent said, "Communication is excellent and Sandra goes out of her way to provide great educational and social experiences for her wee ones."

A very good balance of spontaneous and planned play experiences offered children a wide variety of enjoyable and exciting opportunities. We saw photographs of children playing board games together, dressing up, enjoying craft activities, and celebrating 'World Book Day.' The child present made playdough cookies and chose to do a jigsaw. Children's play experiences encouraged their curiosity and promoted their learning and development. A parent said, "Likes all the different activities, games and toys. Playing with the other children."

Children enjoyed spending time outdoors and in the local community. They felt they belonged and were included as a result. Tree climbing in the local woodland and den building supported children to be curious about their world and to find out how things worked. They were developing confidence and skills in problem solving. A parent said, "Likes the variety of outings- especially going to the milk barn."

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 experienced a calm and welcoming environment. The child present moved around the areas of the home and selected toys and resources independently. This meant they were following their interests and leading their play and learning. The childminder reflected on how children used the space and ensured areas met the needs of children. For example, the sofa provided a cosy space for children to rest and relax. A homely environment supported children's emotional wellbeing. A parent said, "The boys see Sandra's as a home from home and it is a comfort to know they spend their school wrap around in a warm, comfortable, and caring environment."

The garden and the local community provided safe spaces for children to play outdoors. In the garden, children enjoyed using resources imaginatively. They experimented as they built a ramp and a car wash. Risky play opportunities including using a fire pit supported children to learn about staying safe.

The childminder was alert to potential risks in their setting, outdoors, and in the local community. This safeguarded, protected, and supported children's wellbeing and safety. The childminder identified and minimised potential risks through the use of risk assessment. Infection prevention and control measures included cleaning and hand washing routines that were effective. Children were guided and supported to stay safe through discussion and opportunities to take on new challenges. A parent said, "Sandra's house and garden are always extremely clean and tidy. I know if any of the children are unwell she undertakes thorough deep cleans. All of the toys, including textiles, are in good condition and clean. I feel happy that my child is safe whilst Sandra is looking after her."

Children and family's personal information was securely stored. This showed the childminder understood their responsibilities regarding storing and processing children's personal information.

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The childminder had developed trusting relationships with families ensuring that they felt included in the service. Communicating effectively through sharing information in a range of ways helped the childminder achieve their commitment to meeting the needs of children and families. The service statement of aims and objectives created a respectful, happy, and welcoming ethos in the service. This promoted a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. A parent said, "Sandra is very experienced and this is evident when interacting with her. I also often seek advice from her as an experienced practitioner such as, when she believes it might be the right time to think of toilet training."

The childminder offered funded early learning and childcare for some children aged two to five years in partnership with Falkirk Council. They had worked very well with the local authority as well as the Scottish Childminding Association to learn new skills and develop ways of reflecting on children's experiences. The childminder had developed an effective structure around self-evaluation. Areas for improvement identified had included introducing 'wellbeing buddies' (SHANARRI wellbeing indicators) and children's rights language across the service. Continuing to demonstrate the culture of continuous improvement will show how high quality performance is maintained, resulting in very good outcomes for children.

The childminder recognised the importance of involving children and families in the development of the service. Children and families felt included and valued as a result. Children were supported to evaluate their experiences and to decide what photographs would be included in the digital floor book. Families were encouraged to share their thoughts and views through daily chats, questionnaires, and the online portal. A parent said, "Sandra also strikes me as very on top of her role and very responsible, and extremely experienced as a childminder. We are regularly asked for feedback."

The childminder had kept the required records including accident and incident records, and medication records. This supported them to meet the legislative and regulatory requirements of operating a registered childminding service and to keep children safe.

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

The childminder's compassionate and responsive approach supported children's wellbeing. They knew each child well and offered support in an individualised way. The childminder demonstrated a rights based approach when caring for children. Families felt that the childminder had contributed to their children's progress and learning. Warm and nurturing relationships with each family helped children feel safe and secure.

The childminder demonstrated very good knowledge and skills enabling them to offer high quality experiences for children. The childminder regularly attended training, remained up-to-date with best practice, and had a relevant childcare qualification for their role. Reflections around practice had enabled the childminder to identify how they could enhance their practice. This contributed to supporting very good outcomes for children.

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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