

Cassidy, Pauline Child Minding

Aberdeen

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 February 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2014985927

Service no:
CS2014325875

About the service

Pauline Cassidy is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of members of the childminder's family.

The service is provided from the childminder's home in the Dyce area of Aberdeen. The premises were a semi-detached villa with children being cared for on the ground floor with access to an enclosed garden area. Street parking was available.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 February 2024 from 15:30 to 17:30 and on the 14 February 2024 from 09:35 - 11:45. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children present during the inspection
- Spoke with two parents
- Received written feedback from five parents
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and routines
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy and settled within in the childminder's home.
- The childminder's interactions with the children were very responsive, caring and nurturing.
- Information gathered about children's needs needed to be developed further to support the childminder to plan their care, play and learning experiences.
- The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting children's learning and development through play and positive interactions.
- Children were cared for in a comfortable and homely environment.
- The childminder should continue developing self-evaluation systems and processes to support continued positive change to children's outcomes.

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?	4 - 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

Children were happy and settled within the childminder's home. They benefitted from the childminder's consistent nurturing and caring approach. Very positive relationships between the childminder and the children were evident. This helped the children to feel secure, included and loved.

Parents spoke positively about the childminder providing nurturing care and support. One parent told us, "the love and support she has given (the children) and me over the years is priceless", and another, "she is like is second mum."

Each child had a personal plan in place which helped the childminder identify and support their individual needs. These had not been reviewed and updated in line with legal requirements. We saw that some of the information was outdated and some key information has not been fully completed. Our discussion with the childminder did evidence that she was up to date with children's needs however had not recorded this information (**see area for improvement 1**).

Children were involved in the preparation of their own snack, for example by slicing their own bananas. This could be extended further to increase children's opportunities for developing independence skills. For example, the children could have spread their own pancakes. Most children had water to drink and were reminded and encouraged to have a drink regularly to support hydration. One school aged child had juice to drink and we reminded the childminder that children should have water or milk to drink to support their dental health.

Occasional use had been made of the sofa for sleeping and we discussed the need to ensure best practice sleep guidance is fully followed to support children's wellbeing and safety. The childminder advised that she did have appropriate resources for children who need to have a sleep and would use these going forward.

A detailed medication policy was in place and reflected up to date best practice. There was no ongoing medication needs within the service, however appropriate permission slips and forms were in place should this change.

The childminder had a good understanding of her role in keeping children safe, how to identify concerns and the action to take. There was a detailed policy in place and this was made available to parents and carers.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Experiences and play were based on children's development, individual learning needs and preferences. Children were actively involved in leading their play, ensuring a child centred approach. We saw for example, a child happily putting together a jigsaw puzzle and they told us that was their favourite thing to do. The childminder and the children told us about an interest in the circus and how this had led to them putting on a circus show for the parents. They had very much enjoyed this and it was an opportunity for them to be

creative and to perform. A recent spell of snow had provided fun opportunities for the children to explore the snow and have a lot of fun.

A selection of books were accessible for the children to access and make choices from. The children were very much enjoying being read to and older children enjoyed storytelling, receiving lots of encouragement and praise. This helped to support early literacy skills. The childminder enhanced this further by the use of repetition. Stories were explored further, for example by discussing what emotions the characters in the book may have been experiencing. Very good use of song was evident and helped to support the children with their language development.

Children had the opportunity to visit various places in the community, including play parks and various playgroups. This helped to extend their play and learning opportunities and to socialise with other children. Parents expressed that they were very happy with the experiences their children received. One parent told us that there were "varied activities and lots of photos shared to let us know about their experiences."

The childminder had been developing the range of loose parts and open ended resources to support children to be creative and problem solve in their play. These included cardboard boxes, pine cones and shells. Extending these resources further would further enhance children's play experiences and opportunities to be creative and use their imagination.

Some written information was in place to record children learning and next steps, however this was inconsistent as not all children had information in place. The childminder had also recorded some information about activities they had undertaken with the children and how this supported the children in line with SHANARRI (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included). In order to help support children's development these should continue to be developed further.

Areas for improvement

1. To help ensure that children's individual and changing needs are met the childminder should regularly update children's personal plans in partnership with children and their families.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15); and

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

How good is our setting?

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 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were welcomed into a warm and homely environment. The childminder's home was safe for children to explore and play, helping them to feel secure. Discussions with the childminder indicated that she had carefully considered risks and taken appropriate action. She was clear about regularly reviewing risks and necessary action dependent on the needs of the children being cared for.

The childminder's home, garden and equipment were well maintained. The areas used by the children had a lot of natural light. The main play space looked out onto the fully enclosed garden. Parents fed back that the children were in the garden on a very regular basis and also used other green spaces in the community.

There was a good range of resources for the children to choose from. One parent told us, "Pauline has lot of resources the children can play with and also for doing crafts, costumes, paints, playdough, toys."

Regular handwashing took place to support effective infection prevention and control. The children used a communal towel for drying their hands which was laundered at the end of each session. We suggested possible options for supporting better infection prevention and control including the use of individual face cloths or paper towels. The childminder indicated that she would action this. The bathroom was very clean for children's use.

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 aims and objectives of the service in place and these were shared with parents and carers. They reflected the service provided, including for example that the childminder offered a "professional, safe, caring family environment."

The childminder recognised the importance of involving children and families in the development of the service. Paper questionnaires for both parents and children were used to encourage them to share their views about the quality of the service. Consistent positive responses had been received. The childminder had been trying different ways of obtaining feedback, including the use of online surveys. The childminder also asked for feedback about the service when she met with families to go through the children's care and support needs. We discussed more creative child friendly approaches for younger children to get their feedback and the childminder was keen to try some of the suggestions. Children were involved in planning outings and evaluating their experiences. Families were encouraged to share their thoughts and views. This helped children and families feel valued and included.

The childminder had a variety of policies and procedures in place which contributed to a well led service. These were shared with parents and carers. These were reviewed regularly which enabled the childminder to assess if they needed to be updated. Policies and procedures were made available to parents through a service handbook which meant that they knew what to expect of the service. A comprehensive complaints procedure was in place and this was made available to parents and carers at the point of starting using the service. We discussed that it should be amended to advise that the Care Inspectorate can be contacted at any time.

The childminder had completed a course in self-evaluation and had started to self evaluate her service using 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare.' This was in the very early stages and we advised the childminder to continue to develop this further. The childminder had not put in place an improvement plan for how she plans to develop the service further. They had however identified one area for improvement that they were in the process of progressing. Once the childminder has fully self

evaluated their service then this should support the development of an improvement plan with clear goals, timescales for completion and how they support positive outcomes for children.

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's compassionate and responsive approach supported children's wellbeing. They recognised the importance of developing strong relationships with children and families. Children responded positively to the childminder's nurturing approach. Warm attachments helped children feel safe, secure and loved.

The childminder was well trained. They had completed a relevant nationally recognised qualification. In addition, the childminder had kept their knowledge and skills updated through attending various relevant courses, including first aid and child protection. The childminder was able to talk about their learning from these courses and how it supported the 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - 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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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