

Sreenan, Deanna

Child Minding

Inverness

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 March 2024

Service provided by:
Deanna Sreenan

Service provider number:
SP2005952065

Service no:
CS2005107545

About the service

Deanna Sreenan operates from her home in a quiet residential area of Inverness, close to local parks and amenities. The minded children have access to the ground floor only, with use of a bathroom and an open plan kitchen/lounge with direct access to an enclosed garden.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six 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.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 4 March 2024 between 10:00 and 11:30am. Two inspectors carried out this inspection. We provided feedback by telephone to the childminder on 5 March 2024.

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:

- analysed the responses to our MS Forms survey from two family members of people using the service;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from warm and nurturing approaches to their care, which supported them to feel safe and secure.
- Families benefited from the information the childminder shared about children.
- The childminder knew children well and supported their individual needs.
- Children were able to play and rest in a homely and clean environment
- The childminder would benefit from accessing further professional development opportunities including reading guidance and reflecting on their learning.

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?	3 - Adequate

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 quality indicator 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 happy, settled and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder was caring and kind to the children. Children were nurtured and supported throughout their daily experience. Strong relationships had been formed between the children and the childminder. This resulted in children feeling safe, secure and comfortable in the setting.

Children benefitted from a childminder who was very responsive to their needs and wants. We saw that children's interests and requests were responded to immediately, with requests for activities and games being acted upon by the childminder. The childminder played with the children and joined in with their fun. Together they laughed and children enjoyed sharing experiences with the childminder.

Personal planning information was used effectively. Parents were central to sharing relevant information about their child's routines, likes and dislikes. Information was updated when care needs changed, supporting the childminder to provide the care and support children needed at the right time. The childminder was aware of the impact that events in children's lives could have on them, supporting children and families with sensitivity.

The childminder recognised the importance of rest and sleep for children's overall wellbeing. She followed family routines, ensuring children had opportunities for rest throughout the day. This contributed to children's safety and emotional security.

The childminder was very aware of her responsibility to safeguard children. She had completed relevant training and had a good understanding of child protection. We were confident that the childminder was committed to her role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children's daily routines were a mixture of planned and child led play. There was consideration given between the time spent to play in the house, garden, or outings within the local community. The pace of the day was monitored to ensure children's needs were met.

The children had access to some toys that were suitable to their age and stage of development. The childminder responded to the child's interests and initiations of play by providing toys, support and guidance, when appropriate. These were child-centred and responsive to the children's wishes. Sensitive and skilled interactions were used to extend children's thinking and learning.

Various toys and resources accounted for the minded child's age and stage of development and learning. Resources included arts and crafts, board games, small animals, sorting toys, and a range of books. However, there was limited use of open ended, natural play resources to promote curiosity and enquiry indoors. There was a reliance on plastic resources with limited real-life items. This reduced opportunities to develop children's creative potential. The childminder should consider introducing more open-ended resources and ensure they are well presented to readily provoke interest or curiosity. We suggested that she has a look at the loose parts toolkit to develop this further and enhance children's development and learning

through loose parts play. This would support children to develop their problem-solving skills and spark curiosity in their play experiences. This was identified at the last inspection and the area for improvement made in relation to this will be continued.

(See area for improvement 1).

Children were developing strong connections within the local community. They regularly visited parks and walks to the woods. This regular access to the wider community enhanced children's play and learning opportunities.

Areas for improvement

1. To offer children opportunities to be creative and imaginative, open-ended and natural resources should be available to choose from.

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 can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity'. (HSCS 2.27)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder's home was clean, cosy and welcoming and provided a homely environment for the children. There was good natural light, with ample space for the child to move around, play and learn in. Children had access to a living area that included comfortable chairs to sit and relax together. This demonstrated to children that they were valued.

A range of toys were available for the children to choose from inside as well as the outdoor area. The childminder recognised the importance of the outdoors to promote children's health and wellbeing. The childminder's back garden was safe and hygienic and had some play resources in the shed for children to participate in such as trikes, scooters, balls and outdoor games.

Since the last inspection, the childminder had reviewed her risk assessments. Children attending the service were kept safe through the various systems the childminder had in place. The childminder explained that she completed daily visual checks before the children arrived as well as at the end of the day. We sampled the risk assessments the childminder had in place and found that she was vigilant in her care of the minded children.

Accidents and incidents had been managed well. These had been shared as necessary with parents. This contributed to effective communication with families and positive partnership working.

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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had established strong and trusting relationships with the families. This allowed for open communication and sharing of information. The childminder stated that she shares information with the parents informally on a daily basis, at drop off and collection times. Sharing photographs and information about the service meant parents felt included as they were kept updated. The childminder provides a flexible and accommodating service for the families she works with. We found she made good use of text messaging to communicate with families. This helped to ensure parents were included in their child's care.

Success and achievements were shared with families regularly. The childminder communicated with parents verbally at drop off and pick up times. The use of technology allowed the childminder to send photos of their children's achievements and information relating to their care needs and successes to ensure parents felt included and involved in their children's milestones. This facilitates continuity of care for the children.

The childminder was developing a strong ethos of continual improvement. Evaluating her service was an ongoing process. She had involved the children and their families in this. She encouraged the children and their families to give feedback informally. She had also made use of questionnaires to get feedback. By taking account of their views and suggestions contributed to families feeling valued, included and respected. The children were very much involved in the day to day running of the service and deciding what they would like to do while they were there. As a result children and families felt involved and respected as their views influenced the care provided.

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

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

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association. This provided opportunities developing knowledge and reflecting on practice, contributing to positive outcomes for children. We asked the childminder at the previous inspection to take action to access best practice documents and up to date guidance. This had not been actioned. The childminder should now build on this learning by developing a deeper understanding of child development theory, with a particular focus on how children play and learn. This would support an enabling attitude which helps children to reach their potential. Further understanding of best practice guidance would also support children's health, wellbeing and safety. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate Hub where they can access relevant publications such as 'Realising the ambition, Being Me'. (See area for improvement 1).

We also discussed the benefits of keeping a log of training undertaken, detailing how her learning had impacted positively on the outcomes for children. This would support the childminder to identify any gaps

in their practice and consider how learning can be implemented to enhance outcomes for children and families. Plans for professional learning should be based on self-evaluation, the needs of the service and the children who attend.

(See area for improvement 1).

The childminder's focus was that children were happy and having fun within their service. She had already identified areas for improvement in relation to paperwork which included personal plans. She was very keen to make improvements needed.

Areas for improvement

1. To meet the individual needs of children, and further promote their learning and development, the childminder should become familiar with best practice guidance and use this to support her approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 7 November 2022, the provider must ensure that any person living at the premises which are used for the provision of the care service is fit to be in the proximity of children. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Update the Digital Portal detailing all new adults living at the premises.
- b) Fully complete and return a Police Act Disclosure form issued for any person living in the premises used for the provision of the care service, who is 16 years of age or older and who has not already been assessed as fit by the Care Inspectorate, together with all relevant fees.

This is to comply with regulation 4 (1) (a), regulation 12 (1) and regulation 12 (4) 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); and
 "My environment is secure and safe". (HSCS 5.19)

This requirement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder has continued to notify the Care Inspectorate that any person living at the premises which are used for the provision of the care service is fit to be in the proximity of children.

The childminder has;

- a) Updated the Digital Portal detailing all new adults living at the premises.
- b) Fully completed and returned a Police Act Disclosure form issued for any person living in the premises used for the provision of the care service, who is 16 years of age or older and who has not already been assessed as fit by the Care Inspectorate, together with all relevant fees.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To effectively support children's care and development, processes for documenting personal plans should be improved. Plans should reflect children's ongoing development and the care they need to ensure the best outcomes. Plans should be reviewed regularly with parents. Minimum of every six months.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with 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).

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder now has personal plans in place. Personal plans were in place for all children. These contained detailed information including children's likes, dislikes, and routines. The childminder spoke knowledgeably about children's individual care needs and what she did to support them. She confidently described children's preferences, routines, and personalities. As a result, children's needs were met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the provider should ensure each child has access to play experiences that meet their needs, wishes and choices. This should include, but not be limited to:

- access to well planned activities either child led, or adult led;
- access to appropriate age and stage resources;
- play that meets their needs and interests;
- play that supports creativity and challenge.

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 can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27); and

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11)

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

A range of toys were available for the children to choose from inside as well as the outdoor area. The childminder recognised the importance of age and stage resources and continue to look into treasure baskets for the younger children. The childminder's back garden had some play resources in the shed for children to participate in such as trikes, scooters, balls and outdoor games.

Previous area for improvement 3

To offer children opportunities to be creative and imaginative, open-ended and natural resources should be available to choose from.

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 can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity'. (HSCS 2.27)

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

This has not been met

Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure the environment is safe and secure, the childminder should improve the way she assesses risk to minimise hazards and reduce risk.

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

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities'. (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

Risk assessments have now been completed by the childminder to minimise hazards and reduce risk.

Previous area for improvement 5

To promote consistently high quality experiences and outcomes for children, the childminder should develop a system of self-evaluation and improvement.

This should include:

- a) an increased knowledge and use of best practice documents and national guidance.
- b) a system for gathering and using the views of parents and children accessing the service.

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

"I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes". (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

This is partly been addressed. The childminder had involved the children and their families in this. She encouraged the children and their families to give feedback informally. She had also made use of questionnaires to get feedback. By taking account of their views and suggestions contributed to families feeling valued, included and respected. The children were very much involved in the day to day running of the service and deciding what they would like to do while they were there. The childminder still needs to have an increased knowledge and use of best practice documents and national guidance.

(See area for improvement under 4.1 Staffs skills knowledge and values).

Previous area for improvement 6

To promote consistently high quality experiences and outcomes for children the childminder should ensure the service is well managed and improve systems in place in order to become more organised.

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 that is well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder has ensured her paperwork is well managed and procedures are in place. The service is well managed and the childminder has become more organised.

Previous area for improvement 7

To meet the individual needs of children, and further promote their learning and development, the childminder should become familiar with best practice guidance and use this to support her approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 4.19)

This area for improvement was made on 2 November 2022.

Action taken since then

This has not been 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	4 - 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?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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