

Bramble Way Tots Child Minding

Tranent

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
22 February 2024

Service provided by:
Christine Latimer

Service provider number:
SP2023000089

Service no:
CS2023000135

About the service

Bramble Way Tots is a childminding service provided by Christine Latimer. The service is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than six are under 12 years; of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the certificate. No overnight care will be provided.

The service is provided from the childminder's family home which is a semi-detached property in the village of Ormiston, East Lothian. Children have access to the ground floor of the home comprising of kitchen, living room, cloakroom, and front and rear gardens.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 22 February 2024 between 09:45 and 11:35. 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 the childminder
- observed the childminder's practice and daily experiences for children
- reviewed online documents.

Key messages

- Children were relaxed and comfortable in the care of the childminder.
- The childminder could increase the use of loose parts and real life resources and reduce overall the number of toys available for children.
- The home provided a comfortable environment for children.
- The childminder had started to use self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement.
- Children's care was promoted through the childminder's knowledge of child development.

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?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

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

Quality indicator 1.1 - Care and Support

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

The childminder was warm, kind, and caring towards children. The development of trusting relationships helped children to feel safe and secure. The childminder described the settling in process which took account of the child's needs and was carried out at the child's pace to ensure that they felt secure in the childminder's care. The childminder was responsive to children's needs providing physical comfort and support when needed.

Children's overall health and wellbeing was supported by the use of personal plans. Information about children's care routines, development, and experiences were included. This information was gathered digitally and regularly updated to ensure that the childminder had a current overview of children's needs. For example, current information about sleep routines and dietary requirements. The childminder aimed to develop personal plans to ensure a consistent approach to gathering information about children's family life, medical needs, and interests. This will help to provide individualised care.

Children experienced a relaxed, unhurried snack during our visit. They were confident in following routines including washing their hands, and sitting around the table. Children selected the snack foods they would like and ate and chatted with the childminder. The childminder was aware of the need for children to sit whilst eating to prevent choking. Children with allergies were given alternative foods for snacks or lunches. This helped to keep all children safe and healthy. The childminder described the lunches provided for children. These were home cooked and followed good nutritional guidance.

To promote children's health and wellbeing the childminder ensured that children had significant access to outdoor physical play in the local area and further a field for special outings. The use of the local toddler group helped to introduce children to a larger group of children and prepare them for going to nursery.

Quality indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The childminder had an extensive range of play resources for children to use. The main area used for play was the kitchen for art and craft activities and the main living room for younger children's play.

We spoke to the childminder about the use of resources and the need to reduce the amount of toys on offer to enable children to see what was on offer and begin to sustain their interest and concentration. This would enable the childminder to assess how children's learning was developing and support the activities children were interested in.

There were gardens to the front and rear of the home. The garden to the rear provided children with an all weather space to play.

The fixed climbing frame provided opportunities for children to climb, balance and slide. There was an extensive range of resources outdoors for children which could also be reduced to provide more space for play and enable children to develop their interests and concentration.

The childminder had some understanding about loose parts and some of these were provided for children to use. The childminder described children's love of sticks and leaves that they found on their walks. We talked about the use of these natural resources as opposed to the significant use of plastic on dimensional resources which were present for children to use (see area for improvement 1.)

Although we did not see school aged children on the day of our visit the childminder described the activities provided for them. This included art and craft activities, which children enjoyed. There were also opportunities for playing outdoors and visits to the local park.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's opportunities for play and learning the childminder should consider the range and quality of resources on offer to children. This could be achieved by increasing the use of loose parts and real life objects and reducing the amount of toys and resources overall.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 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 had access to the ground floor of the family home. They were familiar with their surroundings and had sufficient space indoors for their play. The living room, which was used for most play activities, had a door leading directly to the safe and secure garden area at the rear of the home, enabling children to have easy access to outdoor play.

The family had two pet dogs. These were kept separated from children and were accommodated in the kitchen while children use the living room and outdoors. When children were in the kitchen, the childminder ensured that dog bowls were kept out of reach of children and that additional cleaning took place to ensure the kitchen was clean and suitable for preparing and eating food.

Appropriate infection prevention and control procedures were followed. The home was clean and well maintained. Children washed their hands at key points during the morning. For example after using the toilet and before a snack. Nappy changing was carried out discreetly but also enabled the childminder to monitor the other children, the procedure followed good practice guidance.

The childminder had developed a range of risk assessments to ensure that children were kept safe and secure. There was a good balance between children being able to take risks in their physical play and appropriate supervision by the childminder. This enabled children to learn about their own limits.

Children's information was securely in a digital format. Parents were sent secure messages and photos of their children. These measures help promote the privacy and security of children and families.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We identified several strengths, which 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 was keen to promote positive outcomes and experiences for children. They recognised the importance of evaluating their own practice and had made a start on this. We suggested using the Care Inspectorate's supporting document: 'Quality Framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare.' This will support self-evaluation and help ensure that positive outcomes for children are at the centre of any identified areas for development.

The childminder was able to tell us about areas for development they had planned. These included further developing methods of recording and thinking about the allocation of placements to enable positive outcomes for all children. We encouraged the childminder to record identified areas for improvement on a simple plan. This will help track improvements and evaluate their effectiveness in providing positive experiences and outcomes for children.

Families had some opportunities to be involved in developing the service. The childminder was in the early stages of quality assuring their service and sought verbal feedback during conversations with parents. They were planning to further develop this with feedback questionnaires. We suggested developing ways of gathering feedback from children to help provide them with opportunities to influence their experiences.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We identified several strengths, which impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder understood the importance of positive relationships with parents and how these helped to promote trust. We saw some of the comments parents had provided through the digital recording system and could see that their requests and suggestions had been accommodated.

The childminder was familiar with aspects of children's lives outside the setting and chatted to them about their hobbies and interests. Children's views were listened to and respected. A responsive approach supported children's individual needs. For example, one child was out of sorts due to having a cold and needed additional support and cuddles.

Children were supported to play as they wished. For example, when children wanted to build two different parts of rail track, the childminder made space available for them to work on these separately. This helped promote a courteous, respectful environment for children.

The childminder had a good understanding of children's developmental stages, adapting their approach to suit children's individual needs. For example, when one child's behaviour threatened to disrupt an activity, the childminder skilfully distracted them with praise and encouragement. The childminder liaised with parents about any concerns they had concerning children's development. These measures helped children and families feel supported and valued.

The childminder was new to the role of a professional child carer. They had carried out some basic training such as food hygiene, first aid and a child protection online course. We encouraged the childminder to make regular use of guidance documents available on the Care Inspectorate Hub. This will support them to continue to develop their practice in promoting positive experiences and outcomes for children.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate

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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