

# Charlene's Happy Hearts Childcare Child Minding

Cowdenbeath

**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
6 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Charlene Buchanan

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019990797

**Service no:**  
CS2019377088

## About the service

Charlene's Happy Hearts Childcare is operated by Charlene Buchanan, who provides a childminding service from her family home within Cowdenbeath. The service is close to local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery, primary schools and local shops. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home and children have access to the lounge, dining kitchen and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

The service was registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 may be of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be less than 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family.

## About the inspection

This was a short notice, announced follow up inspection, which took place on 6 March 2024 between 09:30 and 13:30 hours. 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
- 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
- spoke with three parents
- observed the environment and resources
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children had positive relationships with the childminder.
- We continued to be concerned about the cleanliness of the environment and the potential for this to impact on children's health and wellbeing.
- We continued to be concerned that the childminder had not identified hazards in the home and garden in order to protect children's safety.
- The requirements and areas for improvement identified and highlighted to the childminder at previous inspections had not been met leading to children's health, safety and wellbeing being compromised.

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

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 15 January 2024, in order to ensure children receive the right medication at the right time, the childminder must maintain a record of any medication received into the service. Where medication is administered to a child, the date and time that it is administered must be recorded and the record must be signed by the childminder and the child's parent/carer.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 1.24, which states that "Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective." (HSCS 1.24)

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of Users) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

**This requirement was made on 19 October 2022.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Children who required medication were able to be provided with this during their use of the service. Medication was stored out of children's reach within a sealed box. We advised that each child's medication should be stored within a separate container and that inhaler 'spacers' held, should be cleaned regularly to support children's health. The medication form had not been reviewed. Parent/carer signatures had not been gained to confirm childminder's receipt of medication for their child or confirming administration of the first dose by them with no adverse reactions.

The childminder had begun using an electronic medication form and these had not been fully completed. Information about one child was being held over two forms and this had the potential to lead to lack of clarity about healthcare needs and to compromise children's health. Medication should be stored appropriately and forms used must ensure all relevant information is recorded in one location. These should also demonstrate that parents have given permission for administration.

**Not met**

## Requirement 2

By 15 January 2024, in order to ensure children receive appropriate care and support at all times, the childminder must develop personal plans for each child using the service. These must set out how each child's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met. Reference should be made to the document 'Records childminding services must keep and guidance on notification reporting'. Personal plans must be reviewed by the childminder and the child's family at least once every six months, or sooner if there is any change to the child's care or welfare needs.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 1.15, which states 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)

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 5(1)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c) (Personal plans) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

**This requirement was made on 19 October 2022.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had requested all parents complete new forms which recorded children's basic personal plan information. These were now all up to date. However, children's service start dates were not always recorded. In addition, some critical information was not recorded such as children's full names. Personal plans did not contain important information about children's specific health and welfare needs and how these would be met. The childminder confirmed this was something they still needed to identify and record. Personal plans must be developed to ensure relevant information is recorded, to ensure planning and care and support for children meets their individual needs.

**Not met**

## Requirement 3

By 15 January 2024, in order to promote children's safety and wellbeing and reduce their risk of harm, the childminder must take the following action to improve the storage of household items and hazardous materials within the home and the overall safety of the garden. This includes;

- the removal of a plastic carrier bag from the playhouse in the garden to protect children from the risk of suffocation
- removal of rubbish such as empty drinks bottles, old towels and the damaged tent to reduce risk of cross infection and create a pleasant and safe outdoor play environment for children
- removal and proper disposal of broken items and equipment around the garden such as the old water tray to reduce children's risk of injury
- management of pools of stagnant water sitting within the water tray which pose a risk of infection to children
- repair to the fence to ensure it is secure and does not present a risk of harm or leaving unnoticed from further collapse during children's play
- make safe the gas barbeque to reduce children's risk or harm from exposure to hazardous gasses or fire
- replace or make good the broken baby gate at bottom of the stairs to prevent children's unnoticed access to the upstairs of the home and any potential hazards
- safe securing of the swing/climbing set and removal of broken paving slabs currently used to anchor this
- remove and safely store tubs of paint out with children's access to reduce their risk of harm

- completion of full risk assessments for the home and garden which are relevant to the service and which identify appropriate action needed to be taken to keep children safe.

This is to ensure all hazardous materials are stored out of children's reach and to make the garden area safe for children to use at all times.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 5.19 which states that "My environment is secure and safe." (HSCS 5.19)

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of Users) and Regulation 10(2)(b) (Fitness of premises) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

**This requirement was made on 18 March 2022.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had addressed some of the specified hazards since the previous inspection. For example, the baby gate was now secured at the bottom of the internal stairs and an attempt had been made to make safe and tidy up the back garden. However, additional serious hazards were identified during this visit. We found the gas barbeque had been covered but was still connected, which continued to present a risk. This led us to assess that the childminder lacked the ability to recognise and address risks. We also found additional risks created from the childminder's attempts to address previous hazards. For example, the unsafe swing set was now dismantled, leading to a pile of broken wood with exposed rusty screws lying on the patio, along with other items to be discarded. We noted broken pieces of paving slabs and additional broken wood with exposed screws behind the shed, along with a plastic carrier bag and sharp broken pieces of plastic.

The childminder advised they had stopped play in the garden and recorded this within a risk assessment based on hazards we had identified at the last inspection. The risk assessment was in place and had been shared with parents. However, it identified hazards would be addressed by 14 February 2024, and this date had passed. The childminder advised these items were due to be collected within the next couple of weeks, and we were concerned that these additional hazards were not being addressed immediately, in order to ensure children's safety. This delay demonstrated the childminder's lack of understanding of the importance of addressing risk in a timely fashion.

Risk assessments for the home and garden had been reviewed but were still not reflecting the childminder's own service as they noted hazards that were not present in the service. Risk assessments did not address the actual risks identified such as cross infection around the home. The childminder had used the same mop for the bathroom as for other areas where children eat and play. During our visit we found faeces on the bathroom floor which had not been seen and cleaned up by the childminder.

The general decor of the home presented risks, such as splinters from worn and scratched wood. We continued to be concerned about children's safety and well being due to the childminder's limited awareness, understanding and skills in relation to risk assessment and providing a safe environment for children. This requirement is therefore not met.

**Not met**

## Requirement 4

By 15 January 2024, in order to ensure the cleanliness of the environment and reduce risk of infection, the childminder must ensure the space and resources accessed are hygienically improved and maintained. This includes;

- identifying and addressing the malodour within the house to create a pleasant environment for children
- storage of the changing mat away from the toilet to reduce the risk of cross contamination to maintain children's health
- improved cleaning of all areas accessed by children with specific attention to floors, and high touch points
- removing the mould on the bathroom ceiling to reduce risk to children's health
- developing a cleaning schedule and records of cleaning to ensure the maintenance of a hygienic environment in the childminder's home.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 5.24, which state that "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment." (HSCS 5.24)

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of Users) and Regulation 10(2)(b) (Fitness of premises) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

**This requirement was made on 19 October 2022.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

Children's toys were visibly clean and in good order. A cleaning schedule had been completed for a period of three weeks but was not having a positive impact on the cleanliness of the environment. Storage of the nappy changing mat was still unsuitable as it was beside children's toys. It was also seen to be very heavily soiled and we advised the childminder to replace this. Some patches of mould still remained on the bathroom ceiling following previous water damage, which had not yet been repaired. The childminder had not identified this as mould and was not aware of the risk presented to children's health.

A strong malodour persisted throughout the home, despite adequate ventilation which created an unpleasant environment for children. The childminder was unable to identify what was causing this. Paint on the plastic coated table cloth was not cleaned off prior to a child eating and was cut in several places making it difficult to clean properly. There was a continued lack of attention to areas of cleaning with some areas including windows, floors, units and skirting boards looking heavily soiled. This increased children's risk of cross infection and impacted on their health and wellbeing.

We continued to be concerned about the level of cleanliness and management of infection control throughout the home and children's risk of cross infection. This requirement is not met.

**Not met**

**Requirement 5**

By 5 January 2024, in order to safeguard children, the childminder must submit a Disclosure Scotland form in respect of the person living on the premises who is over 16 years old.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 4.23 which states that "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed".

It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 12(2)(a) (Child minding) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

**This requirement was made on 22 November 2023.**

**Action taken on previous requirement**

The information required to process a Disclosure Scotland check for the other adult living in the premises was provided to the childminder on 22 November 2023 and recently submitted. This requirement is therefore now met outwith the timescale.

**Met - outwith 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**

The childminder should ensure children's care and wellbeing is effectively supported by a record being maintained of all accidents and incidents. They should also ensure this information is shared appropriately and timeously with families. Accident forms should be readily available to support effective information sharing and to enable families to sign for receipt of this.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me." (HSCS 1.19)

**This area for improvement was made on 19 October 2022.**

**Action taken since then**

The childminder confirmed there had been no new accidents and had blank accident forms to hand. However, they were unable to provide the completed form for the accident that occurred prior to the previous inspection. Some accident forms were missing required details such as the date and time of the accident, full names and parent signature. This had the potential to delay possible further treatment and comprised children's health and wellbeing. This area for improvement is not met.

## Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should review the mealtime routines to ensure children are having a positive eating experience. This should include;

- opportunities for children to be more independent during mealtimes
- opportunity to sit and eat together to improve social interaction and reduce the risk of choking
- improved menu planning to reduce sweets and processed foods
- development of a mealtime policy.

Reference should be made to the documents 'Food Matters' and 'Setting the Table', available at <https://hub.careinspectorate.com>.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning" (HSCS 1.33) and "If appropriate I can choose to make my own meals, snacks and drinks, with support if I need it, and can choose to grow, cook and eat my own food where possible." (HSCS 1.38)

**This area for improvement was made on 19 October 2022.**

### Action taken since then

Children were encouraged to sit and eat at the table and were supported by the childminder who joined them. Snack during the visit consisted of fruit and water. The childminder advised that all parents now provide packed lunches. The plastic coated table cloth had paint on it and was not cleaned prior to eating. This was ripped in several places, meaning it could not be cleaned effectively, posing a risk to children's health. A healthy eating policy was not in place and there was no opportunity for the child to be involved in snack preparation. The childminder had not yet developed a menu plan for snacks or used best practice guidance to plan an appropriate balanced menu across the week. We recognised some progress however, this area for improvement is still not met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should improve play and learning experiences for all children. This should include provision of a wide variety of toys and resources which provide appropriate challenge and include opportunities for creative play. These should support children's interests, age and stage of development. Planning of provision should be developed to meet children's needs and interests and support them to grow and learn.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that "As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials." (HSCS 1.31)

**This area for improvement was made on 19 October 2022.**

### Action taken since then

There continued to be a range of toys and games suitable for younger children, alongside some art and craft materials. The childminder had not yet developed loose parts play materials sufficiently to support children's creative play.



Resources and experiences for older children continued to be limited, despite some future planning of more appropriate activities. The limited toys and activities suitable for older children attending therefore reduced children's appropriate levels of challenge and enjoyment. Therefore this area for improvement has not been met.

#### Previous area for improvement 4

The childminder should ensure that record keeping is organised, accessible, up to date and follows current legislation and guidance. This is to provide families with confidence and support the smooth operation of the service. Reference should be made to the Care Inspectorate guidance note 'Records childminders must keep and required notification procedures'.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard which states that "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed." (HSCS 4.23)

**This area for improvement was made on 19 October 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

The childminder had begun using an online app for all information, to support them in being more organised. Parents told us they liked the move to the online app. However, there were inconsistencies between paperwork for medication across the app and printed forms. Also, accident forms were missing and the childminder struggled to find the child protection policy when asked.

Policies and risk assessments still required further review as these were not yet capturing all relevant information and were not fully personalised to the setting. There was scope to further improve the organisation of printed paperwork, documents held on the laptop and transition to the 'baby days' app. This would support the smooth operation of the service to meet children's needs and enhance communication with parents. This area for improvement is therefore not met.

#### Previous area for improvement 5

The childminder should develop opportunities to assess her service and enhance positive outcomes for children. This should include;

- creating an improvement/action plan to identify priorities and support change
- creating regular opportunities for formal feedback from children and families and using this to drive improvements
- becoming familiar with and making use of the new 'Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Childcare' alongside the Health and Social Care Standards.

Reference should also be made to the 'Self evaluation toolkit for childminders' available on our website. This would provide evidence of progress and support action planning for future improvements.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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 18 March 2022.**

## Action taken since then

There was very limited progress on this area for improvement. The social media page had recently been used to ask parents for ideas for activities. The floor book which was being used for planning with children, gathered some recent views on experiences and had been linked to some quality indicators. The childminder confirmed they were still unsure of how to work with the quality framework document and had not yet accessed any of the online bitesize sessions or other documents we provided to support them. The childminder confirmed they were not aware of the 'self evaluation toolkit for childminders' document. We advised to use this as a starting point, as the childminder advised of feeling overwhelmed. We discussed how quality assurance should support them to prioritise planned improvements. This area for improvement is therefore not met.

## Previous area for improvement 6

The childminder should identify and access suitable training and self directed learning to support children's wellbeing and positive outcomes. This should include reviewing a range of best practice documents available as referenced within the the Care Inspectorate document 'A Quality Framework for Childminding, Daycare of Children and School-aged Childcare.' In addition, child protection training should be prioritised to support effective safeguarding of children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 3.14, which states that "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes." (HSCS 3.14)

**This area for improvement was made on 19 October 2022.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder had not completed any further training since the last inspection. A diary identified some planned online modules for the weeks ahead. Child protection training had not yet been completed due to a course cancellation; we advised the childminder to prioritise this. The childminder had not yet developed a training log and we reminded them how reflecting on learning would also support quality assurance. We advised the childminder about upcoming webinars in regard to quality assurance, available on our website. This area for improvement is therefore not met.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

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