

Tots@Home Child Minding

Ayr

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 February 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2017988782

Service no:
CS2017353949

About the service

Tots@Home is a childminding service that operates from the childminder's home in a large residential area in Ayr, South Ayrshire. Children have access to a living area, linked dining area with patio doors that lead to an outdoor decked area.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children under the age of 12 years, of whom no more than three shall not yet be attending primary school and of whom no more than one shall be under 12 months of age.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 February 2024 between 15:00 and 18:00. 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 three people using the service and two of their families.
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Children were happy, confident and independent in the care of the childminder
- The childminder knew the children well and had formed positive relationships with them
- Families were confident that their children were safe, secure and well cared for
- The childminder should continue to undertake further training
- The childminder should further develop their knowledge of how to evaluate the quality of the service by using the Care Inspectorate's self-evaluation toolkit.

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/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

On the day of inspection, the childminder attended the local primary school to collect the children at an agreed meeting point. The children were happy to see the childminder and they were keen to tell them all about their day. This told us that children felt safe and familiar with the daily routine.

Children were kept hydrated and encouraged to make healthy food choices. The childminder provided healthy snacks for the children which included bananas, apples, blueberries and water. They sat at the dining table and chatted about their day and family events such as holidays. This supported children to enjoy a relaxed and unhurried social experience.

Children were happy and comfortable in the childminder's home. It was warm, welcoming and calm which the children responded to. We observed positive and respectful relationships between the children and childminder as they enjoyed sitting together and participating in craft activities. The childminder was kind, caring and responsive when children needed support. They knew the children well and could tell us about their individual needs and interests. This meant that children benefitted from a childminder who was responsive to children's individual needs.

Each child had a personal plan which was up-to-date and reflected their interests and preferences. The childminder used these plans to meet children's needs. We discussed how plans could be further developed and signposted the childminder to the wellbeing indicators from 'Getting it right for every child' which include Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included (SHANARRI).

The childminder had completed child protection training, and during the inspection they were able to demonstrate how they would respond to a concern and safeguard children should a concern arise. A policy was in place and the childminder knew how to respond appropriately. This helped keep children safe from harm.

1.3 Play and learning

Children led their own learning and chose how they wanted to spend their time playing. The childminder provided arts and craft materials which allowed children to create and decorate their own Easter cards. They were having fun and the childminder sat with the children as they talked about their different designs. Children were writing, colouring in and using other craft materials to explore their thoughts and ideas. This supported children to use and develop their creative and imaginative skills.

Children's developed their literacy and mathematical skills as they drew pictures and cards, and followed instructions. For example, one child used a step by step video of how to draw a fire truck. The childminder supported them to follow the instructions. We observed positive interactions as children's learning was supported. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate Hub to help them further develop their knowledge in supporting children's learning.

Children could choose to play or relax. There were books, small world, and imaginative toys and resources stored in the reception area which children could freely access. Older children chose to relax in the living area with their tablets, or watching interactive videos. This meant that children had choices and resources which reflected their age and stage of development.

Children enjoyed outdoor physical play. The local play park had been recently upgraded and had a range of large physical apparatus for children to play and learn. The childminder took the children to this play area most days to use the play equipment and have fun with their friends. This supported children to enjoy energetic, physical play and access regular fresh air.

Children were learning to identify risks and play safely. For example, the childminder supported them to identify equipment that was potentially hazardous and spoke with them about their safety. This helped keep children safe.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were welcomed in to the childminder's home which was warm, comfortable and well maintained, with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had access to an open plan living and dining area. Patio doors led to a small outdoor decked area but children mainly accessed the nearby park for outdoor play.

We observed the childminder's home environment to be clean and maintained to a high standard. Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. This included regular cleaning routines to ensure toys and resources were cleaned. This meant that children benefitted from a home environment that was well maintained and helped keep children safe.

Children accessed local parks and walks within the community with the support of the childminder. The children told us they liked going to the play park and having fun with their friends. The childminder ensured that children had regular opportunities to play outdoors and enjoy the activities that promoted their sense of wellbeing. The childminder knew about the benefits of risky play and risk taking. This helped build the children's confidence and self-esteem.

Risk assessments were used well to ensure children were safe from harm. This included local outings and trips to other community amenities. The childminder had identified strategies prior to going on outings. For example, the childminder spoke with children about road safety. Indoor hazards were identified and strategies were in place to reduce any potential risks. This meant that children were safe.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had developed aims and objectives for the service. The aims outlined the childminder's aspirations to provide a quality service for families. This included ensuring children felt welcomed into the childminder's home and that they would be treated as individuals. We spoke with the childminder and they told us that they wanted to have a strong positive relationship with the families using the service. This was evident when we spoke with families.

The childminder had informally sought the views of children and asked them what they would change about the service. This resulted in children accessing more outdoor activities, including local walks and spending time at the play park with their friends. This meant that the childminder listened to and responded to children's views which contributed to the quality of their experiences.

Formal feedback had been obtained from families regarding the quality of the service. We reviewed comments from families which were all positive and included the quality of their children's experiences. This ensured positive outcomes for children. One family commented, 'Good service, my children have fun after school in a safe environment'.

The childminder had begun to access the Care Inspectorate Hub to develop their knowledge and skills. To ensure the childminder continues to review and improve the quality of the service, we signposted them to the self-evaluation toolkit.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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 review her snack and lunch menu in line with best practice guidance and with input from children and parents.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning'(HSCS 1.33).

This area for improvement was made on 22 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder had reviewed their healthy snack menu and provided children with fruit and water. This meant that children were hydrated and were making healthy food choices. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the childminder should further develop personal plans for each child which shows how their needs are being identified and met. This should be done in consultation with parents and reviewed when there is a significant change in a child's health, welfare or safety needs, or at least once in every six month period.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My personal, plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because its 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 22 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder had recently developed a personal plan for each child in their care. This was carried out in consultation with the child and family. The plans identified the children's health and wellbeing needs as well as their interests and preferences. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should develop quality assurance by implementing more formal systems that enable the quality of the service to be evaluated. Gathering parents and children's views regularly to help identify areas for improvement should be part of the process.

To further support evaluations and improvements in the service, we suggested the childminder use best practice guidance including the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged children'.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 22 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder had sought formal feedback from families to identify areas for improvement. They had also consulted with children about the quality of the service and listened to their views. This led to improvement. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

In order to keep up to date with developments in early learning and childcare practice and to meet children's needs, the childminder should identify and attend suitable training opportunities and/or undertake appropriate self-directed study. The childminder should prioritise child protection and first aid training and source guidance and literature on GIRFEC to support them with meeting children's needs.

This is to ensure the service complies with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "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 22 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder had started to access training. They had participated in child protection training, food hygiene and was scheduled to attend first aid training. This area for improvement has 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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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