

Maitland, Maureen Child Minding

Oban

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 March 2024

Service provided by:
Maureen Maitland

Service provider number:
SP2003901516

Service no:
CS2003003144

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The service provider is Maureen Maitland.

Maureen Maitland is a childminding service. The service operates from the childminder's home, located in a rural area near Benderloch. The service is provided from a detached one-storey house, with children having access to the ground floor and front garden.

Current registration allows the childminder:

1. To provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 6 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. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 20 March 2024. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with the childminder.
- Sent questionnaires to parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

Key messages

- Children were experiencing warm, nurturing care and support.
- The childminder's dedication and passion was supporting children to thrive and flourish.
- There was a strong focus placed on being outdoors.
- Children's experiences were being enhanced and enriched through strong connections with their own and the wider community.
- The childminder communicated and engaged well with families.
- The childminder's warmth, kindness and positive ethos of mutual trust and respect was promoting a happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families.

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

We were able to see children experiencing warm, nurturing care and support. The childminder knew children well and had developed trusted and loving relationships with them through nurturing interactions that supported their wellbeing and helped them feel valued, safe and secure. Children were happy and settled in the service. They were relaxed and confident around the childminder and in the home from home environment.

Parents commented:

"[The childminder] goes above and beyond for our [child]. She provides a caring and loving environment and this shows through [our child] asking to go to her house at weekends".

"Friendly, welcoming, flexible and just a lovely place for my wee [child] to be themselves".

Families provided snacks and packed lunches for their children. The childminder explained the importance of children enjoying a positive relaxed experience when eating that supported their independence, encouraged friendly social interactions and developed their communication skills.

The childminder was nurturing and respectful with children's personal care and explained how sleep routines would be followed using current best practice and tailored to children's individual needs.

Children's personal plans contained relevant core information. Children's likes, dislikes, and interests had been gathered when they started supporting the childminder to meet their health, welfare, and safety needs. 'All about me' profiles and care plans were tailored to children's individual needs, took account of any emerging or changing needs and were linked to the developmental milestones and the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. We have asked the childminder to continue to review and update all children's plans every six months in line with legislation.

The childminder communicated effectively with parents through regular conversations and daily discussions to support children's wellbeing. Through discussion she explained the importance of working collaboratively when needed with other professionals and agencies involved in a child's care and support.

No children were being given medication at the time of the inspection. We sampled medication formats and found these needed to be updated. We discussed with the childminder reviewing the format, in line with current best practice guidance: 'Management of Medication in daycare and childminding services' and she confirmed she would do this.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The childminder engaged with children in a sensitive, nurturing and respectful manner to reassure and support their play, encouraging them to make choices, share and promote friendships. Children were busy, having fun and engaged well playing together. They had access to a wide range of age and stage appropriate toys and resources to support their play and learning both indoors and outside. Children were able to choose and freely access these resources supporting them to lead their own play. These experiences were being enhanced and enriched through strong connections with their own and the wider community.

The childminder was supporting children to explore their ideas and build on their interests. Informal planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's individual needs. For example, using observations to support the development of their natural curiosity, identifying next steps and progression in their play and learning. We discussed how this could be strengthened further by considering floor books as a way to record children's developing skills and progress, gathering their ideas and interests and identifying possible lines of development and challenge.

Parents told us:

"[The childminder] takes into account each individual's learning interests and ensures she has activities available to meet our [child's] interests and needs".

"[The childminder] ensures that our [child's] learning and development needs are always met through excellent communication with us, and providing him/her with activities to meet his/hers interests. [Our child] has daily opportunities to take part in both indoor and outdoor play and regularly attends groups".

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

The childminder's home was clean, comfortable and well ventilated with plenty of natural light. Children had space to play and areas with soft furnishings for relaxation and comfort. Children had space to play together, relax on the sofa or have time to themselves if they wished.

Children had access to a range of suitable resources that were being regularly replenished, including natural, open ended and loose parts play materials. Children were able to make choices and select toys. Resources were accessible to children, providing opportunities for them to direct their own play and be independent. Importance was placed on being outdoors and engaging in the wider surrounding community with walks along the cycle path, visits to the local beach, woodland, playgroup, community hub and toy library. One parent said, "[The childminder] has a very good enclosed garden which the kids are in when it's not really wet. They go for walks in the area too". This was supporting children to explore, be curious and enjoy risky play, promoting their imagination, sense of wellbeing, wonder and adventure.

Measures were in place to support children to enjoy a wide range of activities, the childminder kept a written record of all the risk assessments she undertook to enable them to be regularly reviewed, updated and shared with parents and children.

The childminder demonstrated good practice in infection prevention and control. For example, she modelled good hand hygiene and children were regularly reminded and supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before and after eating and coming in from outdoors.

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 well led

The childminder was welcoming, engaged well with the inspection process and was responsive to our suggestions for further development. She was committed to the ongoing improvement and development of her service to achieve the best outcomes she could for children and their families and was at the early stages of self-evaluation using our new quality framework.

The childminder had developed a range of policies and procedures, and these were available to parents, so they knew what to expect from the service. The childminder should continue to review and update these regularly to ensure they remain in line with current legislation and guidance.

The childminder was in the early stages of developing formal quality assurance processes. As a starting point we suggested she re-issue questionnaires to parents to seek their views and identify areas where she could improve. This would enhance the service moving forward enabling the childminder to reflect on suggestions and make improvements where required.

The childminder could then develop a plan with achievable targets and make links to best practice guidance. For example: 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare', 'Realising the ambition' and the 'Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS)'. This would support the childminder to reflect on what was working well in the service and what could be improved. This will also ensure children and families continue to have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the service. **(See area for Improvement 1)**

The childminder communicated and engaged well with families. One parent said, "[The childminder] is easy to talk to and takes into account our needs as parents".

Parents were given regular updates on their child's development and learning through daily conversations, telephone calls and digital technology.

Parents told us:

"We are always kept up to date with our [child's] day through excellent communication and weekly photo updates".

"[The childminder] sends photos of my [child] engaged in activities through the day which is brilliant".

We would ask the childminder to review her certificate of registration and make a variation application through our digital portal to remove any time limited conditions of registration that have now lapsed.

We discussed with the childminder that she is required to register her business with the information commissioner's office (ICO) as she is a registered business handling personal data. The childminder confirmed she would do this at the earliest opportunity.

Areas for improvement

1. To support a culture of continuous improvement, the childminder should develop monitoring and self-evaluation processes that will help to identify service strengths and areas for further improvement.

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).'

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 dedication and passion was supporting children to thrive and flourish. Her warmth, kindness and positive ethos of mutual trust and respect was promoting a happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families. She was nurturing in her care and had formed strong attachments with the children and their families.

The parents commented that, "[The childminder] has many many years of experience childminding and it is evident in the relationship that she cultivates with the children and the confidence she instils in the parents. I was an extremely anxious first time mother and [the childminder] was supportive and patient. My [child] loves going to see her and I feel so fortunate that I know [my child] is safe and happy whilst I am working".

The childminder engaged with children in a responsive, and respectful manner which supported their self esteem and confidence. She promoted positive behaviour by role modelling kind words and friendly engagement with the children.

The childminder kept herself well informed through her membership with The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and had built up her skills, knowledge and expertise over many years to support children to learn, develop and achieve their potential. She had undertaken recent training in first aid, was clear what to do and who to go to should she have any child protection concerns and demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of identifying and managing risk. She was fully aware she needed to update her child protection training and intended to do this at the earliest opportunity.

Going forward we discussed how further training and access to good practice guidance could support the continued development of her service and further inform and enhance her practice. We directed the childminder to the Care Inspectorate 'Hub' and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) where she could have access to best practice guidance and online training. The childminder should also consider keeping a record of any professional development she undertakes to enable her to evaluate the impact it has had on outcomes for children and the ongoing development of the service. **(See area for improvement 1)**

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure positive outcomes for children and the ongoing development of the service, the childminder should identify and access further training, review best practice guidance and keep a record of her professional development.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 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); and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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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