

Wilkie, Caroline Child Minding

Airdrie

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 April 2024

Service provided by:
Caroline Wilkie

Service provider number:
SP2004942879

Service no:
CS2004085770

About the service

Caroline Wilkie is registered to provide care to a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

These numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service operates from the childminder's family home in Airdrie, North Lanarkshire which is close to local nurseries, schools, shops, parks and other amenities. Care is provided mostly from a comfortable lounge area and children can independently access the rear garden from the kitchen. The toilet is situated on the lower level.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 22 April 2024 between the hours of 10:00 and 12:45. One inspector carried out the inspection.

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:

- spent time with one young child who was attending the service
- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed feedback from four parents/carers
- observed practice and daily life
- looked around the areas of the childminder's home that were used by children
- reviewed service documents.

Key messages

- The childminder was kind, respectful and nurturing which supported children to feel safe and secure in the setting.
- The childminder knew children and their families very well and provided a flexible, reliable childcare service to meet their needs.
- Children's learning and development was supported through good quality play experiences, which reflected their interests.
- Effective communication supported families to be involved in their child's care.
- Children were cared for in a safe and homely environment.
- Personal plans should be further developed with children and their parents/carers.
- The childminder should improve how medication is managed in the service.

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?	5 - Very 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

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing Care and support.

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

There was one young child present during our visit who was content and happy in the childminder's care. We saw that very positive relationships had been formed with the childminder's own family. Minded children were involved in their family life and they were respected and included. The child often sought and received reassurance, attention and cuddles from the childminder which supported their emotional wellbeing. Interactions were warm, respectful and loving. The childminder knew the children they cared for well and was able to describe how they were being supported. A parent/carer commented, "We can tell by the smile on our child's face every-time she sees Caroline, that she loves her and going to her house."

The childminder described positive relationships with parents/carers. They felt, and parents/carers confirmed, that effective communication enabled them to be fully involved in their child's care. This ensured good links between home and the childminding setting, which supported continuity of care. A parent/carer told us that they liked, "Individualised care. Very reliable. I feel like my child's days have a great balance of activities. I trust my childminder and the environment she has for him."

Some important information about children's health, wellbeing and development was recorded in their personal plans, including individual routines and personal preferences. The SHANARRI wellbeing indicators from Scottish Government guidance, 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) were used well to support the childminder to meet children's needs effectively. The childminder recognised, and we agreed, there was scope for plans to demonstrate more clearly how children's needs were to be met. The childminder also agreed to ensure children (where appropriate) and their parents/carers are involved in personal planning. We signposted them to personal planning guidance available on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

We did not observe lunch time during our visit, however the childminder explained that healthy and nutritious options were mostly provided. We noted that snacks could be more healthy and nutritious and encouraged the childminder to continue to promote healthy eating in the service.

We looked at how medication was managed in the service and found there was scope for improvement. While medication was being administered safely, record keeping needed to be better. We provided the childminder with advice and signposted them to 'management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' guidance. This will help ensure the health and safety of children who use the service. The childminder had taken positive steps to address this at the time of this report.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

We observed the child playing happily during our visit. They enjoyed their activities and had lots of fun. The child led their own play ideas and participated in activities that were of interest to them. The childminder was responsive to the child's suggestions and their positive interactions and questioning extended the child's play and supported their learning. We found literacy and numeracy were naturally incorporated into all play and learning experiences. We observed role play, small world and table games being used to explore colours, shape and numbers. The child proudly demonstrated their counting skills and told us, "I'm learning

my numbers."

Children had access to a good range of stimulating, fun toys and resources, including books, role play, crafts and small world. We suggested that children's play and learning could be further enhanced by having access to more natural, real life and open-ended materials to support their curiosity, problem solving and creativity. The childminder agreed to give this further consideration.

Opportunities for outdoor play and outings in the local and wider community were a particular strength in this setting. Children regularly participated in walks to local play parks and attended playgroups and libraries. This supported their learning and helped them develop positive links within their community. The child told us about the fun they had and the friendships they had formed in these groups. A parent/carer commented, "Happy my child is involved in plenty activities while with Caroline."

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 2.2: High quality facilities.

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

Children were cared for in a comfortable, cosy, homely environment. The childminder's welcoming, inclusive approach ensured children and families felt respected and valued. All areas used by children were clean and well-ventilated with large windows providing lots of natural light. A parent/carer commented, "Lovely family home."

Comfortable sofas and soft furnishings provided children with cosy, relaxing spaces to rest when they were tired. Toys and resources were clean, safe and well maintained. These were accessible to children, which promoted choice and independence. A parent/carer told us, "My child is always happy to be in this environment and it is always clean and well maintained."

Children could freely access the garden from the kitchen, which was secure and safe. This provided children with opportunities to be active in the fresh air. There was a good range of outdoor play resources to support their play experiences.

The childminder carried out visual checks prior to children arriving and throughout the course of the day, responding to anything that could pose a risk. Appropriate procedures for recording accidents and incidents were also in place.

Children's safety and wellbeing was supported well through the childminder's infection prevention and control procedures. The childminder ensured areas were well ventilated and toys and equipment were cleaned regularly. We found good hand hygiene practices were in place and the childminder ensured children were prompted and supported to wash their hands at key times. This encouraged children to learn good handwashing habits.

The childminder had two pet dogs who spent limited time with children. The dogs were friendly and the child was clearly very fond of them. Pets and their equipment were generally managed well.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are well led.

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

The childminder was very passionate about their role. They had high aspirations for their service and wanted children and families to experience the best possible care. They provided funded places to children through their partnership agreement with North Lanarkshire Council. Important information about the service was shared with parents/carers prior to them using the service, including aims and objectives, policies and procedures. This helped them to understand the childminder's vision and ensured they were well informed about the service. A parent/carer commented, "Caroline is so flexible, she's a great childminder and has been like an extension of my family for the last 7 years."

The childminder had recently attended self-evaluation training which had developed their knowledge of this process. A reflective tool had been introduced which enabled them to develop a more formal approach to assessing their service. While this was at its early stages, the childminder was developing confidence and was starting to consider what was working well in their service and identifying improvements that were needed. 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged children' was also being used to reflect on the quality of the service and help identify areas for further development. The childminder was confident this would lead to continued improvements in the service. We suggested that the childminder might also find it helpful to access the early learning and childcare improvement programme, available on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

Parents/carers views were important to the childminder. Regular contact, informal communications and questionnaires meant families could naturally influence the care provided. We discussed additional ways in which children and their families could contribute to improving the quality of their experiences, which the childminder agreed to explore further.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The childminder was well experienced and professional. They were committed to ensuring positive outcomes for children and their families. Meeting with other childminders enabled them to reflect on good practice and share and gather ideas. Being a member of the Scottish Childminding Association and accessing information from the Care Inspectorate HUB, supported the childminder to keep up to date with new developments.

The childminder was organised and appropriate records were in place. For example, details of children's attendance had been recorded, written policies, procedures and appropriate insurance were in place. This helped ensure they were meeting their responsibilities of delivering a professional registered childcare service and helped keep children safe.

The childminder had a very good understanding of children's development needs and individual personalities. They were cared for in safe, familiar surroundings and were content and happy. Positive relationships had been developed with parents/carers, who were very involved in their child's care. This ensured continuity and consistency of care. A parent/carer told us, "Friendly service. Personal relationship with my child. The love going."

The childminder was clear about their role in protecting children and knew who to contact for advice and support. Training relating to this topic had been consistently accessed throughout their career and a suitable policy was in place, which had been shared with parents/carers.

The childminder demonstrated a commitment to their ongoing professional development and learning. They were open and responsive to our suggestions, some of which had been taken forward during this process. They had engaged in a wide range of learning and development opportunities since the last inspection, which included gaining a formal qualification in early learning and childcare. This helped ensure they were informed of current practice and kept their knowledge refreshed. The childminder described how recent training had impacted positively on the quality of children's experiences. In addition, accessing training on self-evaluation had supported the childminder to reflect on their professional development and identify areas to develop further.

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

We recommend that the childminder fixes the safety issues within the back garden so that it is safe for the children to access. This will ensure that children's wellbeing is improved as a result, of regular fresh air and opportunities to explore a natural environment.

This is to comply with Health and Social Care Standards, my support, my life- Standard 5, I experience a high-quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.

This area for improvement was made on 16 April 2018.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement had been fully addressed. The garden area had been upgraded since the last inspection and was accessed regularly by the children. This area was safe and secure.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should familiarise herself with current best practice guidance to enable her to reflect on her practice and identify gaps in knowledge. This will support the childminder to develop a personal training plan. As a result of increased knowledge and training children's experiences will be improved and they will be better supported to achieve.

Good practice documents that should be considered include (but are not limited to) are:

- My World Outdoors
- My Childminding Experience

- Our Creative Journey
- Building the Ambition

This is to comply with Health and Social Care Standards, my support my life- Standard 4 I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support and standard 3- I have confidence in the people who support and care for me.

This area for improvement was made on 16 April 2018.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement had been fully addressed. The childminder demonstrated that they had participated in a wide range of training and was able to communicate how this had impacted on practice and quality of experiences for children. Although a formal training plan was not in place, the childminder used their self-evaluation tool to highlight any gaps in their knowledge.

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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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