

Mackie, Aileen Child Minding

Macduff

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 May 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2008971004

Service no:
CS2008182240

About the service

Aileen Mackie provides a childminding service from their property in a residential area of the coastal town of Macduff, Aberdeenshire.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The parts of the premises not to be used are the second bedroom on the upper level and the front garden. The rear garden will not be used unless the childminder is present and there will be no more than two children who are not yet attending school. Overnight care will not be provided.

The service is close to a local primary school, shops, parks, and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room and kitchen. There is a garden to the rear of the property for outdoor play.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 May 2024 between 10:30 and 13:15. 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, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- spoke with two of their parents/carers
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were supported with respect and kindness.
- Children were able to play and rest in a homely and welcoming environment.
- Children had fun and enjoyed playing with the toys and games on offer.
- The environment was clean and the childminder followed infection prevention and control (IPC) procedures to help keep children safe and well.
- The childminder had grown in confidence and ability. They were beginning to use self evaluation and quality assurance to make changes and improve their service.
- The childminder was committed to ongoing professional development which led to improved outcomes and quality care for children.

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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children and their families experienced a friendly and welcoming service. A few of the families had attended the service for a number of years and told us they had a positive relationship built on trust and respect. They appreciated the flexible and understanding approach taken by the childminder in order to meet their children's needs.

Children were supported with kind and nurturing interactions. The childminder's calm and gentle demeanour contributed to a relaxed ethos where children felt comfortable to attend. Children were cuddled when they felt tired, helping them to feel safe and loved.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the effective use of personal planning. Children and their families were central to this process and were involved in reviewing and updating information. This promoted a consistency and continuity of care.

Children benefited from the choice of a nutritious homecooked meal or a healthy packed lunch brought from home. A few children were provided with breakfast before going to school. Parents told us they were happy with the snacks and drinks provided and felt the needs of their children were well catered for. A newly purchased table meant snacks and meals were eaten in the kitchen, providing opportunities for chat and modelling of good eating habits.

Children's sleep routines were well supported and were reflective of their family's wishes. The childminder understood the importance of sleep for children's overall development and children enjoyed a cosy nap after lunch. The childminder sat with the children as they slept, ensuring their safety and comfort.

Children were kept safe and protected from harm and abuse. The childminder had attended training and was knowledgeable and competent in recognising potential signs and symptoms and knew who to contact if concerned.

1.3 Play and learning

Children had fun and were able to choose from a selection of toys and books. They benefitted from warm and kind interactions as they played. The childminder advised resources were rotated to reflect children's current interests, helping to engage and sustain their play.

Since the previous inspection, the childminder had introduced more opportunities for sensory and messy play. The childminder helped children build models with sand and showed children how to draw round their hand using water pens. This led to lots of giggles from happy children who were learning through creativity and imaginative play.

Planning approaches were child-centred and responsive to children's interests and life experiences. This included asking older children about activities they enjoyed and what they wanted to do. Some observations of progress and achievements had been completed for younger children. These were used to plan

experiences to support their development. This was in the early stages of implementation and should be continued.

Some language and literacy development were promoted during play activities. The childminder modelled good listening and talking skills by getting down to the children's level. Children were able to mark make using a water play mat and pens. There were some opportunities for recognising shapes and colours when playing with sand.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections to their own and wider communities. Children enjoyed going for walks and visiting parks and the beach. Older children regularly played with friends at the park. Parents told us this was beneficial to children's wellbeing and provided good opportunities for them to make friends outside school.

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.

Children were kept safe in a secure environment. The front door was locked at all times to ensure children could not leave the house unsupervised. Risk assessments for children playing in the park were robust and helped identify any potential hazards to help prevent any potential accidents. The childminder advised risk assessment for all outings with the children were under development.

Children were able to play and rest in a homely and welcoming environment. They ate snack in the kitchen and the newly purchased table promoted more opportunities for messy play and arts and crafts. Children had ample space for their needs and were able to play games and relax and chat in the cosy living area.

Children were able to play outside on a decked area at the rear of the garden. Some resources, such as pedal cars, a play kitchen, and fishing rods, were stored in a shed, helping to protect and keep them safe for play.

Children were kept safe and well in a clean environment. Appropriate infection prevention and control procedures were followed when completing a nappy change. Handwashing was embedded in practice and children were provided with clean hand towels to help prevent illness through cross-contamination.

Children's personal information was stored confidentially in a safe location.

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.

The aims of the service included providing a safe, enjoyable, and stimulating environment for children, encouraging fair play, tolerance, cooperation and sharing, and respect and manners. This was shared with families, helping them understand what to expect from the service.

There was some potential for children and families to become involved in the service and influence change. Pictures and messages were sent using What's App to reassure parents their child was safe and happy. Parents told us they were very happy with the service provided and felt the childminder was easy to talk to and approachable. Older children were encouraged to voice their own opinions and make suggestions on

outings and where they wanted to play. As a result, they often visited the local park and benefitted from opportunities to run around and make friends. Younger children were at ease in the childminder's company, contributing to them making independent choices which supported their play experiences.

The childminder had grown in confidence and demonstrated a better understanding of self evaluation and quality assurance. This led to better learning experiences and good quality care.

The childminder was beginning to use the document 'A Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare' to reflect and bring about positive changes. For example, they understood the importance of settling-in visits to build relationships and positive attachments in order to help children settle and recognised they did this well. The childminder had identified some areas for improvement which included their continued professional development.

Quality assurance of the service meant children's personal plans contained up-to-date information relevant to their needs. Policies and procedures reflected current research and guidance and supported the childminder in their practice.

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.

Children's wellbeing was supported through respectful and compassionate interactions. The childminder had a good relationship with the minded child present and chatted and talked to them in a kind and friendly manner. They regularly checked to ensure they were happy and that their needs were met. This approach supported children to feel valued and secure and contributed to a positive ethos where children enjoyed attending the service.

The childminder demonstrated a commitment to their professional development. They had undertaken numerous webinars and had formed friendships with other childminders to discuss the latest research and guidance. This was evident in their improved confidence and in the range and quality of play experiences offered to the children. Guidance, such as 'Realising the Ambition', was used well when observing and planning learning experiences. This led to children who were supported to reach their full potential and were progressing well.

The childminder had accessed core training, such as child protection, first aid, and food hygiene. They were able to discuss techniques to help children in the event of choking or in minor accidents. Their clean and tidy home was reflective of their good knowledge and understanding of infection prevention and control. They were confident when discussing their processes to protect children and knew who to go to if concerned. This contributed to happy children who were safe and well cared for.

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

To support children's wellbeing, learning, and development the childminder should ensure children are provided with high quality play and learning experiences based on current child development theory and practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation, and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30).

This area for improvement was made on 30 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Children were provided with a range of play and learning experiences suitable for their age and stage of development. More sensory and messy play activities were introduced and supported learning through creativity and imagination. More opportunities for learning in the wider community were available and children benefited by forming friendships with other children.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to improve outcomes for children, the childminder should ensure they complete training and learning specific to their role and are competent in the application of, including but not limited to, child protection.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state 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 30 August 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had accessed core training, such as child protection, first aid, and food hygiene. They were confident when discussing their processes to protect children and knew who to go to if concerned. They had undertaken numerous webinars and had formed friendships with other childminders to discuss the latest research and guidance. This was evident in their improved confidence and in the range and quality of play experiences offered to the children. Guidance, such as 'Realising the Ambition', was used well when observing and planning learning experiences.

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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