

Dunning, Amanda Child Minding

Irvine

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
22 April 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2015986937

Service no:
CS2015337428

About the service

Amanda Dunning provides a childminding service from their family home which is located in a residential area of Irvine, North Ayrshire. The service is close to local schools, shops and parks.

Children are cared for in a living area with access to a large, fully enclosed garden. They have supervised access to the kitchen and an upstairs bathroom.

The service is currently 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. The numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family. During our visit the childminder was providing a service to six children, three under two years, two four year olds and a five year old.

Paul Dunning is employed as an assistant.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 April 2024 between 12:30 and 16:30. 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 children using the service
- spoke with the childminder and assistant
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed and sampled documents
- received five completed questionnaires

Key messages

- Children were happy, safe and secure in the childminder's home
- The childminder and assistant were kind, caring and nurturing
- Children had opportunities to play indoors and outdoors with a range of resources
- The childminder had a good understanding of child development
- Children's individual learning and developmental needs were well supported
- The childminder and assistant were committed to providing a quality service
- To support improvement, the childminder should continue to use self-evaluation processes

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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?

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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support.

Children experienced kind, caring and nurturing support from the childminder and assistant who knew them very well. They were happy, safe and secure in the childminders home and were having fun with their friends. Strong attachments had been formed with the children and they responded to the childminder, seeking comfort and reassurances when needed. This contributed to children feeling safe, secure and well supported.

Children were relaxed, confident and settled in the home environment. They told us they liked playing outside with their friends and liked coming to the childminder's home to play. The childminder was responsive to children and ensured they were happy and settled within the home. Settling in processes reflected individual family needs and were taken at a pace that was right for the child. This ensured children felt safe and secure.

During personal care routines, children's rights to privacy and dignity was promoted and respected. Interactions were warm, sensitive and caring ensuring children's emotional wellbeing was supported and positive attachments were formed. The childminder promoted older children's independence and self-care through gentle encouragement. As a result, children were able to manage their self-care, promoting their confidence and self-help skills.

Children's emotional security and wellbeing needs were well supported through comfortable, cosy sleeping arrangements. Younger children often slept during the day and a portable travel cot was available for children when they needed to rest or sleep. This meant that children were comfortable, safe and secure. The childminder was aware of best practice in relation to safe sleep guidance.

The childminder and assistant knew children very well. Personal plans reflected children's interest, preferences and stages of development. This meant that children's individual needs were supported and the childminder was able to provide the appropriate care and support. Regular reviews of the plans meant that families could share information about children's health, safety and welfare needs. The childminder worked closely with families to develop specific strategies to support children when they needed additional support. Most families strongly agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their care plans.

Lunch time was an inclusive, relaxed and unhurried experience. Younger children were placed in high chairs for their safety and encouraged to eat their food independently. Older children sat at the dining table and chatted about their day, enjoying the social experience. The assistant provided water to encourage children to remain hydrated and this promoted their continued health. Children were involved in choosing healthy snacks and they had some opportunities to prepare and serve them. This helped promote their independence and life skills.

1.3 Play and learning.

Children had access to a wide range of resources and play experiences, indoors and outdoors. Resources were age and stage appropriate and children were able to lead their own play and self-select. They had access to books, puzzles, floor games and small blocks. Children played on the floor; they shared resources and co-operated with each other. This supported their social skills.

The assistant supported children's learning by joining in on their play, and they encouraged the children to build an obstacle course and take risks. Children were having fun as they played with sand, water and a range of imaginative toys which they used to role play. They were 'cooking and making tea' in the 'cubby house' which sparked their interest and extended their language development. Children's art work was displayed in the 'cubby house'. This celebrated children's achievements and provided them with a sense of belonging.

The childminder and assistant planned for children's learning. A weekly planner provided a broad range of experiences to support children's play and learning. There was a balance of planned and spontaneous activities which meant that children could choose how they wanted to spend their time at the service. Language, literacy and numeracy skills were promoted through books, interactive games and adult led experiences. The childminder spent time with the children to develop their skills in mark making and supported them to recognise sounds, letters and numbers. This meant that children were learning through a range of play experiences.

Children's learning was tracked and showed progress over time. Their next steps for learning was recorded in their learning plan, and reflected their interests and stages of development. It also took into account where children preferred to play, for example, one child liked to play and explore outdoors. As a result, children were progressing well.

Play experiences were extended through opportunities within the local community. The childminder took the children to the park on a nature walk to learn about flowers, insects and animals. As a result, children were learning about nature within their community.

How good is our setting?

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

The childminder's home was warm, welcoming and well maintained with plenty of natural light and ventilation. Children had access to the main living area which led to the large outdoor play area. This meant that children could move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas independently and choose where they wanted to play.

The living area was well furnished and comfortable. Access to soft seating and quiet areas gave children space to rest, relax and be on their own if they chose. This enabled children to set the pace of the day which supported their emotional wellbeing.

Children had access to a wide range of learning experiences outdoors. A 'cubby house' and sheltered area

meant that children could play outdoors in all weathers. The service provided outdoor clothing for the children including puddles suits and warm jackets. Children had access to fun experiences, for example, water play with real life resources such as a sink, basins and crockery to develop their imaginative skills. A climbing frame, bikes and scooters provided opportunities for energetic and risky play. As a result, children were developing their confidence, co-ordination and physical skills.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through good infection prevention and control measures to ensure a safe and hygienic environment. Children were encouraged to develop self-care skills and follow good hand washing procedures. During personal care routines, the childminder used appropriate personal protective clothing to further prevent the spread of infection. We observed good cleaning practices after lunchtime and the home and toys were well maintained. This meant that children were cared for in a pleasant and clean environment.

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 service was in partnership with the local authority to provide childcare. The childminder and assistant attended regular meetings to ensure they were up-to-date with current practice and guidance. This contributed to the overall development and improvement of the service.

The childminder was committed to providing a quality service that was flexible and tailored towards the needs of families. This was reflected in their values and practice. Families told us that they were happy with the service and the quality of care and support provided to their children. The childminder and assistant were also committed to improving the service and had sought the views of families.

Most families strongly agreed that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. This meant that families influenced change and helped improve the quality of the service.

Families were encouraged to share information about the service. The childminder asked families to complete a monthly about how well the service was meeting the needs of families and provide suggestions about any improvements. The childminder responded quickly to put in place family requests and suggestions. This contributed to positive outcomes for children.

Opportunities for daily chats about children's experiences were discussed at the end of the day and regular photographs and messages were sent to families with updates on children's progress and development. Families told us that they enjoyed the daily updates.

The childminder was in the early stages of reflecting on the quality of the service to identify strengths and areas for improvement. To further support this, we suggested keeping a diary to ensure positive outcomes for children processes. The childminder and assistant were scheduled to attend self-evaluation training provided by the local authority.

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.

4.3 Staff deployment.

The childminder was warm, caring and nurturing towards the children and responded to their individual needs. They had formed strong and trusting relationships with children and families. All families strongly agreed that the childminder was nurturing and responsive to their child's needs.

On the day of inspection, the childminder and assistant cared for six children. They worked well together and had established a daily routine to ensure smooth transitions throughout the day. This included scheduled pick up and drop off times to suit family needs. Families told us that the childminder was flexible and happy to accommodate their changing needs.

The childminder worked closely with the assistant. They communicated well to ensure children's needs were well supported. They knew children very well and shared responsibilities. For example, the childminder was settling a child into the service and was supporting their emotional needs. The assistant ensured the other children were engaged in their play before preparing the lunchtime experience. This meant there was continuity of care and children's needs were met.

The childminder and assistant valued training opportunities provided by the local authority and had also undertaken self-directed learning to support their practice. They had completed first aid and child protection training. As a result, children were protected from harm.

Children benefitted from a childminder who was skilled and knowledgeable. The childminder was aware of the importance of having the appropriate skills and knowledge to offer quality care and experiences for children. The childminder had obtained a Higher National Certificate in early childhood practice and this was evident in their practice. They spoke about child development and how they could confidently plan for children's learning. This contributed to positive outcomes for children.

Feedback from families was very positive. They strongly agreed that the childminder and assistant supported their children's care, play and learning. One family commented, "Both do an amazing job!"

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 further develop the personal plan for each child using the service that reflects the national agenda and the wellbeing indicators. She should agree the plan with the child's parents/carers and review the plan with parents/carers and the child where appropriate when changes are required, and at least six monthly.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16;
Standard 3- Health and Wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 6 July 2016.

Action taken since then

The childminder has further developed personal plans in consultation with families at six monthly intervals. Personal plans are detailed and reflect children's individual needs through the use of the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. This means that children are well supported.

Previous area for improvement 2

To improve how she supports children's health and safety the childminder should review risk assessments for outings and other activities, providing more detail regarding hazards and actions taken to keep children safe. Before children have access to the pet snake she should risk assess this activity including reviewing her infection control policy and obtain signed parental consent.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16; Standard 2 - A Safe Environment.

This area for improvement was made on 6 July 2016.

Action taken since then

The childminder had devised a range of risk assessments to ensure children's safety. Hazards were identified and risks were considered and strategies were put in place to mitigate them. This meant that children were safe from harm, The pet snake was no longer an issue.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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