

Jenkins, Pat Child Minding

Fochabers

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
1 May 2024

Service provided by:
Pat Jenkins

Service provider number:
SP2003904904

Service no:
CS2003008975

About the service

Mrs Jenkins is registered to provide a care service to five 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. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. Up to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16 years may be cared for during school term time.

The service is situated in a residential area of a town, it is within walking distance of a school, woods and play parks. The children are cared for in the lounge/diner and there is a toilet downstairs. There is a secure garden to the rear of the premises that has a lawn and decked area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 1 May 2024 between 11.45am and 2.15pm. 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:

- The childminder;
- Observed practice and children's experiences; and
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children had built positive relationships with the childminder, this had been helped by the friendly, attentive and responsive approach of the childminder.

Children were helped to feel safe and cared for as the childminder was sensitive and responsive to their needs.

Children were also able to further develop their skills and confidence and learn about the wider community, through strong links with the local community such as woodland walks and social groups for young children and adults/elderly.

Children benefited from being cared for in clean, well furnished and homely environment.

The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis. Children's achievements were shared with parents.

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

The child had built positive relationships with the childminder, this had been helped by the friendly and attentive approach of the childminder. The child was clearly comfortable, happy and relaxed in their surroundings. The childminder was sensitive and responsive to their individual needs that helped them to feel safe and cared for. Children attending the service did not need to sleep, however, a travel cot was available and children were able to rest and recuperate on the sofa's in the lounge.

The young child enjoyed eating their lunch at a small table in the lounge, there was a relaxed atmosphere and it was unhurried. It was a pleasant social experience for the child as the childminder chatted with them and was focused on their needs that also promoted their independence skills and good eating habits. Parents provided all meals and both the childminder and parents provided snacks, dietary needs and food preferences were met. Children had water with their meal and afterwards a water bottle was within easy reach so that they were able to remain hydrated.

The childminder had got to know the needs of the children well through meaningful conversations with parents. Children's information was recorded in the personal plan that helped to promote consistency and continuity of care. The childminder had recorded changes as they occurred and had regular conversations with families at drop off and pick up. We advised the childminder to continue to ensure that parents signed the personal plan following the process of review. Parents agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan. They told us the childminder was very welcoming and always happy to chat about their child's needs.

The childminder was advised to complete local authority child protection refresher training, to help ensure that their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children remained up to date.

1.3 Play and Learning

The young child was able to lead their own play experiences, that helped to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. The child told us that they liked playing with the toy cars, they took them all from the box and put them in a line and told us that they were in a traffic jam. The child had fun looking for and counting the different colours and then trying to match old phones to their case covers and phoning their friend. The child told us they really liked rockets and how they travelled into space. The childminder listened to the child and talked with them about their play and was responsive to their interests, it helped to enhance their thinking and learning. The childminder told us they had been to toddler group that morning and the child named the friends they played with at the group and told us they had lots of fun.

The childminder provided a mix of spontaneous and planned activities. Primary age children were met from school by the childminder and minded child.

The childminder listened to the children when they asked to stop at the play park, they were clearly having fun together on the play equipment with each other and their friends. The young child was happy to see the older children and one of the them was happy to push them on the swing.

The childminder recognised children's achievements and regularly shared information with parents about their progress. A concise recording format was being used to help ensure that children were developing a broad range of skills. Parents considered that their child's development was always supported through interesting and fun play experiences.

Children were also able to develop their skills and confidence and learn about the wider world through strong connections with the wider community. Such as regular walks and play in the natural environment, that included woodlands and play parks. Children visited the local garden centre and groups such as toddlers and 'cosy cafe' where the children were able to socialise with adults and the elderly, that supported intergenerational learning. The childminder recognised the benefits of outdoor play on children's emotional and physical wellbeing. Parents considered that their child always had the opportunity to play outdoors.

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 benefited from being cared for in clean, well furnished and homely environment. Windows provided ample ventilation and natural light, that contributed to children's psychological wellbeing.

The childminder had implemented infection control practices that followed best practice guidance, to support children's safety. They included disposable gloves and aprons for the purposes of nappy changing and good hand hygiene.

Children were able to learn about their own safety and wellbeing on outings in the community. On walk to the school, the childminder ensured the young child was aware of road safety, holding their hand when walking, talking with them about dangers, stopping and looking for cars before crossing. We discussed the benefits of reviewing and updating risk assessments of the home, garden and outings to support the safety and wellbeing of the children. (see area for improvement 1) Ref: SIMOA keeping children safe practice notes - hub.careinspectorate.com

Children had space to play and explore. Furniture in the lounge was arranged so that children could enjoy floor activities. Sofas enabled young children to improve their balance and mobility, to rest and recuperate. Children could use the table in the lounge for meals/snacks and table activities such as drawing, there was also a small child size table and chairs used for such purposes.

The indoor and outdoor environments were sensitively structured and took account of the children's stages of development and learning. Play resources were placed in open boxes within the lounge, so that children could make their own choices. They were rotated to take account of the ages of the children and their interests. We saw that play materials were mixed together rather than always been separated. The childminder told us that they had seen how this had enabled children to explore more. The garden had a decked area that provided shade and was mostly lawn. A large and small climbing frame supported children's physical development and to control of their large muscles. A selection of ball and balance games were stored in the summer house.

We suggested that wider use of open ended (no pre-determined use) and sensory play materials would further enhance opportunities for exploratory and imaginary play for the children. Reference: loose-parts-play-toolkit and our creative journey - hub.careinspectorate.com

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.

Throughout the inspection, the natural interactions that the childminder had with the children demonstrated that they had got to know them and their family circumstances well. Children were well supported to lead and make choices in their learning and initiate play from different resources. The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis. Children's achievements were shared with parents.

Parents agreed that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. A parent considered that they had not yet had the opportunity, but were sure that the childminder would welcome any suggestions they had. Ref: Me, my family and my childcare setting: A practice note for building stronger connections and meaningful relationships - careinspectorate.com

The childminder had attended a training session on self-evaluation. They were in the process of developing a concise and balanced format for recording improvement, to help identify the developments they had made. We talked about the benefits of noting the difference changes had made to children and/or families using the service. We also referred the childminder to the early years improvement programme and bite size sessions on evaluation - hub.careinspectorate.com

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.

The childminder's warmth and kindness towards the children enabled them to feel valued, loved and secure. Through our discussion it was clear that the childminder was attuned and responsive to the individual needs of the children. The childminder recognised the importance of children having fun in their play and enabling them to learn and develop.

The childminder was well experienced and had completed core training such as, first aid and that supported children's wellbeing, they had also attended a training session on self-evaluation. We discussed how access to wider training opportunities and utilising good practice guidance, would support a proactive approach towards their own professional development and learning, and enhance outcomes for children. Ref: hub.careinspectorate.com

The childminder had found it beneficial to establish weekly meets and informal links with other childminders. It enabled them to have discussions, to share ideas and practice together and learn from each other.

During our discussion with the childminder, it was clear that they had adapted their practice, taking account of the best interests of the children. The childminder recognised the benefits of children having varied experiences and actively promoted exploratory play outdoors in the surrounding community and natural environment. Parents strongly agreed that they had a good connection with the childminder.

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 help ensure that families remained central to the planning process, the childminder establishes a consistent system of review, a minimum of 6 monthly.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it 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 17 August 2022.

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder was recording changes as they occurred and involving families in any review of the personal plan.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that safe practice promoted children's safety the childminder reviews and updates risk assessments.

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

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment'. (HSCS 5.22)

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2022.

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2022.

Action taken since then

Written risk assessments had not been reviewed and with a view to updating as necessary and to ensure good practice was followed.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

Previous area for improvement 3

To enhance outcomes for children, the childminder uses training opportunities and best practice, and involves children and families in the evaluation and improvement of the service.

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

'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership.' (HSCS 4.7); and

'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 17 August 2022.

This area for improvement was made on 17 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder had attended training, they communicated well with parents and shared any changes. A format for recording improvements we being developed.

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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