

Aimee's Wee Monkeys Child Minding

WISHAW

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 May 2024

Service provided by:
Aimee Reynolds

Service provider number:
SP2021000067

Service no:
CS2021000105

About the service

Aimee's Wee Monkeys childcare service, is a childminding service which is provided from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area of Wishaw, North Lanarkshire.

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

The service is close to parks, shops and other local amenities. Childminding takes place on the ground floor with children having direct access to a enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 14 May 2024 between 10:30 and 13:00. 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:

- observed children's play experiences
- observed interactions between the children and the childminder
- spoke with the childminder
- looked around the home and garden
- reviewed service documents and records
- reviewed feedback from one parent.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminder was very responsive to children, providing caring interactions.
- Children's health and wellbeing was promoted with daily access outdoors.
- Personal plans should be further developed to ensure they support the individual needs of children and are updated at least every six months.
- Children were cared for in a warm, comfortable and homely environment which helped them feel welcome, safe and secure.
- The childminder had developed their self evaluation approaches since the last inspection. The childminder should now develop approaches to involve 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

Children present were happy, confident and settled in the childminder's care. The childminder knew children well and was responsive to their cues and request, helping them feel heard and valued. For example, when a child was upset, the childminder provided cuddles and comfort. The childminder had warm and caring interactions, which helped children feel loved, safe and secure. One parent told us "My child leaves happy everyday and is excited to go back the next day."

Regular communication with families helped the childminder gather information to meet children's needs. Children's progress was captured and shared with parents using photographs. At the last inspection, we made an area for improvement to develop personal plans for children in line with current guidance. We found some personal plans were missing, important information to support children. Plans should be reviewed and further developed to include meaningful information to support children's needs, wishes and choices. As a result, we have repeated this area for improvement made at their last inspection. The childminder agreed to action this. (See Area for Improvement 1).

Children enjoyed sociable mealtimes, sitting at the family dining table and chatting with their peers. Children were safe during mealtimes as the childminder sat with them providing effective supervision. Children benefited from the choice of finger foods for lunch, this enabled children to develop independence by feeding themselves and to learn from each other. Children were provided with diluting juice in drinking bottles. This had a potential to impact on children's wellbeing and healthy development of teeth. We discussed with the childminder to review this to ensure practice is reflective of best practice guidance.

Children's care routines were responsive to their individual needs and reflected their parents preferences. For example, individual sleep routines. We did not observe a nappy change, however the childminder talked us through their procedures which took account of children's privacy and risk of infection. We discussed the importance of the childminder wearing an apron during changing procedures.

The childminder had recently participated in paediatric first aid and child protection training. This provided reassurance that the childminder would respond appropriately if they were concerned about the welfare and wellbeing of a child. This helped to ensure children were safe and protected.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The pace of the day was relaxed and responsive, which helped ensure children's needs were met. Children were comfortable leading their play and participating in activities of their choice. For example, playing with animals, large construction blocks and outdoor play.

Children enjoyed playing with their peers and sharing their play ideas with each other. One parent told us "[my child] has new friends which [they] look forward to seeing when [they] are there each day."

The childminder rotated toys and materials in response to children's interests, helping to ensure they were stimulated and enjoyed the materials available. Children told us they were happy with the experiences and commented "we get to play in the garden" and "I like drawing."

Children had opportunities to engage in experiences that supported their literacy and numeracy development. For example, interactions with the childminder and their peers, sorting and matching and pretend play. The childminder supported children's language and communication skills through the use of open ended questions to extend children's thinking and learning. For example, using questions such as "I wonder what will happen next?"

Since the last inspection, the childminder had developed their approaches to planning, which included the use of a 'floorbook' to record play and learning opportunities. We discussed how this approach could be further developed to reflect next steps in learning, which would help support children in their development and provided opportunities to help them progress

The childminder understood the importance of children having opportunities to play outdoors and promoted this very well in their service. In addition to playing in the garden, children had opportunities to visit interesting and fun places in the local and wider community. For example, woodland trail walks and visits to the transport museum. This helped enrich children's learning and formed strong links with their community.

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should further develop children's personal plans to take account of their likes/dislikes, individual progress and achievements. These should be kept up-to-date and reviewed every six months or before dependent on the needs of the child.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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)

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 and well-maintained. Children benefitted from a warm and welcoming environment. Toys and resources were easily accessible to support children's independence. Children confidently expressed their choices and ideas for play and discussed their likes and dislikes. In addition, children could choose to play outdoors which supported their physical development and wellbeing.

An inviting room offered a range of experiences, including stories, construction, creative play and games. One parent told us their child enjoyed "messy play, drawing and painting." Children had space to play and a cosy sofa where they could relax. The childminder had started to introduce natural materials to promote children's curiosity, creativity and imagination.

We suggested they continue to develop these opportunities both indoors and outdoors, introducing more open ended resources including everyday items, such as pots, wooden spoons, colanders etc. We signposted the childminder to the 'Loose Parts Toolkit.'

The garden area was well maintained with areas for risky play. This included a wooden climbing frame, which provided opportunities for children to explore their physical skills. A mud kitchen was available and there was space to run and play.

Children were protected from the potential spread of infection as the childminder followed appropriate infection prevention and control procedures.

To help ensure children were protected from harm, risks were considered throughout the setting. This included discussing safety awareness with children, suitable use of stair gates and good supervision. The environment was well maintained and secure. Resources were in good condition which kept children safe from harm. We discussed developing additional risk assessments to ensure safe storage of hazardous materials.

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 led well

The childminder had developed good relationships with families and children. Parents were welcomed into the home and were able to have informal chats about their child's day. One parent told us "[they] let me know what's happening with [my child] each day." Parents told us they can also use text message or telephone calls if they need to.

Quality assurance systems were in place to help support the delivery of service. For example, accident and incidents, medication and a variety of policies and procedures. In addition, the childminder was registered with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and signed up to provider updates from the Care Inspectorate. This helped provide opportunities for them to keep up-to-date with new information.

Since the last inspection the childminder had developed their self evaluation approaches, recognising what they did well and identifying any areas for improvement in their practice and experiences for children. The childminder used current guidance to inform self evaluations of the service. The childminder should continue to develop self evaluation approaches, consulting with children and families to evaluate the service.

We suggested gathering feedback from children and parents on specific areas of the service that would align with the approaches to self evaluation. This would support the childminder in gathering meaningful feedback that would guide the service development. Whilst also ensuring families felt included within the service.

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 was warm, kind and nurturing in their approaches to children. This helped children feel safe, happy and secure. They had developed positive relationships with children and their families, helping to support strong connections. When discussing minded children and families that had used the service, they did so with respect. They had planned and provided personalised care and support to families, meeting their needs.

The childminder had recently completed training. This included training on additional support needs, STEM, first aid and child protection. We have suggested that the childminder should now record post training evaluations to include a reflection of learning. Reflections of learning would enable the childminder to revisit and reflect on how learning opportunities have supported them to develop their practice, support children's wellbeing or further outcomes for children.

The childminder was aware of professional supports and resources, such as Care Inspectorate hub to reflect and inform current practice. Creating regular time for continuous professional learning would ensure that the childminder had access to current information and guidance.

The childminder had begun to engage with other childminders through social media groups for peer support and to gather ideas. To ensure standards and aspirations continue to be developed and embedded, the childminder should continue to make connections with peers.

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 children's personal plans to take account of their likes/dislikes, individual progress and achievements. These should be kept up-to-date and reviewed every six months or before, dependent on the needs of the child.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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 6 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder gathered some information to inform personal plans. However, this is not yet in place for all children.

Therefore, this area for improvement has Not been Met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that quality assurance processes impact positively on outcomes for children, they should be developed to help identify and inform improvement planning. This should include, but is not limited to, developing self-evaluation processes, actively seeking views from families and children and reflecting on best practice guidance.

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

This area for improvement was made on 6 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had developed their quality assurances since the last inspection. The childminder used 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to reflect on their current practice, identifying their strengths and areas they could further develop. The childminder had created an action plan with steps of how they could improve outcomes for children. We discussed how self evaluation could be further developed to include the views of children, parents and families.

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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