

Su Kirbitson Childminding Services Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 May 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2012983606

Service no:
CS2012308593

About the service

Su Kirbitson provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Niddrie, Edinburgh. 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 the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. Lois Carrie Kirbitson is employed as an assistant. Overnight service will not be provided. At the time of our inspection, two primary school aged children were registered with the service

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks, and other amenities. The children are cared for in the summer house, living room, and dining kitchen, with access to the upstairs bathroom. Children also have access to a large enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 9 April 2024 between 15:45 and 18:30. 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. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service and received feedback from one family
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Key messages

Children were supported to feel valued, safe, and loved as the childminder provided warm and nurturing interactions, which supported their emotional resilience and overall wellbeing.

Children's personal plans should be reviewed and updated in full partnership with children and parents, to ensure that all children's current needs are considered, responded to and planned for.

The childminder had successfully created a homely, inclusive environment for children to play and relax which ensured they felt safe and secure.

The childminder could document planned improvements to demonstrate and measure the impact that improvements had made to enhance positive outcomes for children.

Children benefited from a very good range of games, toys and resources that supported them in their creativity, problem-solving skills and provided them with challenge.

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?	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?

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 were happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder who was loving and respectful. It was obvious that good attachments had been formed and that children felt loved and secure in the childminder's care. The childminder had developed very strong relationships with the families they provided care for and worked hard to build supportive partnerships with the parents by being open and approachable. This was confirmed by a parent who told us, "There is always a friendly atmosphere at pick up time to catch up on what's happening and what's coming up." One child said, "It is amazing here, there are loads of toys and we can chat with Su, who is friendly."

Healthy snacks and drinks were available. Children sat together at the table to enjoy a sociable and relaxed experience. This supported children to develop healthy eating habits and social skills. No children had special diets or required medication at the time of inspection. The childminder had medication forms and a policy in place should they be asked to administer children's medication. This contributed to children's wellbeing and safety.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation that parents should be asked to sign and date the six monthly review of their child's personal plan. We found that all children had a personal plan, which was regularly reviewed by the childminder. However, while there were informal conversations with parents, plans were not reviewed and updated in full partnership with children or parents. Moving forward, children and parents should be fully involved in reviewing and updating valuable information such as children's needs, wishes and preferences. This is in order to ensure that all children's current needs were considered, responded to and planned for. Demonstrating greater acknowledgement of parent's views, knowledge and expertise of their children, should result in meaningful current information being added to personal plans. This recommendation had not been met and we have reworded and included it as an area for improvement in this key question (**see area for improvement 1**).

The childminder understood their role in keeping children safe from harm and was confident about the procedures they would follow, should they have any welfare concerns about a child. They were actively seeking to renew their child protection training to be fully knowledgeable with current child protection guidance. To support, we signposted them to the best practice guidance: National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023 (Scottish Government, 2023).

Quality indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children could make independent choices about where they wanted to play and what they wanted to play with. This was supported by an environment which contained a wide range of toys, games, books and craft materials. Play experiences developed children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy. These included imaginary play, board games and through conversations with the childminder.

Children's achievements and successes were shared with parents via a digital app. This daily, informal communication supplemented the information the childminders provided at handovers to parents.

At the time of inspection, all children who attended the service were of primary school age and only attended sessions after school. The service did not operate during school holiday periods. There was no formal planning approach, however the childminder was responsive to children's interests and life experiences. Similarly, there was access to a wide range of resources and experiences to stimulate children's interests and enhance play and learning opportunities. As a result, children were progressing well, and were happy and confident. We encouraged the childminder to consider introducing an evidence book with photographs, where children could record their thoughts and reflect on previous play and learning experiences. This could generate rich conversations and provoke new ideas for future play opportunities. Similarly it would provide an opportunity for the childminder to highlight the exciting play opportunities that children experienced when in their care.

Children experienced daily outdoor play experiences which kept them active and allowed them to have regular fun playing outdoors. This contributed to good health and opportunities to engage in risk benefit play experiences. Children and parents appreciated the frequent trips to local parks and woods. One parents told us, "The garden is always open for kids to play in, lots of gardening and trips to parks and trips to the woods."

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the childminder should further develop personal plans for each child to show how their needs are being identified and met. This should be done in consultation with parents and reviewed when there is a significant change in a child's health, welfare or safety needs, or at least once in every six month period. To understand the purpose of personal plans, the childminder should refer to the best practice guidance, 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning, Early Learning and Childcare' (Care Inspectorate, 2021).

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).

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.

Quality indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a homely, thoughtfully planned environment. There was plenty of natural light and the setting was well ventilated. The setting was comfortably furnished, and consideration had been given to providing different play spaces. This included the summer house, living room, dining kitchen, and different outdoor spaces to the front, back and side of the property. As a result, children benefited from a range of stimulating open spaces to enhance play experiences.

Play spaces been carefully planned to support children's needs and help them to feel included. The summer house offered free flow indoor and outdoor opportunities as bi-fold doors opened up when the weather was good. This allowed children to move easily from inside to out at their leisure and afforded them opportunities to make choices and lead their play.

Soft furnishings provided areas for children to rest and relax or engage in conversation. During the inspection, one child asked, "Can we sit and have a chat now?" Children benefited from accessing a variety of toys, such as books, puzzles, games, and imaginary play resources. Toys and resources were well organised and stored, and easily accessible. The childminder was aware of children's interests and toys were changed or purchased to support emerging interests. For example, a large dragon had been recently bought. Children spent most of their time during the inspection having fun as they engaged in imaginary play with the new toy. This helped children to know that they mattered.

Children were kept safe and protected as the service was well maintained and clean. Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. For example, children washed their hands when they came in from school and before eating. This helped to minimise the potential spread of infection.

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 valued the views and opinions of both children and their families. For example, they had sought advice on new shelving for the summer house. Parents were keen to support and helped to source appropriate shelving which would help to store toys in a way which was easily accessible for children. Parents had informal opportunities to share feedback, for example through daily conversations. This helped to build positive relationships and to ensure that children's needs were consistently met. Families commented positively on the communication and felt well informed about their child's experiences. They told us, "We are always kept informed about what is happening and what the upcoming plans are."

Moving forward, the childminder could develop more formal methods to enhance opportunities to seek the views of children and families. This could help them to gather meaningful feedback from families to help them make positive changes and enhance outcomes for children.

The childminder had made a number of improvements to their service to enhance the provision and outcomes for children. This included development of the summer house, which created more space for children. Improvements made to the outdoor play space included gates being added at the front of the premises, to improve security in order to keep children safe. This meant that children could now also play in the front garden.

Moving forward, the childminder could consider recording planned improvements to demonstrate and measure the impact that improvements had made to enhance positive outcomes for children. This could support the childminder to reflect on where changes had positively impacted on service provision and play experiences, and support them to plan further improvements.

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.

Quality indicator: 4.3 Staff deployment

The childminding assistant did not work in the service as often as previously, due to lower number of children attending. However, they were available, should a situation arise that meant they were needed to support. This meant that there would be consistency of care provided by an adult who knew the children, and who they trusted.

The childminder and assistant showed commitment to developing their skills to ensure best outcomes for children. They had recently both renewed first aid training to enhance their skills and confidence to respond effectively should an accident occur. The assistant was qualified in early childhood practice. Since the last inspection, the childminder had developed their knowledge and understanding by attending several training courses. This included, the benefits of outdoor learning, and developing knowledge about how to support children through schemas, which are patterns of repeated behaviour which help children to learn through play. Similarly, the childminder had attended a course to help them to develop their knowledge in the best practice guidance, 'Realising the Ambition' (Education Scotland, 2020).

The childminder regularly met with other childminders in the area for shared activities with children. This also provided an opportunity for professional discussions in which the childminders shared their skills, knowledge and values around quality experiences for children. These shared learning opportunities provoked ideas to develop practice.

We discussed how keeping records of professional development activities and evaluating training, personal reading and research would assist with identifying improvement in practice and could be included in the service self-evaluation.

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

It is recommended that parents are asked to sign and date the 6 monthly review of their child's care plan and the update of their child's personal information.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 13 Well Managed Service.

This area for improvement was made on 29 April 2017.

Action taken since then

The childminder was reviewing personal plans within every six months, however they were not doing this in partnership with parents. Parents had not signed the plans to demonstrate they had been involved in the review process.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded and restated in key question 1, 'How good is our care, play and learning?' of this report.

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?	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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