

# I am Stephanie Sunshine Child Minding

East Linton

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
21 May 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Stephanie Foulds

**Service provider number:**  
SP2023000002

**Service no:**  
CS2023000004

## About the service

I am Stephanie Sunshine, is a childminding service provided by Stephanie Foulds. The service is provided from her home in a residential area of East Linton, East Lothian.

The childminder may care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than six are under 12 years; 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.

Children are cared for in the lounge, kitchen/dining area, upstairs playroom, and nook/library. Minded children use the downstairs toilet. They have access to a spacious enclosed garden to the rear of the property. The service is close to local amenities, including parks, schools, shops, and transport links.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 20 May 2024 between the hours of 9:30 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 registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke to and interacted with the two minded children using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice, daily routines, and children's experiences
- reviewed documents in the service
- considered feedback we received from three families using the service.

We gave feedback to the childminder on the day of our visit and followed this up with a call on 21 May 2024.

## Key messages

- The childminder had developed strong and trusting relationships with children and families.
- Children experienced a caring and nurturing environment with play experiences and opportunities taking into account their interests and choices.
- The childminder was committed to undertaking training to meet the needs of children in their care and to improve the service.
- The childminder reflected on practice and made changes when needed to secure positive outcomes for children and families.
- There were quality assurance and self-evaluation process in place to ensure children benefit from a culture of continuous improvement.
- The ethos of the service creates a positive experience for all 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced a calm and nurturing approach from the childminder. She knew them well, and spoke confidently about individual children's care needs, preferences, interests and strategies used to support them. The childminder valued each child's uniqueness and personality. This helped to develop relationships and secure attachments. As a result, children were respected, and their individual needs were met.

Detailed personal plans were well organised for each child. These contained key information about each child to support their wellbeing needs, routines, and preferences. This helped the childminder to support consistency and continuity of care. Positive partnerships with parents enabled the childminder to respond quickly and sensitively to any changes in a child's life. She described how children were supported in different situations and how this benefited their wellbeing, this reflected children's records. Families told us, "We discuss and regularly review my child's plan with their childminder" and "the childminder is really reassuring with a lovely calm way about her. I feel the relationship between the childminder, my child and I is very positive with good communication".

Children enjoyed their lunch in a relaxed atmosphere which was unhurried. They sat with the childminder at the dining table chatting as they enjoyed their healthy lunch. The childminder provided choice, offered words of encouragement and supported children's independence. Some children brought their own foods to the service and this meant their dietary requirements were catered for. The childminder was aware of any dietary needs and the action to take in the event of any allergens or food intolerances. As a result, children were kept safe. The childminder encouraged and enabled regular hydration for the children, by offering water throughout the day.

Systems were in place for the safe administration of medication however it had not been necessary for the childminder to use these. This meant the childminder was aware of her responsibilities surrounding medication.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefited from spontaneous and planned play experiences that helped to build their skills in language, literacy, and numeracy. For example, the cosy nook, provided a comfortable library area, and they attended a French class, which involved singing, rhymes and movement.

The childminder was aware of and promoted children's interests. Children indicated they wanted to play in the playroom upstairs, and this was followed. Play was child led, children had space to explore the playroom and resources without interruptions. The childminder observed play and was there to support when needed. She engaged well with children, encouraged them to try new things, share and take turns, whilst praising their efforts. The children were happy and relaxed during their play and responded well to the childminder's interactions. As a result, children's confidence and social skills were developing.

The childminder's gentle manner and knowledge of child development supported children's learning. A key

strength of the service was the way children were supported through responsive interactions and they were listened to. This created an opportunity for children to express themselves and make decisions about their play.

The childminder used her experience as a Yoga teacher to support children and develop their awareness of emotions and mindfulness. This created an opportunity for children to develop their concentration, flexibility, and body awareness.

Children's personal plan information and floor books, outlined their individual likes, interest needs and goals. Effective use of observations supported the childminder to plan and extend children's learning. The childminder recognised children's achievements and shared these through photographs and videos with families. Parents told us, "the childminder does loads of great activities which cover many different things: exercise, art, mindfulness, social interaction, singing, sport, walks, nature, chalk and drawing" and "I love that the childminder does some yoga and other activities that relax my child. She often takes the kids for fun trips out".

Children had regular opportunities for outdoor play experience and learning. We observed children walking to the French class in the local community, and this experience was enhanced by observing the natural environment. For example, it provided opportunities for the childminder and children to talk about the farmer, the local railway, trains, and flowers. Families commented, "my child tells me of walks, park visits and games outside, they like counting and enjoys playing 'what's the time Mr wolf and Granny's footsteps'" and "The childminder always reports of outdoor time and includes options of outdoor activities at the start of the day."

## 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, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children were welcomed into a comfortable, stimulating and homely environment. Careful consideration had been given to the range of spaces available for minded children to use. A dining space created a family feel at mealtimes. The environment took account of children's ages and stages of development. Resources reflected children's current interests and needs. As a result, children had a sense of belonging and had fun, whilst developing their knowledge, emotional, physical and social skills.

Children's safety was promoted as the environment was very well maintained and secure. Resources, furniture and equipment were of high quality and in a good state of repair. Consideration had been given to reduce risks around the home for example, a stairgate was in place to ensure children were safe. Risk assessments were in place for all areas of the home garden, outings and the family pet. This kept children safe and protected from harm.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place and of a high standard. For example, effective hand washing routines, and cleaning processes. The childminder had a wealth of knowledge in respect of food safety. All areas of the home used by children were well organised and hygienic. This led to, minimising cross infection and keeping children safe.

The secure enclosed garden was accessed directly through patio doors, this meant children could choose when to spend time outside enjoying fresh air. There were resources encouraging sensory, imaginative and active play outdoors. For example, water tray, playhouse and a slide. Cosy relaxing areas in the home, as well as a benches outdoors provided areas for children to relax if they wished. This gave the message to children that they mattered. A parent told us, 'the most positive aspects of their child's experience in the service, were 'the layout of the house, garden and location of the house for local outdoor things'.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children's views were heard verbally by the childminder. They led their own play with the childminder taking the lead from them. The childminder positively encouraged children to make choices and be involved in decisions that affected them. Families told us, the most positive aspects of their child's experience in the service was 'their children were involved in decisions at the beginning of the day', and 'the childminder's calm, fun and consistent nature and the way she communicates with the children and adults'.

The childminder recognised the value and importance of building and maintaining positive relationships with families. Informal discussions supported parents to hear about their children's daily experiences. Whatsapp, was used to send pictures and videos to families of their children enjoying activities and trying out new things. Formal feedback was collated from families through online questionnaires, which supported improvements within the service. When we asked what could make the service better, one family responded, "I can't think of anything which they could do better" and "I am delighted with the service that the childminder provides, she is approachable, organised, reliable and easy to communicate with and I feel my child's needs at this age are met." This showed positive relationships between the childminder and families, and high satisfaction from families on the standard of service provided.

The childminder made use of a 'floorbook', and used this to note children's experiences, observation and goals. This supported the childminder to be reflective and to extend children's learning. For example, to focus on road safety with children whilst walking to the local French class. The floorbook helped the childminder to monitor, track and record children's voice, learning and progress. This led to children being involved and reflecting on their learning.

The childminder was enthusiastic and motivated about their role and wanted to ensure the best outcomes for children and families using her service. They were reflective, and engaged in ongoing professional learning that supported them to develop a rights based approach to managing and delivering the service. For example, children and families were encouraged as partners, with the right to be heard and make decisions about their care, experiences and wellbeing. As a result, families were respected and valued.

Self-evaluation had been established through the use of a detailed improvement plan. This was enabling the childminder to consider all aspects of her service, the strengths and any areas for development. The childminder identified they would benefit from updating their knowledge on transitions and the curiosity approach and were willing to put these into practice. Additionally, they were looking at ways to further support children's language and communication skills. This contributed to achieving positive outcomes for children and improving the overall 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 4.3: Staff deployment**

The childminders approach to providing care, support and nurture, was caring and responsive to each child and their family needs. We observed the childminder engaged lovingly with the children in her care, they were sensitive to the individual needs and responsive to their wishes in a kind and gentle manner. The childminders warmth, kindness and compassion enabled children and their parents to feel valued and safe. Families told us, 'the childminder had been caring and nurturing since day 1' and "I am delighted with the service the childminder provides, she has an enormous amount to give and her genuine warmth towards the children is evident. She is approachable, organised, reliable and easy to communicate with."

The childminder had undertaken induction training with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). The childminder was able to access additional training, as part of her role in the local school's parents council, For example, Think Stem, Autism, ADHD and the senses. Additionally, the childminder had participated in core training including child protection and level 2 Food hygiene, this demonstrated her commitment to children's wellbeing and safety. As part of the childminder's improvement plans, they had identified and planned to undertake Paediatric First Aid to support their service and keep children safe.

Membership of SCMA, and childminding forums helped the childminder to keep abreast of best practice guidance. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate Hub, to support their continued learning on best practice documents and guidance. For example, 'Growing my potential', and 'Voice of the Infant, best practice guidance and infant pledge'.

The childminder understood different child protection concerns and was aware of their responsibilities in dealing with and reporting concerns. As a result, the childminder safeguarded children.

**Complaints**

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good



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