

Mhairi Graham's Child Minding Child Minding

Balerno

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 June 2024

Service provided by:
Mhairi Graham

Service provider number:
SP2011982576

Service no:
CS2011298535

About the service

Mhairi Graham, trading as Mhairi Graham's Child Minding, provides a childminding service from the family home in Balerno, which is on the outskirts of Edinburgh.

The childminder is registered to provide a 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.

The service is delivered from the family home with children accessing the lounge/dining room, and upstairs bathroom. Following development and maintenance of the rear garden, children were using this fully enclosed safe outdoor space.

The service is close to local amenities including green spaces, local nurseries and schools.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that was undertaken on 5 June 2024 from 14:30 to 17:45. The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with four children using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice including interactions with children
- reviewed documents
- gathered feedback about the service from families.

Key messages

- Children felt safe and secure as a result of the childminders warm, welcoming and respectful interactions.
- Children's play and learning experiences were planned in response to their interests and choices.
- Children were confident and relaxed in the homely environment.
- Children and families felt included in the service because positive relationships had been developed and communication was effective.
- The childminder had made the necessary improvements to the service to meet the requirements and areas for improvement made at the last inspection.

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 were nurtured by the childminder who treated them with warmth, kindness and compassion. Using a calm and reassuring approach supported children's emotional wellbeing. The childminder understood each individual child's personality and unique ways of communicating their needs. Children were listened to and respected as individuals. A parent said, "Mhairi is very communicative and supportive of the children's needs."

Children's overall health and wellbeing was supported by consistent care and support that met their individual needs. Personal plans were up-to-date and contained the necessary information that reflected children's needs and how their wellbeing was supported. This meant children received the right care and support at the right times. Strong relationships with children and families meant the childminder worked with them to promote positive outcomes. The childminder needed to ensure all records were dated and signed off by families as part of the review process. A parent said, "...I also fill any forms that she requests me to update."

Children experienced a sociable, unhurried and safe snack time. They helped to clear the table and washed their hands. Healthy snacks were offered including fresh vegetables and fruit. Baking and cooking activities supported children to develop life skills and independence. Children were encouraged to have a drink with their snack keeping them hydrated. They told us that different types of fruit was added to the water to flavour it and that their favourite was the lemon water. Healthy snacks supported children's health and wellbeing.

We found that general practice in areas of managing medication, recording accidents and incidents and child protection had improved and were managed to a good level.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had access to a range of resources that were age appropriate and that took account of their interests and choices. Children told us they enjoyed arts and craft. They were in the middle of a design project dyeing material and sewing an object of their choice. A child said, "I was making a cat but it looks like a mouse." A second child was supported to take part in a scientific experiment. They were turning cream into ice cream by using ice and salt and shaking the bag until the cream changed to frozen ice cream. Children's daily experiences promoted positive outcomes in science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM). When asked about play and learning experiences a parent said, "Lots of arts and crafts which my daughter loves!"

The childminder communicated effectively with families. Engaging families in the service ensured they were included and valued. The use of an online platform and effective daily handovers supported the sharing of children's experiences. Children's folders included some of their art work. The childminder had supported children to reflect on their experiences and celebrate their achievements. Children felt valued and respected. The childminder referenced outcomes for children using the wellbeing indicators. This demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of how play supported children's development. A parent said, "Mhairi always feedbacks on how (name of child) has got on...."

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

Children were cared for in a warm, welcoming and homely environment. They were confident and were able to directly access a variety of resources. These included board games and books which reflected children's interests. We could see book marks with children's initials to mark the chapter they had reached in their chosen book. Children enjoyed relaxing engaged in their chosen activity. They had a sense of belonging in the family home and had opportunities to achieve and develop a variety of skills. Children told us they had lots of fun at Mhairi's. A parent said, "Home from home environment."

Children enjoyed spending time outdoors and in the local community. They accessed the field close to the school for ball games, visited local parks, and used the garden. This supported them to be active. The garden space had been developed so that it was safe for children. A parent said, "They play in the garden and get taken up to the park for lots of free play which they love."

The childminder was alert to potential risks in their setting, outdoors, and in the local community. This safeguarded, protected and supported children's wellbeing and safety. The childminder had identified and minimised potential risks through the use of risk assessment. Infection prevention and control measures included cleaning and hand washing routines that were effective. Children were guided and supported to stay safe through discussion and opportunities to take on new challenges.

Children and family's personal information was securely stored. This showed the childminder understood their responsibilities regarding storing and processing children's personal information.

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 well led

The childminder was committed to meeting the needs of children and families. Trusting relationships had been developed supporting children and families to feel included in the service. Effective communication ensured the childminder gathered the information required to deliver high quality care and support. The vision for the service and an overview of policy and procedure was shared so families knew what to expect. This included sharing policy and procedure that had been reviewed and developed. The childminder had created a happy and welcoming ethos promoting a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. A parent said, "Mhairi is caring, proactive and organised, flexible and understanding of family needs."

Self-evaluation had helped the childminder to reflect on the quality of the service. They had developed a system that helped identify what was working well to support outcomes and experiences for children, and to identify areas for improvement. They recognised the need to continue to measure quality through the use of best practice guidance including Care Inspectorate's 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged children.' Continued development of quality assurance will support continuous improvement and positive change to children's outcomes.

The childminder recognised the importance of involving children and families in the development of the service. Children and families were encouraged to share their thoughts and views through, for example, questionnaires. This demonstrated that they helped to plan activities and influence the quality of the service. Children told us that they had chosen a climbing frame for the garden. The improvement plan showed how a suggestion from a child to bake had resulted in recipe books and ingredients being purchased. Children felt listened to, valued and included. Parents said, "Mhairi always asks for feedback although there is not much we would change" and "Mhairi sends questionnaires."

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 demonstrated their knowledge and skills were up-to-date to offer high quality experiences for children. They were proactive in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding of best practice linked to improving service delivery and meeting the individual needs of children. They had attended a range of training courses including Safeguarding; self-evaluation; understanding asthma; and caring for children with allergies. Reflecting on new learning had enabled the childminder to identify how it could enhance their practice. This contributed to supporting good experiences and outcomes for children. The childminder needs to develop the recording of reflections to highlight the impact on practice as part of the quality assurance systems and processes.

The childminder's compassionate and responsive approach supported children's overall wellbeing. They recognised the importance of strong attachments which meant children felt safe and secure. Children responded positively to the childminder's nurturing approach. They felt valued and respected by the childminder who demonstrated a rights based approach when caring for children. A parent said, "Mhairi is lovely and so good with our children. I trust her completely and our children trust her, which is so important."

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 31 May 2023 to ensure children's safety, health and wellbeing, the provider must ensure that children's personal plan information is up to date and contains the necessary information. Personal plan information must reflect children's needs and record specific strategies to support their wellbeing. Personal plans must be reviewed with families at least once in every six months.

This is to comply with Regulation 5 (2) (a) and (b) Personal Plans of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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 my 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 requirement was made on 25 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Personal plans had been developed and reviewed regularly in consultation with families to support children's wellbeing.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 31 May 2023, to ensure children's health and wellbeing, the provider must ensure that medication policy and procedures are improved. Information must be clearly and accurately documented for children with known medication needs. This must include outlining how children's individual needs are to be supported including any emergency measures to be taken.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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

'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This requirement was made on 25 April 2023.

Action taken on previous requirement

Medication policy and procedures had been improved and clear information documented to ensure the health and safety of children.

Met - within timescales

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 ensure a safe environment for children, the childminder should develop risk assessment information for the home and garden. This should outline any potential risks and the action taken to minimise these.

This is to ensure 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 25 April 2023.

Action taken since then

Risk assessment had been recorded outlining potential hazards and the action taken to minimise risk to children.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support positive outcomes and experiences for children, the use of best practice guidance would help the childminder to evaluate their practice and plan for continuous improvements. This should include using the Care Inspectorate's website and The Hub to access information and documents, including but not limited to:

- Realising the Ambition (Education Scotland 2020);
- Health and Social Care Standards (Scottish Government 2017); and
- A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare (Care Inspectorate 2022).

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

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 25 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had developed a system that helped them identify what was working well to support outcomes and experiences for children, and to identify areas for improvement. They recognised the need to continue to develop quality assurance and self-evaluation further to support a cycle of continuous improvement.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children experience a high quality service, the childminder should continue with their professional development including the use of best practice documents to help inform their practice. To support their reflective practice, the childminder should keep a record of any changes made as a result of their learning and development.

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

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14)

and

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 25 April 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had attended a range of relevant training courses. Reflecting on new learning had enabled them to identify how it enhanced their practice. This contributed to supporting good experiences and outcomes for children. The childminder needs to develop their recording of reflections to include the impact on practice as part of the quality assurance systems and processes.

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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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