

Melanie Campbell Child Minding

Bathgate

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 July 2024

Service provided by:
Melanie Campbell

Service provider number:
SP2022000161

Service no:
CS2022000237

About the service

Melanie Campbell operates a childminding service from their family home in Bathgate, West Lothian. They are registered to provide care to a maximum of six children 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. The service works in partnership with the local authority to offer funded places.

Children have access to a designated playroom, living room, kitchen-diner, ground floor toilet facilities and an enclosed back garden. The service is close to green spaces, schools, nurseries and other local amenities and can be reached by transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 3 July between 08:45 and 11:45. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service and observed their play
- spoke with one family and received feedback online from five
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled, happy and having fun as they explored.
- The childminder was attuned to children's needs and wishes. Positive attachments had been made that supported children's emotional wellbeing and sense of security.
- Children experienced a breadth of learning indoors and outdoors as the childminder valued the importance of connecting with the wider community.
- Play spaces had been thoughtfully created using best practice guidance.
- Strong connections had been made with families that supported learning through play.
- The childminder had a very good understanding of self-evaluation and used this to continually improve the service.
- Children and families experienced care and support from a childminder who was committed, enthusiastic and loved their role in supporting positive outcomes for children.
- Children benefitted from the childminder's creative approach to ensuring resources were engaging, interesting and sparked curiosity.

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?	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?

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 warm, kind and nurturing interactions from the childminder who knew their individual needs and wishes. Positive attachments had been formed that supported children to feel safe and secure. The childminder worked closely with families to ensure children's routines and preferences were consistent with home. Families commented "Melanie is an excellent childminder, she provides a caring, varied and interesting environment for my child. My child has thrived in her care, and I could not be happier." This meant that families had trust and confidence in the care and support the childminder offered.

Interactions between children and the childminder were caring, reassuring and fun when personal care was being supported. The childminder was respectful of children's rights and supported this routine in a respectful and dignified way.

Children were learning about their rights through everyday experiences. The childminder used creative ways to support this. The wellbeing indicators were used in floor books and children told us the names of the characters. They also enjoyed exploring the children's rights bag that was filled with emotions resources, stories and games. Children engaged with these to learn about feelings and talk about their emotions.

Mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and at the child's pace. The childminder had worked on this routine as part of their improvement priorities for this year. Children were consulted on menu planning, were able to prepare foods using safety equipment and enjoyed eating with peers and the childminder. This meant they enjoyed a sociable routine that offered rich opportunities to develop independence, learn the safe use of kitchen utensils and enjoy meaningful conversations.

Children's wellbeing was supported through well planned spaces for sleep and rest. The childminder had a very good understanding of the importance of sensitive and safe sleep arrangements. They offered children cosy spaces, cushions, blankets and equipment that promoted good sleep habits. As a result, children's emotional security was being supported.

The childminder had a very good understanding of the importance of personal plans. Plans were clear, well organised and supported the childminder to meet children's needs in line with families' preferences. Plans had been updated with families to ensure information was consistent and evidenced what was important to the child. Families commented "Melanie regularly prepares, updates and shares a formal development plan which I am able to review, comment on and discuss in person."

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy, settled and confident to explore areas to lead their play. The childminder had thoughtfully created an inviting playroom and other spaces throughout the service using best practice guidance. They focused on spaces, interactions and the experiences offered, and we could see the positive impact this had. Families told us "There is plenty of opportunity for free play, the home is well equipped with toys, games and outdoor play areas."

This meant children had choice, experienced high-quality play and learning that supported their stage of development and their learning style.

Planning for children's interests were a balance of intentional promotion and free play. The childminder was attuned to children's likes and wishes and offered rich and engaging experiences based on this. For example, children had been learning about space. High quality resources, books and loose parts had been provided that sparked curiosity, exploration and engaged them in play for sustained periods of time. Families' comments included "Melanie plans her activities based on the children's interests and upcoming personal experiences, she updates her toys, resources and activities to cater for their preferences. As a result, children's learning was well planned to meet their needs.

Children were supported to make progress in literacy and numeracy through fun and creative ways. The childminder valued the importance of promoting this through positive interactions, creative resources and meaningful conversations. Children enjoyed using song spoons, picture stones, listening to stories and exploring sensory play. The childminder engaged families in supporting this through story bags that children were able to take home and enjoy engaging with the activity.

Children experienced a breadth of learning in their wider community that included visits to the library, parks, the woods, music groups and shopping for food choices. Children were able to talk about their experiences and the fun they had. Evidence of learning through play was recorded in floor books that children had ownership of. These documented their ideas, learning and fun. The childminder used the floor book to further promote children's understanding of their rights as they linked the articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the wellbeing indicators to experiences. This meant children's best interests were at the heart of the service.

The childminder supported children to reach their full potential at a pace that was right for them. They recorded detailed observations that demonstrated they had a very good understanding of child development and individual children's progress. They shared observations and pictures with families online. They used this evidence to track learning and agree relevant next steps. Families commented "Melanie keeps me fully informed on a daily basis through detailed week plans, handovers, photos and regularly asks for feedback" and "Melanie is very aware of my child's developmental needs and actively designs games and activities to build on these in a fun way." This meant strong partnership working between the childminder and families ensured children thrived and flourished.

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 and families experienced a setting that was well furnished, homely, safe and inviting. Spaces and the well-planned organisation of resources gave a strong message that children mattered.

The childminder had a very good understanding of children's stages of development and structured spaces to ensure they met the needs of all children. For example, younger children were able to explore a wide selection of open-ended resources that were stimulating, offered challenge and promoted curiosity.

As a result, they were able to engage in schematic play (patterns of play) that supported them to make sense of their world.

Children benefitted from a wide selection of loose parts indoors and outdoors. These offered children challenge in their play, sparked creativity and problem solving and supported children to work together to create their ideas. For example, they created ramps for the wheeled toys in the garden. This promoted risk benefit play as children learned about risk and how to manage this safely whilst being supported by the childminder.

Children benefitted from play and learning in the childminder's home and out in the community as measures were in place to manage any potential risks. Risk assessments were clear, detailed and reviewed regularly. As a result, children's safety and wellbeing was prioritised.

The childminder had effective systems in place for the safe management of infection, prevention and control practice in line with best practice guidance. All spaces were clean, well maintained and free from hazards. One family said, "Excellent hygiene is maintained at the house." Children were confident about the hand hygiene routine and told us they wash their hands because of germs. Children had their own hand towel to support with personal care. This meant any risk of cross contamination was minimised.

Children and families benefitted from the childminder's commitment to operate a service that had clear policies and procedures in place that reflected guidance and legislation. This meant families were clear about the service being offered.

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 and led well

Children experienced a setting that promoted their vision to offer a homely, fun, friendly and caring ethos that was nurturing and inclusive. The childminder was creative in their approach to ensure families were meaningfully involved in the life of the service. They created learning at home bags so children could share experiences. This meant families were included in learning through play.

Families were kept informed through online systems, face to face discussions and termly newsletters. Families were welcomed into the setting to observe where children played. This meant there was strong connections that supported positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had a robust quality assurance system in place that supported them to deliver a high-quality service for children and families. This included reviewing children's information, completing progress reports, updating policies, risk assessments, carrying out maintenance checks and engaging in ongoing training. As a result, children's care, play and learning was supported through effective systems.

The childminder was committed to involving children and families in the life of the service. They regularly gathered their views through questionnaires, discussions, floor books and feedback from interactions with learning online. They used this to support developments. Families told us "Melanie will often send out surveys to gain the information she needs to tailor the service to suit every child," "it is clear that anything you suggest to Melanie she will consider if appropriate"

and "she regularly asks for suggestions and feedback, and it is a credit to her already excellent service that I have very little to add."

Children benefitted from the childminder's knowledge and experience of engaging with self-evaluation for improvement. They demonstrated they made very good use of the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare'. The childminder evidenced in a floor book what the service did well, how they measured this and identified next steps. They used this to structure their improvement priorities. This meant children received high quality experiences that were meaningful and placed them at the heart of the service. We recognised how effective the documentation the childminder used to evidence their self-evaluation journey was and encouraged them to share this with others.

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, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge & values

Children were treated with kindness, compassion and respect from the childminder who genuinely loved the role and saw the important part they played in ensuring children reached their full potential. They were attuned to children's individual needs and were able to suggest strategies to support children and families with transitions into the setting. They recognised the importance of children being nurtured, loved and valued as individuals. Families' comments included "Melanie is nothing short of amazing and I am so thankful to her" My child is "welcomed into their family home and given all the attention and love that he needs.", "Melanie always goes above and beyond" and the "Childminder is excellent with children" As a result, children developed confidence, were happy and having fun.

Children and families benefitted from the childminders experience, knowledge and dedication to continuous professional training and development. They had completed training that included child protection, safer sleep, science, technology, engineering, maths (STEM), autism, ADHD and the senses and linking legislation to policy. To ensure this had an impact on outcomes for children, the childminder evaluated each piece of learning and documented how this would be implemented into practice.

The childminder made very good use of guidance, the Care Inspectorate and The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) updates. This ensured they provided care that reflected best practice. They had established positive and supportive links with other professionals in the area. This ensured they were able to reflect on practice, discuss guidance and make any changes required to support high quality outcomes for children.

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?	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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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