

little dinosaurs childminding ltd

Child Minding

Elgin

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
18 July 2024

Service provided by:
Sadie Malpass

Service provider number:
SP2022000247

Service no:
CS2022000367

About the service

Mrs. Malpass is registered to provide a care service to six children at any one time, 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. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is situated in a residential area of a town, close to some local amenities. Children are cared for in the lounge and dining/play room. A secure garden to the rear of the property is directly accessed from the play room.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 July 2024 between 11.30 and 14.15. The inspection was carried out by an 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:

- Communicated with four parents;
- Spoke with the childminder;
- Observed practice and children's experiences; and
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children had built positive relationships with the childminder, this had been helped by the friendly and attentive approach of the childminder.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the personal plan, which contained key information about them.

The childminders interactions and conversations with children during their play, helped to widen their skills and consolidate their learning through play.

Children's play and learning was enhanced through strong connections to their own and wider communities.

The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis.

To enhance the delivery of high-quality practice, that leads to improved outcomes for all, the childminder should establish a clear ethos of continuous improvement.

The childminder recognised the importance of children having fun in their play and enabling them to learn and develop.

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?	3 - Adequate
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/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children had built positive relationships with the childminder, this had been helped by the friendly and attentive approach of the childminder. Children were clearly comfortable, happy and relaxed in their surroundings. The childminder's warm and respectful interactions promoted children's confidence and enabled them to feel secure and cared for. Where children required personal care, it supported children's dignity and safety. Children's overall development, was also supported through sensitive arrangements that promoted good habits around sleep, such as a travel cot in a quiet space within the home.

Children enjoyed sitting and eating their lunch together at a small table in the playroom. A child was in the process of moving from the high chair to sitting with the other children and were coping well with the change. It was a positive and calm social experience for all of the children. The childminder sat beside the children which helped to promote close attachment and also enabled them to be focused on the needs of the children. Food choices were nutritious and reflected current guidance and dietary needs. Children had water with their meal and water bottles enabled them to remain hydrated throughout the day.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the personal plan, which contained key information about them, such as contact details and any health needs such as allergies and medical conditions. Personal plans were not being consistently reviewed with parents and children (where possible), to support continuity of care and development. We discussed this with the childminder (see area for improvement 1). We also suggested that reintroducing 'about me' forms that gathered additional information such as care routines, feeding/sleep, interests and likes/dislikes also helped to enhance a holistic approach to children's wellbeing needs. The childminder was also referred to guidance on the use of chronologies, that helped with the identification of children's needs and directed action to support children well. Ref: Practice guide to chronologies - hub.careinspectorate.com

Parents strongly agreed and agreed that they had a strong connection with the childminder. They told us that there was lots of communication and updates all the time, so they were kept informed of how their child was doing.

We advised the childminder that it would be beneficial to refresh their child protection training, to help ensure that their knowledge and understanding remained current. Ref: National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023.

1.3 Play and Learning

Children were able to lead their own play experiences, it helped to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. Children were having fun together with using building bricks to construct a house. A toddler was having fun with repetitive play emptying containers and filling them, climbing into the wicker storage basket and filling it with different items. Children had fun with some soft play blocks and hiding things in the ball pit.

The childminder listened to and talked with the children during play activities such as sorting magnetic letters and numbers and playing matching games with children. Their interactions and conversations helped to widen children's skills and consolidate their learning through play.

The play room was equipped with a variety of activities that included matching and number games, books, creative building sets, threading games and jigsaws. It helped to promote children's choice and independence. Photos showed children having fun building with wooden blocks, sand play and sorting pine cones. Educational posters displayed throughout the playroom promoted early numeracy and literacy.

The childminder recognised children's achievements and shared them with parents. We discussed observation and assessment of children's progress and development with the childminder. It would help to ensure that any additional needs were identified and that children were supported to reach their potential.

Parents told us that their child's development was always supported through interesting and fun play experiences. They were always welcomed into the childminder's home to discuss their child's care, play and learning.

The childminder enabled children to build strong connections to their own and wider communities that enhanced their skills, confidence and learning opportunities. Children visited the library, wildlife centres and petting farms, natural play areas, organised nature based learning events, woodlands and play parks. Parents told us that their child always had the opportunity to play outdoors that included the garden, educational visits, farm, parks and beach.

Areas for improvement

1. To help ensure that families and children remained central to the personal planning process, the childminder should establish a consistent system of review, a minimum of 6 monthly.

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).

'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me'. (HSCS 2.17)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children benefited from being cared for in a comfortable, clean, well furnished and homely environment. It helped to give the message to children that they mattered. Children had ample space for their needs. Plenty of ventilation and natural light contributed to children's psychological wellbeing.

The childminder had suitable equipment in place to support infection and prevention control such as, individual hand towels for washing hands and disposable gloves and aprons for personal care needs.

To support robust infection control practices we advised the childminder to consistently follow good practice, such as children washing their hands prior to eating. Ref: Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - Public Health Scotland. The childminder had complied with food hygiene legislation to support safe food practices.

The childminder identified and removed risks to children within the setting, both indoors and outdoors. Written risk assessments also helped to support the safety and security of the children. We suggested that a programme of review and a bespoke approach to outings, would help to ensure that risk continued to be assessed and evaluated. Ref: SIMOA keeping children safe practice notes - hub.careinspectorate.com

The indoor and outdoor play space was structured to take account of children's stages of development and learning. The arrangement of furnishings in the lounge and dining/play room, enabled children to take part in floor play. A variety of resources and materials were stored in a unit with boxes that was accessible to the children. Resources were also rotated regularly, to provide a variety of experiences. Children had their meals seated at child size table and chairs within the play room. A sofa and chairs in the lounge area enabled children to rest and recuperate and enjoy quieter activities.

A large secure garden was accessed directly from the play room, although children did not access during the inspection. It enabled children to enjoy active, physical play and creative play. We saw that children were growing plants that they had bought during a trip to the garden centre. During our discussion with the childminder they acknowledged that the garden would benefit from a regeneration, particularly the mud kitchen. Children having wider access to real/natural play materials that would help inspire imaginary and exploratory play.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this theme as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The childminder had policies that supported them in running the service and they were shared with parents. We suggested that having a programme of review would help to ensure that they continued to reflect the provision of the setting, and aligned with good practice guidance and the Health and Social Care Standards.

The childminder recognised the value of working in partnership with parents in a meaningful and supportive way, taking account of their views on a daily basis. Parents told us that they always felt welcomed into the childminder's home and that there was open discussion. Whilst this provided a starting point for improving the quality of the service, self-evaluation was at an early stage of development.

We spoke with the childminder about the benefits of a concise format for recording changes as they occurred and identified areas for improvement, that helped to support the process of self evaluation. It could be as result of seeking the views of parents and children, learning from training that informed practice, and implementing best practice guidance. We discussed this with the childminder (see area for improvement 1). Ref: How we support improvement programme and bitesize sessions, and A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare - hub.care@careinspectorate.com

We also discussed notification reporting to the Care Inspectorate and referred the childminder to the guidance on the Care Inspectorate hub.

Areas for improvement

1. To enhance the delivery of high-quality practice, that leads to improved outcomes for all, the childminder should establish a clear ethos of continuous improvement.

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

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes'. (HSCS 4.19)

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder had a clear understanding of how children developed and learned. They also had previous experience of providing a childminding service in another country, and had undertaken relevant training. They had completed core training such as first aid, food hygiene and an induction to childminding in Scotland. Their knowledge and understanding helped to enhance children's safety and well-being. We discussed the benefits of a reflective journal to record how the childminder had used their learning to improve their practice and children's experiences. It also included using early years good practice guidance documents ref: hub.careinspectorate.com

The childminder was also a member of an organisation that provided support and offered training to Scottish childminders.

The childminder's enabling and responsive attitude was supportive of building children's confidence and promoting their independence. Their warmth and kindness towards the children helped them to feel valued, loved and secure.

The childminder recognised the importance of children having fun in their play and enabling them to learn and develop.

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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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