

Brambling Bairns Childminding Child Minding

Dunfermline

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 July 2024

Service provided by:
Emma-Jane Stewart

Service provider number:
SP2023000214

Service no:
CS2023000331

About the service

Brambling Bairns Childminding is provided by Emma-Jane Stewart who provides the service from the family home in the Duloch area of Dunfermline. The service is very close to local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery, school and local shops. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the detached, spacious family home where children have access to the lounge, kitchen/diner, playroom and sun room. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

The service was registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 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.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 29 July 2024 between 10:15 and 13:45. 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
- intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with two children using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- gathered feedback from parents/carers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were loved, happy and comfortable in the setting.
- Use of resources in the local community enriched children's care, support and learning.
- Children had control over matters affecting them as a result of the childminder's responsiveness to their needs.
- The childminder had made a strong start the business, which was organised and reflected on, supporting continued improvement.
- The childminder should now formalise their quality assurance approaches.

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/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1; Nurturing care and support

Loving and supportive interactions were evident between the childminder and children. There was lots of natural chat, smiles, laughter and singing. This contributed to children's level of comfort and affectionate relationships with the childminder. Parents told us "Highly engaged and attentive care is given by Emma. It's clear she has the children's care and development as an absolute priority."

The childminder quickly picked up on young children's cues supporting them to make choices about play routines and activities. For example, when one child wanted to go outside to explore and when children became hungry and tired. This contributed to children feeling happy, settled and secure.

Children were at home in the service as the childminder demonstrated that they knew children and families very well. The childminder spoke confidently about children's specific needs and preferences, which ensured the care provided met their individual needs. The childminder worked closely with parents to provide consistency, for example, ensuring daily routines were balanced to allow time for play and rest, outings, use of community facilities and learning through play. This supported home routines and provided reassurance and security for children.

Children enjoyed a relaxed and unhurried mealtime experience. They were supported by the childminder and had opportunities to develop skills such as learning to feed themselves which the childminder praised and encouraged. This meant children were developing independence and a sense of achievement. Baby led weaning was an approach taken and the childminder held a good understanding of this and discussed it with parents to reduce the risks of choking. Healthy, nutritious menus for snacks and meals were shared weekly with parents supporting a balanced diet for children between home and the service.

At the time of inspection, no children required medication. The childminder had documentation in place to support the safe administration of medication, should it be required in the future.

The childminder had established good communication with families. They used digital technology to share children's daily updates and photographs of their experiences and achievements. One parent suggested that face to face opportunities to discuss children's progress every few months would further enhance this.

The childminder promoted use of a travel cot with parents to support children's safe sleeping. However, there was occasional use of a buggy for sleeping in the home when children were unsettled or as a result of parental request. This is not in line with safe sleeping guidelines, we asked the childminder to continue with their approach of promoting use of the travel cot and sharing this with parents to ensure children routinely enjoy restful sleep on a flat surface with ability to move naturally.

Children's dignity was maintained through sensitive approaches to nappy changing. We reminded the childminder to follow current infection prevention and control guidance and make use of aprons along with gloves when changing children. This would reduce risk of cross infection and support in keeping children healthy.

Quality Indicator 1.3; Play and learning

Personal plans supported the childminder to meet children's needs. These fully captured children's experiences and learning and how the childminder was supporting children to achieve with clear next steps. This information supported children's wellbeing and was reviewed regularly with parents.

Regular use of local community amenities benefitted younger children in developing social skills and building friendships. For example, visits to the local church café and soft play. The childminder also made use of other amenities such as nearby parks and forest which promoted children's physical wellbeing. Outdoor play and learning was a passion and was promoted well through regular access to the garden and local park. These experiences built children's active skills such as balancing, climbing and swinging, along with developing their curiosity and understanding of the natural world. One parent told us there was "Lots of walks and always garden time."

The childminder was attuned to children's interests and responsive in providing play experiences. They carried out some planning which they were continuing to develop to ensure children's play experiences fully supported their needs and interests. We discussed and provided reading material on 'schematic play' to support planning for young children to explore through repeated patterns of behaviour across different activities.

Experiences were well considered for children's different ages and stages of development. Older children were supported well in engaging in shared activities suited to their interests. For example, the childminder done a regular workout routine with an older child as they had an interest in going to the gym. Children were developing their literacy and numeracy skills through planned activities. This included regular storytelling, songs, rhymes and puzzles for younger children and more challenging games such as 'Yatzi' for older children.

Children had fun and led their own play as they independently chose from a wide range of resources and books which supported their interests. We asked the childminder to continue to develop the range of open-ended resources. This would develop children's curiosity, creativity and problem-solving skills.

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 cared for in a homely environment that was comfortable, welcoming and offered them space to play and relax. Children could move freely between the living room, play room, sun room and garden. This contributed to their feelings of belonging and enabled them to make choices about where to play.

The wide range of toys and games were in good condition, sufficient and suitable to the age and stage of children attending, promoting children's enjoyment. Resources were easily accessible from low storage units and boxes which enabled children's independence as they made choices.

Good ventilation and the childminder's effective cleaning routines meant children's wellbeing benefitted from a home which was clean, tidy and well maintained.

Children learned about good hygiene practice through hand washing at appropriate times in the day. This reduced children's risk of cross infection and contributed to them remaining healthy.

Children's safety was promoted because the childminder had taken appropriate steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises, both inside and outside, were minimised. A fire extinguisher was held but we asked the childminder to ensure the fire blanket was attached to the wall for quick access. The home and any areas visited had been robustly risk assessed with detailed written risk assessments in place. These were regularly reviewed and updated.

Information about children was stored securely to ensure that only the childminder could view the information. This meant that children's personal details were protected.

How good is our leadership?

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.

Quality Indicator 3.1; Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Relationships with children and families were strong and supported meaningful involvement in influencing change. Parents and children's views about the quality of the service, and areas for improvement, were gathered through daily discussions. This information was used to inform developments. As a result, families felt involved, and children benefitted from a service that continually improved.

The childminder had a clear vision, values and aims for the setting which were evident in their practice. They drew upon best practice guidance documents to inform them in writing these. This gave a clear direction for the service, enabled parents to understand the childminder's approach and created a positive ethos where children mattered.

The childminder used her knowledge, skills and experience to provide a well-managed service that promoted positive outcomes for children and families. The childminder made good use of best practice documents to support them in developing their policies and considering their practice. For example, they referred to the 'Setting the Table' guidance when developing the food policy.

Policies and risk assessments were kept under review and supported the safe and effective running of the service. As a result, children were cared for by a childminder who carefully considered their safety and wellbeing. We suggested some small changes to policies to provide more detail of support and actions. For example, revising the complaints policy to say parents can come to us at any time and reviewing the medication policy to state that parents must complete and sign in the medication.

The childminder was very reflective of their practice and read a wide range of professional written materials to support their practice which contributed to ongoing self-evaluation and improvements. They were able to confidently describe their strengths and areas for improvement and how they would address these. We discussed how to capture this formally to support ongoing quality assurance and improvement. The childminder should make use of our 'Quality Framework' and refer to the document 'Self-evaluation toolkit for childminders'. This would allow them to formalise quality assurance approaches and measure improvements made. They should also consider identifying improvement priorities for the year ahead through creating an improvement plan and how to gather parental feedback formally (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To further support evaluations and improvements in the service, the childminder should formalise quality assurance approaches. They should make reference to best practice guidance including the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged children' and the 'Self evaluation toolkit for childminders'. In addition they should identify priorities and capture this within an improvement plan for the year ahead. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: '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?

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 and values.

Children benefitted from the childminder's kindness and compassion. They enjoyed nurturing interactions from the childminder who supported their progress in a natural way according to their stages of development. The childminder recognised the importance of relationships and attachment especially for younger children. As a result, children were happy and relaxed as their needs were being met and they felt loved and secure.

The childminder drew on her personal experience as a mother and previous career in Education to support provision of quality care, support and learning. They demonstrated a passion for learning and keeping their skills and knowledge up to date. The childminder was reflective of particular needs of children when identifying relevant training and learning. For example, completing a course on fussy eating to support a child's improved eating habits. As a result of their passion for outdoor learning, they had booked to attend a weekend outdoor learning festival. This targeted approach to learning and development supported children to achieve.

Regular development and learning was carried out through reading relevant documents, updates from the Scottish Childminding Association and the Care Inspectorate. They had also accessed core training which supported children's health and wellbeing. For example, first aid and food hygiene and they had identified future training such as refreshing child protection. This commitment to learning supported delivery of quality experiences and supported children's outcomes.

The childminder kept a log of their professional development which supported further reflection on this and how it could be used to further develop the service.

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	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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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