

Jade's Childminder Service Child Minding

ALFORD

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
13 August 2024

Service provided by:
Jade Main

Service provider number:
SP2020991172

Service no:
CS2020379441

About the service

Jade's childminder Service provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Alford. 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; of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is close to a local primary school, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the kitchen/diner, living room and downstairs toilet. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden all year round.

About the inspection

This was an announced (short notice) inspection which took place on 13 August 2024 between 08:30 and 12:15. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Made contact with seven parent's of children who attended.
- Spoke with the childminder and children.
- Observed daily life and children's experiences.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care which supported them to feel valued, loved, and secure.
- Children were cared for by a childminder who knew them well.
- The childminder had developed and maintained strong relationships with families. They routinely shared information to ensure children's care and learning needs were met and reflected families preferences.
- Children had regular opportunities to explore their local and wider communities.
- Self-evaluation should be further developed, using recognised audit tools, to support the quality of the service.

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. We found several strengths that impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced a warm, nurturing and gentle approach to care from the childminder. Cuddles and reassurance were provided when separating from parents and this contributed to secure attachments and supported children to feel safe and loved. The childminder was consistently attentive to children's needs and responded to children's cues and requests which provided the message that they mattered.

The childminder demonstrated that they knew children and their families well. Personal preferences and personalities were taken account of which ensured care was provided on an individual basis and well considered to meet needs. One parent told us; "Jade treats the kids like her own and it shows in the relationships she develops with the children. Our little one loves attending Jade's." Another parent said; "I think Jade and the service she provides is fantastic. She is approachable and accommodating. She provides child centred childcare. My kids enjoying going to her and feel very comfortable in her home. I know they speak to her and confide in her and I know she will always have their best interests in mind."

Personal plans were in place for each child. These were created in collaboration with families, identifying children's likes, preferences, health and care routines which helped to promote continuity and consistency of care. Following a suggestion made at our last inspection, the childminder had yet to incorporate the wellbeing indicators into children's plans. Again, we suggested that the childminder reviewed the children's plans, considering the health and wellbeing indicators. This would improve the quality of information gathered and ensure children's care and support was individualised, enabling the childminder to help them reach their full potential.

Children enjoyed snack at the dining table. Parents provided packed lunches which took account of their children's preferences and dietary needs. Whilst the childminder did not eat with children, they sat with them, promoting a sociable meal time experience. We discussed how children could be supported to develop independence through opportunities to help prepare snack and set the table for mealtimes, developing important life skills.

When reviewing personal plans we found that medication for one child was taken into the setting daily. Whilst the childminder had paperwork with information in place, we discussed the importance of parents completing a medication form to ensure all the relevant information was gathered for reference purposes. We highlighted the importance of updating the service medication policy at our last inspection. This had yet to be done. We again highlighted the value of reviewing and updating this policy in line with best practice guidance to stating how they would effectively store and manage the administration of medication to further ensure children's health and wellbeing.

No children slept during our visit however the childminder told us they slept in a travel cot upstairs, using a monitor. We highlighted the importance of updating the service sleep policy to reflect current practice at our last inspection. This had yet to be done. We directed the childminder to best practice guidance and discussed working with parents to support them to work in accordance with safe sleeping practice. This would contribute to the comfort and safety of the children.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

The childminder was responsive in their approach to planning children's play and learning. A balance of spontaneous and planned experiences took account of children's interests and development needs. The childminder was knowledgeable of children's interests and provided resources and planned activities to support these. This meant that play was meaningful and exciting.

Children confidently led their own play, exploring their interests and curiosities through a range of quality play resources. Outdoors, these included the sand pit with buckets and spades, tough trays with loose parts and open ended toys and a large climbing frame with swings. Resources were accessible, promoting children's independence and allowing them to choose how they spent their time. The pace of the day was relaxed and unhurried, giving children time to play and explore.

Children had opportunities to develop their skills in language, literacy and numeracy through their daily experiences. The childminder played alongside children and chatted with them during their play, modelling positive use of language and vocabulary. They used some open questions to extend children's thinking, such as; 'how many more will you need?' and 'tell me about the hippo at the zoo' when using tongs to sort bowls of animals. Although books, real resources and mark making materials were accessible within the environment we discussed the benefits of making these more readily available within a wider range of play experiences. This would further support children's literacy and numeracy skills and the foundations of lifelong learning.

Discussions with the childminder highlighted that they had a good understanding of child development and used their knowledge to recognise children's achievements and identify where children required support. Some observations of play and identified possible next steps in children's learning had been captured using WhatsApp and in children's plans. We discussed the benefits of recording observations and next steps for all children. This would allow the childminder to plan new learning and offer appropriate challenge to help children to progress.

The local community was well used to extend children's experiences. There were opportunities to explore nature through walks in the woods and along the river, visits to different parks and beaches and museums further a field. This encouraged children to develop their social skills and provided strong connections to their own and wider communities.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We found several strengths that impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder's home was clean, bright and well ventilated with the patio doors opening to the outdoors. The childminder had created a home from home environment for children, helping them to feel confident, safe and secure.

Children experienced a stimulating environment which provided ample space to explore. Spaces had been planned well to account for children's interests and needs. During our visit children played outdoors, exploring a variety of resources to support their age and stage of development.

Following our last visit the childminder had introduced more open ended resources and loose parts to encourage children's curiosity and imagination. A child used sand to make different kinds of ice creams using cones and scoops. Whilst playing with the child minder they enjoyed pretending to make different flavours, adding sprinkles and charging for ice creams. They used their imagination and were able to relate to real life experiences.

Most parents told us that their child's development was supported through interesting and fun play experiences. One parent said; "Jade regularly crafts with the kids. They play outside a lot. They also go to the park and the library frequently. They go on day trips in the school holidays. They have lots of board games and also time to relax after a busy day at school." One child said; "Doing crafting, playing with my friends and going to the park. Jades garden is good too for playing."

The setting was well maintained indoors and outdoors. Risk assessments highlighted potential risks and identified measures to support children's safety. We discussed adding to these to support walks and trips further a field involving the children in the process. Following a suggestion made at our last inspection, the childminder had yet to explore benefit-risk assessments, in line with current best practice. We once again we talked about the benefits of this, supporting children's access to risky play opportunities. While taking into account the risks, this would recognise the benefits to children of more challenging play experiences.

Infection prevention and control measures were supportive of reducing the risk of infection spread. Effective cleaning practices and good hand washing procedures were in place, encouraging children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We found several strengths that impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder's aims and objectives clearly reflected the service provided which included, offering a happy, caring and nurturing environment for children to have fun. We discussed the benefits of updating the setting's vision, values and aims with children and families currently accessing the service, taking account of feedback provided. This would support children and families to feel included and valued.

Positive relationships had been established with families. A range of communication methods supported effective information sharing. The childminder valued the views of families and sought these through regular conversations and service questionnaires. This enabled families to influence their children's care and experiences. The childminder discussed how parental feedback supported them to reflect on their practice and assess if the service was meeting current needs. The feedback we received from parents highlighted that most agreed that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting and their ideas and suggestions used to influence change.

Since our last inspection, the childminder had introduced a self-evaluation system. Through daily reflections of practice and children's experiences they had identified improvements and documented the impact of these. We suggested engaging with; 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to further support effective self-evaluation and improvements within the service, improving outcomes for children and families. **(See area for improvement 1 reinstated)**

Areas for improvement

1. To support improvement to the service and ensure good outcomes for children, the childminder should ensure quality assurance systems, including the use of quality audit tools, are fully embedded into practice.

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

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We found several strengths that impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder was warm, caring and kind. Throughout our visit, we observed children's needs and wishes being met in a naturally responsive and nurturing way. It was clear that strong attachments had been formed. The childminder's gentle approaches contributed to children feeling safe and secure.

Children and their families benefited from a childminder who was committed to providing quality care. They worked well with families, who were warmly welcomed into the service and given time to discuss their child's needs and to share experiences. As a result, relationships were positive and parents felt valued. In response to a recent questionnaire, the childminder had developed how children's learning was shared for some children and we discussed how this could benefit other children and families. Most parents told us they were welcomed into the service to discuss their child's care, play and learning. One parent said; "Jade is easy to speak to and welcoming. I feel I can discuss anything relating to my kids with her. I think she is wonderful." Another parent said; "We have a very open relationship with Jade, she's great at communicating and has put me at ease since day one. She's warm and friendly and nothing's ever a bother."

The childminder was aware of the importance of ensuring that they had the appropriate knowledge and skills to offer high quality care and experiences. Since our last inspection they had completed a variety of training and professional development which supported positive outcomes for children. We highlighted the value of keeping a more detailed record of training. This would help to identify future training needs and allow the childminder to evaluate any learning undertaken.

We signposted the childminder to a range of resources available on the Care Inspectorate Hub to further support their professional development in early learning and support the improvements within the service.

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 support improvement to the service and ensure good outcomes for children, the childminder should ensure quality assurance systems, including the use of quality audit tools, are fully embedded into practice.

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

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

This area for improvement was made on 31 May 2023.

Action taken since then

Since our last inspection, the childminder had introduced a self-evaluation system. Through daily reflections of practice and children's experiences they had identified improvements and documented the impact of these. However, they had not used quality audit tools to support this. We suggested engaging with; 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to further support effective self-evaluation and improvements within the service.

This area for improvement has not been met.

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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