

McCrae, Sheona Child Minding

Greenock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 August 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2005945967

Service no:
CS2005091464

About the service

Sheona McCrae is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of 6 children will be under 12, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight care will not be provided. At the time of our inspection, four children were registered with the service.

The service operates from the childminder's home which is a ground floor flat property within the town of Greenock. The children have access to a living room, toilet facilities and a shared secure garden to the rear of the property. There are schools, nursery and parks nearby.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Friday 23 August between 11:15 and 13:00. 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 previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- received four completed questionnaires
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were provided with warm, nurturing interactions, fostering their wellbeing and creating a positive environment.
- Systems were in place to evaluate children's progress and achievements.
- Children experienced a welcoming, home from home environment that supported them to feel safe and comfortable.
- Self-evaluation needs to be developed to support the childminder in assessing the quality of the service and making improvements. This should include gathering views of children and their families to help them influence change.
- The childminder should develop their skills and knowledge through current best practice guidance and training. They should also reflect on learning to support their own professional development and improve outcomes for children.

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? | 3 - Adequate |

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

Positive relationships had been developed with children and families who used the service. The childminder's daily communication with families, both in person and through the WhatsApp app, and their flexible care provision showed their commitment to supporting each child and family's needs. We discussed how relationships could be further strengthened by welcoming parents and carers into the setting at drop-off and collection times.

Overall, parents and carers were happy with the care and support their child received. They appreciated the childminder's approachability, with one commenting, "Sheona offers a fantastic service; she cares deeply for the kids in her care and is always available for discussion should this be needed". Another shared, "We have a great relationship. Sheona has been caring for my child since he was 3 years old, they've formed a great relationship and she's always there when I need her. I can speak to Sheona about changing days or adding days and there is never any issues. She's very approachable and has a warm and friendly nature".

Children attending the service were settled and confident. The childminder responded to children's needs, which supported their emotional wellbeing. This included discreet personal care, which supported their privacy and dignity, and an opportunity to build positive relationships.

At the previous two inspections, we made an area for improvement about children's personal plans. When children started at the setting, information gathered from parents and carers supported a link with home to form personal plans. However, these working documents were not updated to show how the childminder would continue to meet children's health and wellbeing needs. This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded (see area for improvement 1).

The childminder was confident in their role of safeguarding children and how they would respond to any concerns. Their child protection policy and up-to-date training should assure parents and carers that the childminder has all the necessary information to keep their children safe and protected.

Children enjoyed a relaxed and unhurried mealtime experience. The childminder sat beside the children while they ate, which minimised the risk of choking and helped keep them safe. Parents and carers provided packed lunches/snacks for their children, and the childminder offered healthy drinks and additional snacks when required.

The childminder told us that should children need sleep or rest, this was planned in cooperation with parents and carers wishes. We asked the childminder to familiarise themselves with safer sleep guidance, gain informed consent from parents and carers, and record this information in the child's personal plan. This will ensure that individual sleep routines reflect children's needs and parents and carers wishes and keep them safe.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had opportunities to play with toys that were accessible to them in the living space, including a tea set. The childminder engaged with and played with them, encouraging the children to use their imagination and have fun.

The childminder supported the children's language development through appropriate conversations and role-modelling. There were opportunities for children to engage in activities and experiences that supported literacy and numeracy, such as puzzles. The childminder engaged with children in meaningful conversations to develop their speech and language. This meant that children were being challenged to problem solve at an appropriate level.

Children played indoors during the inspection. However, the evidence reviewed showed they had opportunities to explore the local community outdoors. They went for walks and visited local playparks. This ensured children received regular fresh air and exercise, which supported their wellbeing and gave them a sense of belonging to their local community. The childminder shared that children who attended extended days would be given more opportunities to explore the local and surrounding community, which should enhance their experiences and help develop their social skills.

The childminder shared with families how their children were progressing. One parent commented, "Sheona keeps me updated with the progress she feels my child is making. She talks to me at pick up every day to let me know how the day has been and regularly sends home progress reports." This helped to ensure that children were supported in achieving their potential.

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should ensure that children's personal plans are updated at least once every six months. This will help ensure that the childminder has all the necessary current information to support children's health and wellbeing and that children receive the right support at the right time.

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).

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 benefitted from a comfortable, homely, and welcoming setting that allowed them to feel safe, secure and loved.

The living room was a comfortable and valued space that allowed children to play, rest, and relax, reinforcing their sense of importance and belonging.

Children had access to age-appropriate resources, meaning they could choose what they wanted to play with. As a result, children were beginning to lead their own play experiences.

Suitable infection control measures were in place to ensure children had access to a safe and clean environment. This contributed to their health and safety.

Accidents and incidents were managed effectively and shared with parents and carers as necessary. This open and transparent communication fostered positive partnerships and reassured families of the childminder's commitment to their children's safety.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder engaged well with the inspection process and was welcoming and willing to answer the questions required to support the evaluation of their service.

Risk assessments had been developed to support children's health and safety indoors and outdoors.

At the last inspection, we made an area for improvement for the childminder to develop their skills and ensure that policies and procedures aligned with current best practice guidance, supporting a quality service for children and families. This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded (see area for improvement 1).

Overall, parents and carers felt they were involved in a meaningful way to develop the service, with one commenting, "Sheona regularly asks for feedback on how we feel things are working and is always happy to listen to any suggestions that might be made".

However, the evidence reviewed showed no formal systems were in place for the childminder to evaluate the service's quality and identify areas for improvement. As a result, processes were not yet effective or meaningful, and there continued to be gaps in the quality assurance processes. We discussed the benefits of using quality audit tools such as 'A quality framework for day-care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to support self-evaluation with the input of parents and carers and, where appropriate, children (see area for improvement 2).

The childminder should submit an action plan to the Care Inspectorate detailing how they will address the areas for improvement identified within this inspection report to ensure children receive a quality service and the best care possible. The Care Inspectorate will assess the quality of the action plan and follow up at the next inspection.

Areas for improvement

1. Policies and procedures should be reviewed and updated in line with current best practice guidance to support the childminder in delivering a quality service for children. Any updates should be shared with parents and carers.

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

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

2. Self-evaluation should be developed to ensure a quality service for children, including meaningfully involving children and families in the process.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas need to improve.

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder provided a caring environment for children, supporting children in building positive relationships with them and each other. As a result, children were secure in the childminder's care.

The childminder had engaged in some professional development opportunities since their last inspection. This included child protection training. The childminder would benefit from updating their skills and knowledge about providing high quality play and learning experiences for children and supporting their health and wellbeing. Continuing professional learning could be used to develop a deeper understanding of the experiences and spaces children need to learn and develop. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge gained during training or self-study will support improvements in the service and lead to high-quality provision for children (see area for improvement 1).

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), which should help to keep them informed of current best practices. We signposted the childminder to some national practice guidance to research and further enhance their knowledge and skills to provide a quality service. These included 'Realising the Ambition- Being Me' and 'My Childminding Journey', available on the Care Inspectorate HUB.

Areas for improvement

1. To further support children's wellbeing, learning and development, the childminder should access training and professional development. Apply their knowledge in practice, record and reflect on learning to support consistency in their practice and improve outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that 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' (HSCS 3.14).

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

The childminder should develop written personal plans for each child, within 28 days of attending the service, and implement a plan for review within a six month period, or before if necessary, involving parents or, where appropriate, children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child,

"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).

This area for improvement was made on 26 April 2021.

Action taken since then

Personal plans should be further developed in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, children. Strategies should be included to support children's health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded under key question 1: How good is our care, play and learning?

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should develop robust risk assessments, referring to most recent good practice guidance, to ensure a safe environment for children. This should include risk assessments for car journeys and playing on the garden trampoline. She should also obtain written permission for such activities and for contact with her family pets.

This is to ensure a safe environment for children that is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that as a child
"My environment is safe and secure" (HSCS 5.17).

This area for improvement was made on 26 April 2021.

Action taken since then

Satisfactory improvements were made to develop risk assessments indoors and outdoors, supporting children's health and safety in the service.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

In order to keep up to date with developments in childcare practice, the childminder should review and update her policies and procedures in line with the latest good practice guidance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child

"I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS4.23) and "I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources" (HSCS 4.27).

This area for improvement was made on 26 April 2021.

Action taken since then

Policies were reviewed; however, they should be further updated in line with current best practice guidance to support a quality service for children and families.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded under key question 3: How good is our leadership?

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? | 3 - Adequate |
| 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values | 3 - Adequate |

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.