

Shand, Gillian Helen

Child Minding

Glenrothes

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 September 2024

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2011982867

Service no:
CS2011301119

About the service

Gillian Shand provides a childminding service from their family home in Glenrothes, Fife. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. The service is registered to provide funded places in partnership with the local authority.

The service is close to the local primary school and nursery, shops, park, and woodland. Children have access to the living room, kitchen, toilet, and a secure garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 September 2024 between 09:15 and 11:30. We provided feedback on the same day by telephone call. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration and any complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with two children using the service
- reviewed feedback from five families using MS forms
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Children were cared for by a childminder who knew them and their families well.

Children's emotional wellbeing benefitted from strong and positive attachments with the childminder.

Children benefitted from regular outings within the local community to extend their experiences.

The childminder recognised the importance of fun in children's play.

The childminder had developed an improvement plan which identified strengths of the service and areas for improvements.

Personal plans were in place for each child. These could be further developed to include children's progress and next steps in learning. These should also be regularly reviewed.

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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were supported by the childminder who was warm, patient and nurturing in their interactions. One parent told us "Gillian's house has a relaxed atmosphere which is what my child requires to feel safe and comfortable."

The childminder knew children and their families very well. It was clear that close bonds had been developed with children. Most families commented positively on the daily communication they received. This supported families to be involved in their child's care and their individual home routines and preferences were respected. The childminder spoke confidently about children's individual care needs and how children were supported.

Personal plans were in place for each child, and they contained key information about each child. We asked the service to ensure that all personal plans were updated regularly, a minimum of every six months or sooner if needed. We discussed ways to further develop personal plans to gather information that was important to the child. This would enable the childminder to use these plans as working documents with families. For example, recording information shared informally by parents as children's needs changed, out with the six-monthly review period. This approach would further support a shared understanding of learning with children and families and ensure they are included and respected.

Children experienced relaxed mealtimes. Families provided most meals and snacks and children were offered a variety of healthy options from the childminder. This ensured that parental preferences were supported. The childminder was knowledgeable about choking risks and how to prevent these. These measures helped to ensure a safe and sociable mealtime experience for children.

Children's routines were responsive to their individual needs. When children needed to sleep or rest there were safe spaces to do this. The childminder was aware of good practice to support safe sleep for children.

Children were protected from harm by the childminder who had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities towards keeping children safe. The childminder was confident in recognising and responding appropriately to any concerns.

No children were receiving medication at the time of inspection; however, the childminder spoke confidently about how to store and administer medication. A medication policy and related paperwork was in place and in line with best practice guidance.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children could independently access a variety of resources and activities were spontaneous to support children's interests. The childminder was knowledgeable about children's individual interests and how to support these. This approach promoted play experiences that were meaningful and interesting, encouraging children to direct their own play and learning.

The childminder understood the importance of outdoor play opportunities. This supported children to be healthy and active. Children were also developing strong community links by regular visits to the nearby parks, and local toddler groups. This approach helped to enhance children's learning and encouraged them to make positive connections with their local community.

Children benefitted from resources that promoted literacy and numeracy through play. For example, we saw a variety of books and children regularly enjoyed story time to encourage communication skills of the youngest children.

The childminder interacted with children in a responsive and nurturing way. The childminder used open-ended questioning, which supported the young children to develop skills in understanding, thinking and problem solving. This approach encouraged children to feel valued and included. This supported children to develop their confidence and feel secure in the service.

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 an environment that was welcoming, safe and clean. Children were confident in moving around the areas of the home and could access the secure garden area. The garden was safe, secure and spacious. Space was used well to allow children to be physically active using climbing equipment. Children could also explore the newly developed water wall.

We suggested more open-ended resources could enhance creative thinking, problem solving skills and new learning. This would support children's skills in understanding, thinking, and investigation as well as their creativity.

Some risk assessments were in place. Detailed risks were identified within the home and garden, and this ensured children were kept safe. There was scope to develop these further to include more detail in relation to regular outings such as toddlers. The childminder spoke confidently about the visual risk assessments she undertook on a daily basis. This approach supported children's health, wellbeing and safety.

We found effective infection control measures were in place, which helped to reduce the potential spread of infection. Effective handwashing routines were embedded into daily practice, and this supported a safe and healthy environment for children.

The childminder had developed relevant policies that supported the running of the service. These were shared with parents so that they knew what to expect from the service.

Information about children was kept securely. As a result, children's information was protected, and storage complied with relevant best practice.

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had developed positive relationships with both children and families. The childminder had cared for the minded children for some time and knew the families well. Most families who completed our MS forms survey, told us that the agreed or strongly agreed that they had a have a strong connection with the childminder. As a result, children felt comfortable in their care and families felt reassured by the positive trusting relationships with the childminder.

The childminder had developed relevant policies that supported the running of the service. These were shared with parents so that they knew what to expect from the service. Some had been recently reviewed to ensure they reflected best practice.

We acknowledged that the childminder reflected regularly on their practice and the service provided and used this to bring about positive changes to outcomes for children and families.

The childminder had developed a meaningful improvement plan for their service, and this supported their continued self-evaluation. Using the quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare the childminder had identified what they were doing well and some areas they would like to develop within their service. To further support this the childminder sought the views of families. These views were important to the childminder. Formal feedback was gathered through questionnaires and daily conversations provided informal feedback. This encouraged families to be included and contribute to the life and development of the service. One parent told us "Gillian will always ask for our opinions."

How good is our staff team?

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 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge, and values

Children's health and wellbeing was well supported as the childminder recognised the importance of nurturing and positive relationships. Interactions were kind, compassionate and respectful. This nurturing and responsive care showed children were valued and loved. The childminder understood individual children's cues and body language, enabling them to meet their needs and support younger children developing their language and communication.

Children were encouraged to share their views, thoughts, and opinions through regular discussion. Children were actively encouraged to choose activities and experiences each day. This meant children felt listened to, knew their views mattered and supported their feelings of self-confidence.

The childminder understood how children developed and learned. They had completed core training such as First Aid and were in the process of updating their child protection training. The childminder had also accessed specialised training to support children with complex additional needs. The childminder told us that this training was invaluable and ensured they were meeting children's individual health and care needs. This training supported inclusive practice.

The childminder was sensitive, kind, caring and consistent in her approach to children, which helped them feel safe and secure. She was committed to ensuring high quality outcomes for children and families. The childminder had developed positive relationships with families. This was highlighted in the MS forms responses received from families. Comments included:

"Gillian and her family are great and so welcoming nothing is ever an issue both my girls run from the car to the door and are so excited to see her she truly is amazing."

"Overall, Gillian is just an amazing childminder who cares for my two kids and keeps them safe and happy at all times."

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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