

Boyle, Fiona Child Minding

Bonnyrigg

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 October 2024

Service provided by:
Fiona Boyle

Service provider number:
SP2003906251

Service no:
CS2003012527

About the service

Fiona Boyle is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 7 children under 16 years at any one time, of whom a maximum of 6 will be under 12 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

When working with an assistant care can be provided to a maximum of 8 children under 16 years at any one time, of whom no more than 4 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local primary schools, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room, conservatory, kitchen and downstairs toilet. The garden is accessed through the conservatory door.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 02 October 2024 between 13:00 and 14:30 and Friday 04 October 2024 between 09:00 and 10:00. 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 since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with two people using the service
- received six on line questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with the childminder and their assistant
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm, kind and caring interactions from a childminder that knew them well.
- Children benefitted from an effective personal planning approach that was responsive and meaningful.
- The childminder's approach, focused on creating a comfortable, and content environment.
- Children's play and learning experiences were enhanced through the use of the wider community.
- Parents thought highly of the childminder and their assistant.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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?

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 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The childminder supported children and families to feel welcomed and at home in the setting. By encouraging families to settle at their own pace, the childminder recognised the uniqueness of each child, their family and the importance of fostering secure attachments. During settling-in visits, the childminder requested families complete paperwork and engage in discussions about their child, ensuring an understanding of the child's needs and preferences. This was important for ensuring a smooth transition, as it allowed the childminder to understand the child's needs, routines, and preferences, fostering a secure and supportive environment from the start.

Children's emotional security and wellbeing was supported by routines that reflected their individual needs and family wishes. Because the childminder knew children's routines, needs and interests well, they spoke with affection and confidence about each child and how they supported and met their needs. This was echoed by a parent who told us, "I always update Fiona with any changes in my child's development and she is always willing to adapt and accommodate anything he needs".

The childminder was highly supportive of families, demonstrating dedication and genuine love and care. Parents appreciated this, with one telling us about the childminder doing shopping for them noting, "I have a very good relationship with Fiona, and she is very caring and always tries to help when she can, she goes above and beyond". Another shared, "Fiona and John are great people and they are providing very high standard care for my child. My child always feels very well looked after. They like going to Fiona even when one of their parents is off that day". The childminder organised special activities tailored to children's interests, provided flexible hours to accommodate parents' work patterns, took children to their extra-curricular activities, and offered resources for families facing challenges. This commitment fostered a nurturing environment that not only enhanced the children's emotional and social development but also strengthened outcomes for families. As a result, families felt connected and supported, leading to improved wellbeing for both children and parents.

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through the childminder's personal planning approach. The personal plan system allowed the childminder to document and track children's progress, enabling the implementation of strategies for future learning. A parent commented on the success of this, noting "Communication is always very open with Fiona and I regularly update and review my child's plan". This approach ensured that each child received personalised support tailored to their needs, contributing to their overall development.

We did not observe a mealtime but from what the childminder told us, children enjoyed a relaxed, unhurried, and safe mealtime experience. Parents provided packed lunches which children ate at the table or took as a picnic for when they were out and about. Snacks, provided by the childminder included crackers, toast, vegetables and fruit. Fresh water was available throughout the day which encouraged children to remain hydrated.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

During the inspection, it was clear that the children felt comfortable and engaged in their environment, enjoying their chosen toys. The childminder's understanding of each child's interests allowed for regular updates to experiences and spaces, fostering a fun environment. Parents expressed their satisfaction, noting, "My child is happy and well taken care of with Fiona. They have a wide variety of experiences and activities that benefit their development" and "My child is very happy every day, always excited to go into Fiona's and eager to share their experiences. This shows they are comfortable and receiving the right care." This feedback reflected a nurturing environment where children were supported in their play and learning.

The childminder's assistant was a valuable source of knowledge for children, always eager to answer their questions. A parent told us, "John is always ready to answer all the questions, even the most difficult ones". When the childminder's assistant did not know the answer, they and the children would explore and find it together. This approach not only satisfied children's curiosity and love for learning but also fostered critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Children even had the opportunity to build furniture with the assistant, promoting teamwork and practical skills in a fun and engaging way. When asked what they liked best at the childminder's home, children told us, "Playing games, going to the park, being with my friends", "Going in the green van. Playing with friends", "Fiona is fun" and "I like to see my friends". This feedback showcased the fun children had in a setting that clearly met their needs.

The childminder provided opportunities for children to enjoy the natural outdoor environment through walks to parks and other places of interest within the local community and further afield. These experiences included visits to playgroups, which promoted social skills; soft play areas, enhancing physical development; castles, sparking historical interests; beaches, fostering sensory exploration; community gardens, encouraging an understanding of nature; and even church to support a family's faith. Such opportunities enriched children's play and learning, fostering strong connections to their own and the wider community.

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.

The childminder's home had an inviting atmosphere, creating a welcoming and homely environment. The one level layout allowed children to freely access the living room, conservatory, and toilet, promoting easy and convenient use for them. The garden, an extension of the home, was accessible through the conservatory, providing a safe and enjoyable outdoor space. Older children had access to a summer house where they could relax and watch TV after their school day. This provided them with a calm space to unwind, supporting their sense of independence within the setting.

Children were cared for in a clean and tidy environment at the childminder's home. This prevented the spread of infection, promoting a positive and healthy atmosphere. Maintained in good condition, the childminder's home provided a safe environment for the children. Good hand hygiene practices were in place and the childminder ensured children were prompted and supported to wash their hands at key times. This helped minimise the risk of spread of infection and encourage good handwashing habits.

The childminder understood the importance of keeping children's personal information secure. They asked families for permission before taking photographs and shared their confidentiality policy with families using the service. The childminder had well organised records in place for children supporting her to maintain

confidentially of information. This meant that children's personal information was managed in line with best practice.

How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

Years of experience allowed the childminder to enhance the setting naturally and informally. Children played a key role in guiding improvements as they had a voice in shaping activities at the childminder's home. By listening to children, and an understanding of each child, the childminder remained attuned to their needs and interests. This proactive approach allowed the childminder to plan ahead, ensuring a nurturing and personalised care, play and learning environment.

Before starting in the setting, the childminder provided families with written and verbal information about their own family, home and childminding service. This practice was important as it helped parents understand the environment their child would be in and set clear expectations from the start. As a result, parents were informed and could be confident about the care their children would receive, fostering trust and open communication from the beginning.

Families provided highly positive feedback to us about the childminder with one stating, "Thank you for what they have done for myself and my family." When asked for areas of improvement, parents had no suggestions, unanimously agreeing that they had formed a strong connection with the childminder. They felt their opinions were valued and were confident in communicating their views about the service if necessary. The trusting and respectful relationships the childminder had built with parents allowed for informal discussions about children's needs and the best ways to meet them, as noted by parents who told us, "She is very friendly and approachable. Always keeps us updated and takes time to chat", "I have a good relationship. Fiona is great at what she does, she is always very friendly and helpful" and "Our relationship has been very good and professional between the two of us". This feedback highlighted the effective relationship between families and the childminder, contributing to a supportive environment for all.

The childminder was organised, and appropriate records were in place. This supported the childminder to deliver a professional service. Regular contact, informal communications and questionnaires meant families could naturally influence the care provided.

Good practice guidance and national and local documents informed ongoing self-evaluation. The childminder was currently using 'A quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare' (Care Inspectorate, 2022) to reflect on the service provided. As a result, strengths and some areas for improvement were identified. This proactive approach positively impacted children's outcomes, contributing to their overall development and wellbeing.

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 4.3: Staff deployment.

The childminder's assistant played a key role in the setting, particularly when the number of children required additional support. Beyond these times, the assistant was actively engaged in important tasks, such as school pick-ups and maintenance of the home, contributing to the smooth running of daily routines. They supported the childminder to effectively provide quality care, as described by the assistant who told us, "I try to always encourage children to learn and help them play" and "We keep on top of all things needed to be safe and secure and look at situations and areas needing attention". As a result, the care provided was consistent and adaptable to the needs of the children, ensuring a supportive environment.

The childminder, and their assistant, worked well together to create a nurturing and supportive environment. Their combined experience, knowledge, and skills contributed to positive outcomes for the children in their care. Effective communication ensured that they prioritised the safety and wellbeing of each child. A parent highlighted the positive and trusting relationships they fostered noting, "My child treats John and Fiona as extended family members," Another parent praised their standards by telling us, "Fiona and John are great people and they provide a very high standard of care". These positive outcomes were evident in the strong relationships and trust the childminder and their assistant had built with children and their families, some of which had been attending the childminding setting for a number of years.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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