

Sangster, Beverley Child Minding

Aberdeen

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 October 2024

Service provided by:
Beverley Sangster

Service provider number:
SP2010977662

Service no:
CS2010239077

About the service

Beverley Sangster provides a childminding service from their property in the residential area of Bridge of Don. The childminder may care for a maximum of six children under 16 years at any one time, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

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

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8 October 2024 between 09:15 and 13:45. 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 four parents 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.
- The childminder should seek feedback from parents and children regularly and consider how this feedback could support them to reflect on their practice and assess if the service was meeting current needs.

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. 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

The childminder was warm and nurturing in their approach to caring for children. Cuddles and closeness were provided when needed. 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 gave 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. Parents told us they had a strong connection with the childminder. One parent said, "My childminder has always made me feel so comfortable with my child going to [their] place for childcare. [They are] very welcoming and a very positive influence in my [child's] life. We are so pleased to have found a childminder like we have". Another parent said, "I feel that my children are very well cared for at [the childminder's]. [They go] above and beyond to look after them and my children go into [their] house happy, and leave happy".

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. However, only the contact information had been reviewed within Microsoft Forms, meaning some of the information held for individual children was out of date. We discussed the importance of regular reviews with parents to ensure the children's care and support was right for them, enabling the childminder to help them reach their full potential.

Children sat together at a small table during mealtimes. The childminder sat beside the children, promoting a sociable mealtime experience. The childminder provided snacks while parents provided lunch. Children were given cookies and fruit gummies for snack. We discussed the nutritional value of these and the childminder explained that these were already packed for going out before the inspection. She told us that the children were generally offered a platter with fruit and crackers. We talked about the benefit of supporting children to develop independence through opportunities to help prepare snack and set the table for mealtimes. The childminder and children told us that when they are in the house they were involved in preparing snack, practicing skills such as cutting and spreading. We discussed the importance of developing these life skills.

No children in the setting required medication at the time of the inspection. However, we highlighted the value of reviewing and updating this policy in line with best practice guidance, stating how they would effectively store and manage the administration of medication to ensure children 's health and wellbeing.

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.

Children confidently led their own play, exploring their interests and curiosities through a range of resources. Indoors, these included books, a variety of craft activities, and a shop with food. 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 learn.

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. When talking to a child with English as an additional language about a farm visit, they asked about the names of the animals and repeated these back. Books and mark making materials were accessible within the indoor environment. However, we discussed adding more real resources, such as old phones, keyboards, clocks, calendars, etc. 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. They 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 in children's personal plans. We discussed amalgamating some of these and recording observations with children in the moment, involving them in the planning process and sharing them with parents to further support children's progression.

The local community was well used to extend children's experiences. They attended local groups and there were opportunities to explore nature through walks to different parks and woods. Children also had the opportunity to visit places further afield, such as Easter Anguston Farm. This encouraged children to develop their social skills and provided strong connections to their own and wider communities.

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

The childminder's home was very clean, bright, and well ventilated with direct access 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 for them to explore. Spaces had been planned well to account for children's interests and needs. During our visit children played indoors, exploring a variety of resources to support their age and stage of development. They were very interested in exploring craft scissors and the different patterns they made. The childminder was supporting younger children with cutting through modelling and supporting their grip. Children used play dough to support their imaginative play and they used the variety of resources to make birthday cakes for each other. We discussed introducing more open-ended resources and loose parts to further encourage children's curiosity and imagination.

Children told us one of their favourite things to do was to play outside in the garden with the toys. Parents told us that their children had the opportunity to play outdoors. One parent said, "[My child] always has an opportunity to play outside if the weather is good to do. Our childminder has a back, secure garden with toys, bubbles, etc". Another parent said, "[they do] football, mud kitchen, free play". This contributed to the children's health and wellbeing.

The setting was very well maintained, indoors and outdoors. Robust risk assessments highlighted benefits, potential risks, and identified measures to support children's safety. This supported children's access to a variety of play opportunities and encouraged them to be involved in risk assessing their own safety. This took into account the risks and recognised the benefits to children of more challenging play experiences.

Infection prevention and control measures were very effective with regard to reducing the risk of infection spread. Effective cleaning practices and handwashing procedures were in place, encouraging children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This supported good infection control measures.

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 warm, loving, stable, and safe environment to play. We discussed the benefits of updating the setting's vision, values, and aims with children and families currently accessing the service, taking account of any 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, previously, through service questionnaires. We discussed additional ways in which the childminder may seek feedback from parents and children regularly and how this feedback could support them to reflect on their practice and assess if the service was meeting current needs. The feedback we received from parents highlighted that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the setting and their ideas and suggestions used to influence change. One parent said, "[The childminder] always asks the children what kind of toys/play experiences they'd like and acts on their requests".

The childminder was using 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare' to self evaluate their service. Using this approach, alongside daily reflections of practice and children's experiences, time should be taken to evaluate improvements and document the impact of these. This would further support effective self evaluation and improvements within the service, improving outcomes for children and families.

Policies and procedures were in place which underpinned the service. We discussed reviewing these in line with best practice guidance to ensure parents were provided with up-to-date information. This would support children to have access to a quality service and experience care that is right for them.

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

The childminder was very 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 very strong attachments had been formed. The childminder's gentle approach contributed to children feeling safe and secure.

Children and their families benefited from a childminder who was very 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.

Parents told us they were welcomed into the service to discuss their child's care, play, and learning. One parent said, "If I need help or discuss something regarding my [child] I feel welcomed to come in and discuss, ask questions". Another parent said, "[The childminder] always operates an open door policy".

The childminder was aware of the importance of ensuring that they had the appropriate knowledge and skills to offer high quality care and experiences. They were currently undertaking a further qualification, a BA (Bachelor of Arts) in Childhood Practice. The childminder had engaged with a range of professional development opportunities supporting positive outcomes for children. For example, 'Supporting sensory behaviours' and 'Autism awareness'. The childminder kept a detailed record of training which helped them to evaluate any learning undertaken and identify future training needs.

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

Antibacterial hand wash should not be used with the children. This should be substituted by ordinary liquid hand wash instead.

Reference: National Care Standards, early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2: a safe environment; Standard 3: health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 16 November 2016.

Action taken since then

Infection prevention and control measures were very effective with regard to reducing the risk of infection spread. Effective handwashing procedures were in place, encouraging children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This supported good infection control measures.

This area for improvement has 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?	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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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