

Michelle's Little Explorers Child Minding

Kirkcaldy

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
18 October 2024

Service provided by:
Michelle Goodsir

Service provider number:
SP2023000131

Service no:
CS2023000206

About the service

Michelle's Little Explorers is provided by Michelle Goodsir, who operates a childminding service from the family home in Kirkcaldy. The service is very close to the local retail park and close to other amenities including green spaces, the local nursery and school. The service is delivered from the ground and upstairs floor of the family home and children have access to the lounge, kitchen/diner and one upstairs playroom and bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

The service was registered to provide care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the registration certificate. No overnight care will be provided.

About the inspection

This was a short notice, announced inspection, which took place on 17 October 2024 between 09:30 and 12:30 hours. We gave feedback to the childminder by telephone on 18 October 2024. 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
- intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we;

- spoke with one child using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- gathered feedback from seven parents/carers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The childminder had made a strong start to their service which was valued by families.
- Children were happy and secure as a result of the childminder's warm, friendly and caring approach.
- Children's learning was promoted well as a result of the quality interactions from the childminder.
- The childminder's continued learning and reflection on practice supported improvement and positive 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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.

Children's safety was supported as they were closely supervised at all times. Children were given reassurance during their play and given appropriate comfort with cuddles when needed. As a result, children were confident and had developed positive relationships. One parent told us "Michelle is a very nurturing, caring and friendly person. She has built strong relationships with my children in the time they have been in her care."

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as the childminder ensured systems were in place to manage medication and accidents. This meant information was quickly shared with families ensuring continuity of care.

Children experienced toileting and nappy changing that supported their privacy, health and hygiene. The childminder used all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), promoted independence and changed children out of view of others. This maintained children's dignity, built their self-help skills along with their understanding and control of their bodily functions.

Children were supported to manage their behaviour because the childminder had created a calm and nurturing environment and encouraged sharing, turn taking and respect for each other. We saw the childminder patiently but firmly giving explanations and praise as she encouraged the children to share and play together. The restorative approach taken to behaviour meant children's self-esteem was maintained and they were supported in understanding their emotions. We reminded the childminder to remove the reference to 'time out' in their policy as this was not a supportive approach and did not reflect practice seen.

Mealtimes allowed children to be sociable, creating a sense of belonging and opportunity to learn from each other and build relationships. They sat together at a suitably sized table and chairs which increased their comfort. Children's ability to have control was supported through their involvement in preparing the table and cutting the fruit. Snacks were provided which were healthy and nutritious and parents supported to provide healthy packed lunches. This encouraged children to develop healthy eating habits.

Quality indicator 1.3; Play and learning.

Children had influence over matters that affected them as the childminder used her observations and listened to them. Children's needs and interests were captured within weekly planning sheets which support provision of play experiences. We suggested the childminder could develop this to make it more child friendly and display it. Children would then become more actively engaged with it, such as through drawing or writing on it. This would allow children to see how their voice is recorded and valued in planning provision.

Personal planning was maintained which enabled the childminder to gather relevant information and meet children's needs. Daily diary information ensured that parents were fully informed about their child's day. Children's progress was recorded allowing the childminder to identify individual next steps and provide appropriate support enabling children to achieve. Conversations with parents contributed to shared approaches which were supporting children to be successful such as with potty learning for one child. One parent told us "Michelle chats with us informally daily but also takes time to share their personal plan and uses these discussions to enhance our children's experience".

Children's language, numeracy and problem solving skills were enhanced by the childminder's consistently positive interactions and effective questioning. The childminder role modelled mathematical language well whilst children stretched a 'slinky' spring like toy between them. Story telling and singing were daily activities promoting children's literacy and language. During other activities, children's thoughts were encouraged at all stages and they were encouraged to consider their own actions. This contributed to children developing their thinking and communication skills.

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

Children had access to a wide range of resources which were suited to their age and stage of development. Additional resources were stored at child level in the play room upstairs. This allowed children to see clearly what was available and make independent choices to control their play. We suggested how the childminder could further expand play materials for children by introducing 'loose parts play' materials both indoors and out. This would support gender equality, provide challenge across the age ranges and enhance children's creativity. Reference should be made to the 'loose parts play toolkit' available on the 'hub' section of our website.

Children's health and wellbeing was maintained because the childminder routinely cleaned the home and resources that children played with. The childminder followed exclusion guidance for common childhood ailments and promoted positive hand hygiene with children. These actions helped to minimise the spread of infection and keep children healthy.

Children were active and developing healthy attitudes towards exercise as they enjoyed daily outdoor play. This included play in the garden with physical play resources and daily outings to woodlands and parks. Photographs evidenced a breadth of activities and outings which contributed to children's enjoyment and physical wellbeing. One parent told us "Michelle provides many of the aspects of core provision within an early years setting including baking, games, outdoors, park visits etc".

Careful consideration of risks and appropriate actions taken within and outwith the home promoted children's safety. Equipment such as fire blankets and safety gates were in place, fire drills were regularly practiced and a daily risk check list was completed. These actions prevented children from suffering accidental harm. We encouraged the childminder to develop written risk assessments and provided some examples. Risk assessments should then be reviewed annually or when there are any changes.

The childminder evidenced that she had a very good understanding of confidentiality issues when storing, collecting and sharing information with parents. This ensured that each child's personal circumstances and information was kept private.

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 is led well

The childminder carried out ongoing critical reflection of the service and were able to describe their strengths and areas for improvement. They discussed how they planned to get children more involved in adding to their own folders and the planned introduction of a floor book. We discussed how the floor book could also support quality assurance by making reference to the quality indicators and Health and Social Care Standards. This reflection on provision enabled the childminder to plan and implement changes for continuous improvement supporting positive outcomes for children.

The childminder was making use of quality assurance tools such as the 'quality framework' and the 'self evaluation toolkit for childminders' to measure the quality of provision. This process enabled the childminder to enrich children's play and learning, build their own knowledge and give assurance to families.

Children and families had regular formal opportunities to give their views on the service. Questionnaires were issued following settling in and annually. These asked relevant questions to support full feedback. Following feedback from a child, the childminder had acted to improve gender balance in dressing up clothes, contributing to children's enjoyment. Parents told us "Michelle is reflective on experiences our children have and asks us if we feel anything needs developing, etc" and "The childminder is always happy to listen to any thing we need to discuss about our son's well being and how the service can provide that".

A very good range of policies held supported provision of a service which met children's needs and kept them safe. Policies were kept under review and were in line with current guidance and legislation. We asked the childminder to make some slight amendments to their policies on healthy eating and complaints.

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.

Children were happy and secure in the setting, as the childminder created an inclusive environment through their calm, kind, responsive and supportive approaches. Children enjoyed nurturing interactions through physical and verbal reassurance which resulted in children feeling loved and secure. Parents told us "Michelle has built a really positive relationship with my children" and "My child really enjoys his time with the childminder". One of the children told us "It's fun and she looks after me".

Children received quality care and support as the childminder drew on their skills and experience as a qualified childcare practitioner. They demonstrated a strong knowledge and understanding of child development and learning.

The childminder took her lead from the children she was caring for in helping to identify her training needs. For example, they spoke about looking into further training to meet the needs of babies and very young children. This learning would support children's specific needs.

The childminder regularly met up with other childminders which allowed them to share ideas and information. The conversations shared helped the childminder to remain abreast of current thinking and changes in practice.

The childminder demonstrated commitment to keeping their skills and knowledge up to date. Regular learning and development was carried out through reading relevant documents and accessing a wide range of online learning. Core training in first aid, child protection and food hygiene had been completed and supported children's health and wellbeing. This commitment to learning supported delivery of quality experiences and supported children's outcomes.

The childminder maintained a record of learning undertaken. We reminded them to also evidence its impact on children's experiences as part of ongoing quality assurance. This would support provision of high quality care and positive outcomes for children.

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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.