

Brodie, Stephanie Child Minding

Dunfermline

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
16 October 2024

Service provided by:
Stephanie Brodie

Service provider number:
SP2006962575

Service no:
CS2007145954

About the service

Stephanie Brodie provides a childminding service from the family home in the city of Dunfermline. The service is within easy walking distance of local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery and school and town centre. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home where children have access to the sitting room, lounge/diner and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden and supervised access to a large outdoor garden room.

The service was registered to provide care to a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection, which took place on 16 October 2024 between 11:30 and 13:15 hours. 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 minded child using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- gathered feedback from one parent/carer
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children continued to enjoy strong and nurturing relationships with the childminder promoting their self esteem and comfort within the setting.
- Children are fully involved in leading the direction of their play through consultation and planning of activities and experiences.
- Children's information should be regularly reviewed to support planning and to help children achieve.
- Quality assurance and self evaluation still needs to be developed to support continuous improvement.
- The childminder should access relevant training and development opportunities and familiarise themselves with best practice guidance to enhance 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?	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 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 experienced warm, nurturing interactions and care. They were happy and relaxed and had affectionate relationships with the childminder, who responded to them sensitively and respectfully. One child told us "I like coming and kind of feel part of the family". This meant that children felt safe and cared for in the setting.

Regular discussions with parents through social media applications and face to face chats enabled sharing of information, supporting children's continuity of care. The childminder sent photographs to families, enabling parents to feel involved in their child's day and discuss this with them.

The childminder was kind, caring and attentive to the needs of the children in her care. They demonstrated that they knew children well, including their personal traits and interests. Children's requests were responded to and they were given praise and encouragement during their play, such as when trying to follow a YouTube session on how to draw. This built their self-esteem and confidence.

Information was gathered and included in personal plans, which were kept under review with parents/ carers once a term. These contained basic information such as contact details, medical and dietary information and personal preferences. This meant that up to date information was held which helped the childminder to meet the needs of children.

Mealtimes were relaxed and sociable. Children sat at the table to promote safe eating and were given choices. Snacks were healthy and nutritious, supporting children to build healthy relationships with food.

Children who required medication were supported through appropriate procedures in place. These included the safe storage, recording and administration of medication in line with a medication policy. This contributed to children's continued wellbeing.

Quality indicator 1.3; Play and learning

Children enjoyed a variety of activities which interested them and enabled them to achieve. The childminder actively listened to children and encouraged them to make suggestions about play experiences. A planning board enabled children to make suggestions and plan their week ahead. This supported children to feel valued and included.

Children were learning through their play as the childminder was skilled in posing appropriate questions, re-framing these to support children's understanding and encouraging problem solving. These interactions and the effective questioning was promoting children's language and mathematical development.

Children enjoyed regular opportunities to be physically active, as the childminder recognised the importance of outdoor play in supporting children's wellbeing. Experiences provided promoted children's physical wellbeing and develop confidence.

One child told us "we go swimming and go on dog walks and go to lots of places like Torryburn and Blair Adam forest". These outings enabled children to play independently, follow their own interests, and explore the natural environment. The childminder also made use of other facilities in the local and wider community such as libraries and the 'ceramic café'. This helped children to feel connected to their community.

The childminder held a good knowledge of children's individual needs and stage of development and confidently discussed this. They spoke about how they discuss with children what their next steps should be such as learning to tie shoelaces. However, there was no written information to capture children's experiences and learning along with next steps. A 'SHANARRI' sheet had been created to begin recording this and should now be progressed for all minded children. These should record children's ongoing development, progress and next steps. This would support planning to meet children's needs and promote positive outcomes for children. The area for improvement made at the previous inspection has been made again (see area for improvement 1)

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should now begin recording children's development and experiences along with next steps. They should share this information with parents and use it to plan for and meet children's needs and support them to achieve.

This is to ensure 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 were cared for in a well maintained environment, which was suitable for their needs as it was tidy, comfortable, ventilated, spacious and child friendly. Children moved freely between the dining room and living room for their play, enabling them to have choice and control over their time there. As well as the living room and dining room, an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play activities and a summer house were used for children's play.

The home and equipment was observed to be clean and all resources safe and appropriate for purpose. Children were aware of the importance of handwashing and needed little prompting. The childminder also followed recommended exclusion periods for common ailments. This reduced the risk of cross infection and helped to keep children safe and healthy.

Children were stimulated by the variety and choice of toys and activities available to them. They had easy access, supporting them to make independent choices whilst being offered and provided materials which were less readily available. Access to electronic, screen based technology and television was time limited and planned. This ensured children engaged with the variety of resources available and supported their interactions with each other.

The childminder held a good understanding of confidentiality issues when collecting and sharing information with parents. Information held was stored securely in a locked box. This contributed to children's personal circumstances and information remaining private.

The childminder continued to maintain close supervision of children and supported their understanding about how to keep themselves safe. They carried out visual checks on the home and garden daily to assess for any potential new risks. This helped to reduce children's risk of harm. Written risk assessments were held for outings, however, these had not yet been developed for the home and garden. We shared examples of these with the childminder to support them to develop them. The area for improvement made at the previous inspection has been made again (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should further develop written risk assessments on the home, garden and outings. These should demonstrate all potential hazards and the control measures and be reviewed annually or sooner if there is any new risk identified or any changes to the environment. This is to support provision of a safe environment for children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "My environment is secure and safe" (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality Indicator 3.1; Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had reflected on the feedback from the previous inspection and actively made some changes to support further improvement. This included reviewing personal plans, updating some policies and accessing relevant training. This enabled some improvements which enhanced outcomes for children.

The aims and objectives of the service had been reviewed and updated. These were now reflective of the current provision and provided a clear direction for the service as part of quality improvement.

The childminder was able to identify areas of strength and improvement in the service and demonstrated a desire to make positive changes. However, they remained unsure about how to implement formal quality assurance. They continued to use their observations of children and informal conversations with families as a benchmark for quality of care and support. We signposted the childminder to the 'Self evaluation toolkit for childminders' available on our website and discussed how to use our quality framework document to enable more formal reflection on provision. The childminder should also refer to the 'Health and Social Care Standards' and the 'Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare'. An action plan for improvement for the year ahead should also be developed to support ongoing planned improvements. The area for improvement made at the previous inspection has been made again (see area for improvement 1).

Children continued to be invited to give their views and opinions verbally, which provided them with some opportunities to influence improvement.

The childminder had developed questionnaires for families to gather formal feedback but had not yet issued these. We asked the childminder to further develop opportunities for children and families to give their views more formally and suggested other ways this could be done. These formal opportunities to give feedback would ensure provision could be tailored to meet the needs of children and families. The area for improvement made at the last inspection has been made again (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should put in place formal quality assurance systems and create an improvement plan for the year. This should be regularly reviewed and used to inform planning and development of the service. This is to enable children to benefit from a service that is focussed on improvement and committed to providing high quality care. To further improve outcomes for children, the childminder should also ensure they use relevant best practice documents and tools to inform and improve their practice. Using these to build current knowledge; consider what the service does well and what could be better. Useful documents and websites can be found at <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/>.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23) and "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

2. The childminder should develop ways to include parents and children in the development of the service. This could include questionnaires. Information received should be recorded and used to make positive changes. This is to improve practice and 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 am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve" (HSCS 4.8).

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

The childminder drew on their personal creative skills to enhance children's play and learning in the service. Their consistent, kind, caring and respectful approaches contributed to a welcoming ethos where children felt at home .

Children's wellbeing was promoted as the childminder had accessed core training in child protection and first aid. We asked the childminder to continue to identify and access relevant training to support their practice. We acknowledged their time restrictions due to other work commitments and encouraged them to access our YouTube channel, the 'Hub' section of our website and other sites. We reminded the childminder to maintain a log of learning and development to support reflection and improvement.

The childminder was beginning to access best practice guidance as they demonstrated a knowledge of a recent practice note. However, they were not yet working with other key documents such as the 'Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare'. The childminder should make reference to best practice documents to support learning and further improve outcomes for children. The area for improvement made at the last inspection has been made again (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should ensure they use relevant best practice documents and tools to inform and improve their practice. These should be used to build current knowledge, consider what the service does well and what could be better. Useful documents and websites can be found at <http://hub.careinspectorate.com>. This is to further improve outcomes for children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

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

To ensure up to date information is held, the childminder should review all personal plan information held on children, along with parents. These should be dated to ensure regular review. This should be carried out at least once every six months or sooner if there is any change in a child's health, welfare or safety needs.

This is to ensure 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).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Personal plan information had been reviewed and updated and regular updates maintained ensuring children's information was current. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's continued health and wellbeing, the childminder should ensure that the policy and practice for the administration of medication is reviewed and improved in line with the Health Guidance document, The Management of Medication in Day Care and Childminding Services, April. This is to ensure that all medicines are stored safely and recorded to promote children's safety and wellbeing.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

The medication policy had been revised and administration of medication now meets current guidance. Medicines are held securely in a locked box. This area for improvement is now met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support sharing of progress and planning to meet needs, the childminder should now begin recording children's development and experiences along with next steps. They should share this information with parents and use it to plan for and meet children's needs and support them to achieve.

This is to ensure 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).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

SHANARRI sheets had been developed in readiness to begin recording children's learning and development however these were not yet implemented and identifying and sharing of children's progress remained informal and verbal. This area for improvement is therefore not met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To support provision of a safe environment for children, the childminder should further develop written risk assessments on the home, garden and outings. These should demonstrate all potential hazards and the control measures and be reviewed annually or sooner if there is any new risk identified or any changes to the environment.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that "My environment is secure and safe" (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Some written risk assessments had been revised but were not yet fully identifying the risks and actions taken to reduce these. There were not yet written risk assessments for the home and garden. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

Previous area for improvement 5

To ensure the childminder provides a service in line with best practice and keeps children safe, protected and healthy, the childminder should review and update their policies and procedures to support them in their role and reflect current best practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

Many policies and procedures had been reviewed to reflect current best practice and guidance. The childminder was continuing to work through these on a rolling programme of review. We reminded them of some further changes needed. This area for improvement is therefore met.

Previous area for improvement 6

To improve practice and outcomes for children, the childminder should develop ways to include parents and children in the development of the service. This could include questionnaires. Information received should be recorded and used to make positive changes.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve" (HSCS 4.8).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not yet further developed ways to gather children and their families' views on the development of the service. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

Previous area for improvement 7

To enable children to benefit from a service that is focussed on improvement and committed to providing high quality care, the childminder should put in place formal quality assurance systems and create an improvement plan for the year. This should be regularly reviewed and used to inform planning and development of the service. To further improve outcomes for children, the childminder should also ensure they use relevant best practice documents and tools to inform and improve their practice. Using these to build current knowledge; consider what the service does well and what could be better. Useful documents and websites can be found at <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/>.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23) and "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

There was evidence of review of paperwork such as policies, personal plans and risk assessments and the childminder had been reflecting on actions required to make improvements following the previous inspection. However, the childminder had not yet fully developed robust quality assurance systems. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

Previous area for improvement 8

To support positive outcomes for children, the childminder should identify and access training and professional learning to develop their skills and knowledge. They should record learning and demonstrate ways in which it has improved experiences and 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, and are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had completed some training including updating child protection training which supported positive outcomes for children. There was still scope to build on knowledge and understanding through identifying and accessing other relevant learning and development opportunities. This area for improvement is therefore met with advice to continue to access learning opportunities.

Previous area for improvement 9

To further improve outcomes for children, the childminder should ensure they use relevant best practice documents and tools to inform and improve their practice. These should be used to build current knowledge, consider what the service does well and what could be better. Useful documents and websites can be found at <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/>.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that "I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 5 September 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder was beginning to access some relevant best practice materials to support their learning and development, however, this was still limited. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

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	5 - Very 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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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