

Elea's Little Sharks Childminding Service Child Minding

Dunfermline

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 November 2024

Service provided by:
Eleanor O'Rourke

Service provider number:
SP2021000221

Service no:
CS2021000350

About the service

Elea's Little Sharks Childminding Service is provided by Eleanor O'Rourke who operates a childminding service from the family home in Rosyth. The service is close to local amenities including green spaces and local shops and is a short distance to the local nursery and schools. The service is delivered from a second floor maisonette flat where children have access to the lounge, kitchen/diner and bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed shared 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 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.

Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the certificate. No overnight care will be provided. Eleanor O'Rourke must be physically present in the garden when it is being used for childminding purposes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 13 November 2024 between 09:45 and 12:45 hours. We provided feedback to the childminder on the same day. 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
- requested feedback from parents/carers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children continued to be supported to achieve through the childminder's supportive interactions in their play.
- Nurturing, warm interactions contributed to children feeling relaxed and at home in the setting.
- Self evaluation approaches still need to be developed to support continuous improvements.
- Learning and development opportunities should be increased, along with familiarisation of best practice documents to support the childminder's knowledge and understanding.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 continued to enjoy a home from home experience. Relationships with the childminder and their family members continued to contribute to children's feelings of security. The child present spoke about other members of the family with fondness. Physical comfort was given when children needed this, which supported their emotional wellbeing and feelings of comfort in the home.

Although lunches were mostly provided by parents, the childminder promoted some healthy eating through provision of a range of fruit. Encouraging children to access their water bottles throughout their play, helped them remain hydrated. This encouraged children to make some healthy food choices. We signposted the childminder to the newly updated document 'Setting the Table' to further reduce provision of high fat and sugar foods. The child present told us "We can have a treat called a Kinder". The childminder ensured children sat comfortably at the table to eat, which reduced risks of choking and sat with them to support their understanding of the social aspects of eating. This resulted in a relaxed mealtime experience for children.

Children's self-esteem continued to be enhanced through positive practices such as regular praise and encouragement during play, along with a restorative approach to behaviour. This built children's confidence and enabled them to label and learn how to manage their feelings.

Systems for the recording of medication and accidents were in place which supported children's continued wellbeing. Although there were no completed accidents forms to view, these were to hand to support timely recording and information sharing. Medication forms had been reviewed but still needed some further updating to ensure clarity on parents having given the first ever dose of medication. These need to be printed and ready for use when required, to ensure all relevant information and permission is gathered prior to administration.

Personal plans were held on children which gathered basic information relevant to their continued care and wellbeing. Some of these had not been reviewed by parents since August 2023. We reminded the childminder that these must be reviewed at least once every six months to support them in meeting children's individual needs and making contact in the event of an emergency (see area for improvement 1).

Quality indicator 1.3; Play and learning

Children were achieving due to the promotion of language, literacy and numeracy through conversations and interactions in their play. Lots of sharing of books with children supported their language development and love of stories. Also, discussions about promoting recognition of colours, shapes and sizes contributed to their understanding of early maths. The child present told us "my favourite book is the dragon one". Interactions during play supported the child to question and problem solve whilst extending their learning and understanding.

Children's interests were extended as the childminder was responsive to their requests for different resources and books. Use of resources in the community further extended children's play, with visits to the library and trips on the bus. Supervised outdoor play in the garden or local parks promoted physical strength and coordination on a daily basis. These outings provided further interest and variety for children throughout their time in the setting.

Children were able to influence provision by being given choices of toys, snacks and outings. This could now be further enhanced by techniques such as 'mind mapping' to further empower children. The childminder should now improve opportunities for consultation and participation by children across all aspects of their day to support their inclusion. Reference should be made to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children's individual progress was no longer being recorded within their personal plans. Additionally, information about specific individual needs such as or strategies for support had still not been recorded. The area for improvement made at the previous inspection has been made again and amended to include the need to regularly record children's progress and next steps. This is to enable the childminder to meet children's needs and interests and support their achievement (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should ensure that personal plan information is reviewed and updated with families at least once every six months or sooner if there is any change to a child's health and wellbeing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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).

2. The childminder should now develop personal plans to capture identified additional support needs. These should record strategies for support in place and be used to enable children to achieve. These should also include recording children's achievements and identify relevant and meaningful next steps. This information should be regularly reviewed and updated with parents to support children's progress.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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?

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 home and toys were clean and tidy, providing a comfortable and inviting environment for children. The childminder spoke about actions carried out to reduce the risk of cross infection which included promoting positive hand hygiene. The child present told us "I wash my hands when I go to the toilet and dine and and lunch and I even wash my hands for breakfast". Risk assessments were in place which identified potential harm and minimising actions. This all contributed to children's continued safety.

The varied range of toys and activities available both indoors and outdoors, supported children's skills in cooperation, imagination, curiosity and creativity. These resources met the needs and interests of the different children attending, were plentiful and in good condition. Some loose parts play materials were available in the garden and the home supporting children's imaginative play, which could be further developed. These contributed to children's positive play experience.

The childminder had a good understanding of confidentiality issues when collecting and sharing information with parents. Personal information was stored securely and the confidentiality policy provided parents with further information as how their child's personal information was protected. This ensured that each child's personal circumstances and information was kept private.

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 policies and procedures were up to date, ensuring the service reflected current national policy and best practice. These were shared with families, allowing them to assess the service and understand how their child's needs would be met in the setting.

The childminder was aware of the areas for improvement needed within the service alongside the strengths. They reflected on the children's contentment and their responsiveness to children's needs as a key strength. Motivation to address the administrative side of the business was identified as an area for improvement. This meant they had reflected how to make further improvement to improve outcomes for children.

Quality assurance continued to be informal and based on observations of children's emotional state and routine conversations with families. There remained scope to gather children's and families' views more formally. We again discussed how the childminder could formalise self-evaluation and develop quality assurance systems using the 'self-evaluation toolkit for childminders' available on our website. This, along with the bitesize video sessions online, would help build their confidence and understanding of what self-evaluation and quality assurance is. The childminder should make use of the 'quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' available on our hub to help them measure their provision. We suggested how creating a written improvement plan for the year ahead would support identification of areas for improvement and progress made. Developing a quality assurance system would enable planning for continuous improvement and support positive outcomes for children. (see area for improvement one).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should formalise quality assurance to support planning for continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children. This should include making use of the 'quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' and consideration of how to use views of parents and children to evaluate the service and make improvements. Development of action planning for the year to identify areas of strength and improvement should also be considered.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

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

Quality Indicator - 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values.

Children benefitted from the childminder's kind and gentle approach, as the minded child present clearly enjoyed spending time there. The childminder interacted well with the child as they chatted, laughed and had fun whilst playing. The nurturing approach helped to form strong attachments, supporting the child to feel respected, loved and secure.

The childminder had built trusting relationships with families. A flexible approach supported families' needs and regular communication via social media applications enabled children's continuity of care.

The childminder had accessed relevant child protection training and demonstrated knowledge of protection procedures to keep children safe. This contributed to children's continued protection and wellbeing.

No further learning and development opportunities had been accessed, although first aid training had been identified as a future priority. We acknowledged the childminder had some difficulty accessing a suitable course due to time restrictions as a result of another job. We asked the childminder to consider refreshing knowledge in other ways until a suitable course becomes available. This is to ensure children's wellbeing in the event of any accident or emergency. We again reminded the childminder of other avenues of learning and development such as webinars and bitesize videos on our YouTube channel. We also reminded them to familiarise themselves with the range of best practice notes and documents published. These should be used to support knowledge and enhance positive outcomes for children. The childminder should also maintain a reflective record of any training completed to demonstrate the impact of this on children's experiences (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should become familiar with the range of best practice documents available which can be accessed from the 'Hub' section of our website and be proactive in sourcing other avenues of training and development. This should include, but not be limited to child protection and first aid training. This will allow her to develop as a professional and make changes to meet the needs of the children in her care. Additionally, a reflective log of training and learning should be maintained and used to support improvements.

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

The childminder should now develop personal plans to capture identified additional support needs. These should record strategies for support in place and be used to enable children to achieve. This information should be regularly reviewed and updated with parents to support children's progress.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards 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 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder was able to talk about strategies for support for children with additional support needs. However, these were not yet being recorded within the personal plan. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children, the childminder should formalise quality assurance to support planning for improvement. This should include making use of the 'quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' and consideration of how to use views of parents and children to evaluate her service and make improvements. Development of action planning for the year to identify areas of strength and improvement should also be considered.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "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 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not yet developed any formal quality assurance processes and continued to take an informal approach to benchmarking the service. This area for improvement is therefore not met and has been made again.

Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should become familiar with the range of best practice documents available which can be accessed from the 'Hub' section of our website and be proactive in sourcing other avenues of training and development. This should include, but not be limited to child protection and first aid training. This will allow her to develop as a professional and make changes to meet the needs of the children in her care. Additionally, a reflective log of training and learning should be maintained and used to support improvements.

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 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not yet familiarised themselves with key best practice documents and other learning and development opportunities had been 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	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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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