

Isaac, Shirley Child Minding

Aberdeen

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 December 2024

Service provided by:
Shirley Isaac

Service provider number:
SP2003900920

Service no:
CS2003002274

About the service

Shirley Isaac is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 7 children at any one time up to 16 years of age:

of those 7, no more than 6 are under 12 years of age;

of those 6, no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school;

of those 3 no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is situated in a residential area in the coastal village of Balmedie, Aberdeenshire. The service is close to the local primary school, shops and other amenities. Children have access to the lounge, dining kitchen, bathroom and a fully enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 December 2024 between 08:45 and 12:15. 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, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. .

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children using the service
- Spoke with one parent
- Received four responses from parents to our online questionnaire
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care which helped them to feel valued, loved and secure.
- Children were happy and relaxed in the childminder's care.
- Children were engaged and having fun in their play.
- Children benefitted from a setting that was homely, comfortable and clean.
- Positive communication with families promoted continuity of care.
- Children benefitted from regular trips to local groups which supported their social development and learning.

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?	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?

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 and their families experienced a friendly and welcoming service. This helped build positive relationships and promoted good communication. Families told us they felt connected to the childminder, describing them as "extremely welcoming." One parent commented the childminder, "is really friendly, cares about the children and supports our family."

Children were happy and relaxed in the childminder's care. They had affectionate relationships with the childminder, who responded to them sensitively and respectfully. Cuddles, chatter and laughter helped children to feel secure, included and loved. One child described the childminder as "kind" and parents commented, "My children are always so happy to attend" and "My child feels very comfortable with the childminder."

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of the children. Personal plans were in place for each child. These were created in collaboration with families, identifying children's likes, preferences, health and care routines. This helped to promote continuity and consistency of care. Parents agreed they were fully involved in planning their child's care. One parent commented, "Daily discussions are always had about the care of the children and what they have been working on. Paperwork is discussed and targets made and it is clear (the childminder) knows the children's wellbeing and development inside out."

Mealtimes were relaxed and sociable experiences for children. They were given opportunities to develop their independence skills, for example, helping clean and set the table. The childminder sat with the minded child at lunch, helping to keep them safe from choking as well as supporting language and communication skills. Children were offered water to drink, ensuring they were kept hydrated and well.

Children were kept safe by effective medication systems and procedures. Whilst children did not currently need medication administered, paperwork was in place should it be required. A policy supported the childminder's understanding and practice and promoted parents' awareness of their process.

The childminder recognised the importance of rest and sleep for children's overall wellbeing. Children's individual sleep routines were supported by the childminder and were reflective of their families wishes as detailed within personal plans. Older children relaxed on the comfortable sofa. This ensured children had opportunities to rest and relax after a busy day at school.

Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children were engaged and having fun in their play. Easy access to a variety of toys, games and activities empowered them to make individual choices and lead their own play. The range of experiences available supported children's differing ages, interests and development. Children enjoyed playing with dolls, constructing with bricks and sensory play with sand. Older children told us when they were at the childminder's house, they liked to do arts and crafts and play games with their friends. Children took pride in

showing us Christmas decorations they had made and telling us about their detailed art work which illustrated how their creative skills had developed over time.

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. For example, some activities were planned to support development of children's early numeracy and gross motor skills. This meant that children were involved in play that was meaningful.

Parents told us that their child's development was supported through interesting and fun play experiences. One parent commented, "My child frequently comes home with crafts they've made." Another parent shared, (the childminder) "fills my child's day with so many experiences. It is evident from (my child's) excitement and enthusiasm for going that their needs are constantly being met."

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were embedded throughout the home and within children's experiences. A range of toys promoted children's skills and enhanced learning, such as, books, games and writing materials. The childminder's effective commentary and use of open-ended questions encouraged children to share their experiences and extended vocabulary. This helped them grow in confidence and supported them to reach their potential.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through connections to their wider community. This included regular use of local parks, sensory garden and nature walks. Children took part in music and physical play groups. This supported their social development and learning. Parents told us that they were happy that their children had the opportunity to experience these groups.

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.

Children were able to play and rest in a homely and welcoming environment. The living area provided ample space for children to play. Comfortable sofas provided a place to rest and relax and the dining table provided a space for play and meals. Children's artwork was displayed which helped them feel included and valued.

Children were offered a variety of play resources to support and develop their learning. Toys and games were age-appropriate and included a play kitchen, small world figures, sensory toys and construction kits. Children told us they liked playing with these resources. The childminder described using some natural open ended materials to enrich children's play experiences. This included real life kitchen utensils, bottle tops and cardboard boxes. These types of materials supported children's creativity and imagination.

Risk assessments and safety checks for the home and local community had been carried out. These documented potential risks and measures in place to support a safe environment. We discussed how the childminder could involve children further in risk assessing their own safety. This would support children's understanding of keeping themselves safe and well.

Children were cared for in a clean and tidy environment. Children were well supported to wash hands at key times such as before eating and after toileting. They were provided with individual hand towels to help prevent illness through cross-contamination. However, disposable gloves and apron were not worn during a

nappy change to help keep children safe and well. We discussed this with the childminder who agreed to action this.

Children and family's personal information was securely stored. This showed the childminder understood their responsibilities regarding storing and processing children's personal information.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder shared key information about the service with families. This included aims and objectives, policies and procedures. This helped families to understand what to expect from the service.

There was some potential for children and families to become involved in the service and influence change. Parents were welcomed into the childminder's home and encouraged to chat and share information. They told us they felt confident to speak with the childminder if they had any concerns. Photographs and messages kept parents well informed. This promoted working together to ensure the childminder met the needs of children and families.

Children were at ease in the childminder's company and older children were able to voice their opinions and views. They told us they enjoyed going to the childminder's. One child commented, "I like everything" and "there are fun games."

The childminder had started to self-evaluate their service identifying areas of strength and areas that could be further improved using, 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare.' Current improvements included the development of the garden area to support children's health and wellbeing. We suggested that recording and prioritising plans with timescales would support the childminder in promoting improvements in their service.

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.

The childminder was kind, enthusiastic and responsive in their approach, which enabled children to feel valued, happy and secure. The childminder joined in children's play and recognised the importance of making it fun. Parents told us they valued the childminder's support and flexibility. One parent commented, "They are more than a childminder, they treat my children with so much care and respect. They always go above and beyond to meet their needs."

The childminder had a clear understanding of how children developed and learned. They had substantial experience of providing a childminding service. The childminder held a relevant early years qualification, that supported their skills and knowledge and helped to enhance outcomes for children.

The childminder understood their role in relation to child protection and had attended recent safeguarding training. They could identify indicators that may suggest a child was at risk of harm and knew who to report concerns to. This contributed to keeping children safe and nurtured.

The childminder had kept their skills and knowledge up to date through attending training and reading guidance. They had accessed core training in first aid and food hygiene. The childminder had accessed training on promoting children's rights and developing early numeracy skills and this was evident in their interactions and play experiences for children. To identify further learning opportunities we suggested evaluating the impact training had on the service and outcomes for children.

The childminder was aware of the Care Inspectorate Hub and received provider updates from the organisation. Regularly accessing resources and best practice documents will help ensure good outcomes for children.

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 must further develop the personal plans to include all children in her care. Plans should be reviewed every six months, or sooner should needs change.

Reference: National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16.
Standard 3: health and wellbeing; standard 6: support and development.

This area for improvement was made on 21 March 2017.

Action taken since then

Each child had a personal plan in place which helped the childminder identify, support and monitor their wellbeing, development and learning. These were reviewed and updated regularly with parents to ensure that recorded information was current.

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?	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?	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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