

Katy's Kids Child Minding

Oban

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 November 2024

Service provided by:
Katy Pollock trading as Katy's Kids
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Service provider number:
SP2011981518

Service no:
CS2011281072

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 4 August 2011. The service provider is Katy Pollock trading as Katy's Kids.

Katy's Kids is a childminding service. The service operates from the childminder's home, located in a rural area close to Oban. The service is provided from a detached single storey house, with children having access to the ground floor and large fully enclosed garden.

Current registration allows the childminder:

To 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.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector, which took place on 13 November 2024. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Observed practice and daily life.
- Spoke with children using the service.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with the childminder.
- Sent questionnaires to parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

Key messages

- Children were experiencing very warm, nurturing care and support.
- The childminder's dedication and passion along with her skills, knowledge and expertise were supporting children to thrive and flourish.
- There was a strong focus on outdoor play and learning which children relished.
- The childminder communicated and engaged very well with families.
- The childminder's warmth, kindness and positive ethos of mutual trust and respect was promoting a very happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families.

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

We were able to see children experiencing very warm, caring and nurturing support. The childminder engaged skilfully with them to reassure and support their play, encouraging them to make choices, share and promote friendships. She knew children extremely well and had developed trusted and loving relationships with them through sensitive, nurturing interactions that supported their wellbeing and helped them feel valued, safe and secure. Children were happy and very settled in the service. They were relaxed and confident around the childminder and in the home from home environment. A parent commented on their child's behalf; "[The childminder] is always so friendly and caring and I feel very comfortable in her home. [My child] is always excited to go to [the childminder] each day." Another parent commented; "[The childminder] is amazing with [our child]. He/she loves playing outside in the garden with the mud kitchen and also going on walks."

Families provided packed lunches for their children. The childminder provided fruit as a healthy snack if needed. Children enjoyed a positive, relaxed lunchtime experience together where the childminder encouraged friendly social interactions, developing their communication skills and supporting children well with their independence.

The childminder was nurturing and respectful with children's personal care, inviting them to have their nappies changed and supporting them with sensitivity throughout the experience. The childminder explained sleep routines were tailored to children's individual needs and took account of parents' wishes, along with safe sleeping guidance.

Children's personal plans contained relevant core information. All about me and more about profiles gathered children's likes, dislikes, and interests in partnership with parents. An introductory meeting before they started was supporting the childminder to meet their health, welfare, and safety needs. Transition arrangements were also carefully planned and flexible based on children's needs.

Plans were tailored to children's individual needs with next steps linked to the developmental milestones and the (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included) SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. Children's plans were being regularly reviewed and updated in line with legislation. Parents told us; "We are often asked to complete and update forms about our child. We are also given excellent information and pictures at the end of each day that we can comment on and ask questions about if needed. We get to speak to [the childminder] each day and can discuss anything about our child needs." The childminder had plans to develop these further to include a record of the informal observations she was undertaking. This was to further support and identify children's next steps, any emerging or changing needs, and support strategies if needed.

The childminder communicated effectively with parents through conversations, daily discussions and digital technology to support children's wellbeing. Through discussion she explained the importance of working collaboratively when needed with other professionals and agencies that may be involved in a child's care and support. For example, the health visitor. Parents told us; "[Our child] has made such good progress, [the childminder] always communicates well with parents both at pick up and drop off and we love the individual posts about the children's day. She is approachable and support in our children's development goes above and beyond" and "[The childminder] keeps us well informed. She uses an individual page to report daily on our child when he/she attends her setting. She also provides us with more formal reports throughout the year. Through discussions with [the childminder] at drop off and pick ups we are also able to chat about what is happening and being worked on."

No children were being given medication at the time of the inspection. The childminder was regularly reviewing and updating her policy and procedures in line with current best practice guidance: "Management of Medication in daycare and childminding services" and confirmed she would continue to do this.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The childminder engaged with children in a sensitive, nurturing and respectful manner. Children were very happy, busy and having fun, engaging well with each other and the play and learning opportunities on offer. They had access to a wide range of age and stage appropriate toys and resources to support their play and learning both indoors and outside. Children were able to choose and freely access these resources supporting them to lead their own play. These experiences were being enhanced and enriched through connections with their own and the wider community. For example, when out walking and exploring in their local environment, on expeditions to the beach and visits to soft play. A parent commented; "We are always amazed at the variety of activities our child experiences. [The childminder] clearly puts a lot of time and effort into making sure the children in her care are engaged and learning through fun activities. There is a fantastic variety such as messy play, arts and crafts, sensory play, outdoor learning and also independent learning in a safe environment. [Our child] also gets to listen to stories and look at books on his/her own. He/she can explore the great variety of toys available in [the childminder's] home."

The childminder was supporting children very well to explore their ideas and build on their interests.

Informal planning approaches were child centred and responsive to children's individual needs and interests. For example, using observations to support the development of their natural curiosity, identifying next steps and progression in their play and learning. The childminder was considering ways to strengthen this further. For example, introducing interest/floor books to record children's developing skills and progress, gathering their ideas and interests and identifying possible lines of development and challenge. Parents commented; "My child's interests are taken into account with the activities that are planned. [The childminder] is excellent at taking our views and any worries on board and works with us to support our children" and "In the play room there is a wide range of toys and activities set up on tuff trays to explore interests and more focused tasks."

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 clean, comfortable and well ventilated with plenty of natural light. Children had their own dedicated space to play and areas with soft furnishings for relaxation and comfort. There was space for them to play together, relax or have time to themselves if they wished.

Children had access to an extensive range of suitable resources that were being regularly replenished, including natural, open ended and loose parts play materials. Children were able to make choices and select toys. Resources were accessible to children, providing opportunities for them to direct their own play and be independent. Children relished being outdoors and were able to free flow outside to a well equipped garden. A parent commented on their child's behalf; "There is always a great variety of activities and toys to keep me busy. I especially love that I get to go outside and play everyday. There is a great selection of outdoor toys and the space is fantastic". This was supporting children to explore, be curious and enjoy risky play, promoting their imagination, sense of wellbeing, wonder and adventure.

Measures were in place to support children to enjoy a wide range of experiences, with risk assessment being regularly reviewed, updated and shared with parents and children. A parent told us; "Our child always benefits from the safe and enjoyable environment that he/she consistently receives in [the childminder's care]. He/she is so well looked after and cared for whilst learning so much through the activities he/she experiences."

The childminder demonstrated good practice in infection prevention and control. For example, she modelled good hand hygiene and children were regularly reminded and supported to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before and after eating and coming in from outdoors.

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 are led well

The childminder was very welcoming and engaged well with the inspection process. She was committed to the ongoing improvement and development of her service to achieve the best outcomes she could for children and their families. She was taking a rights based approach through embedding children's rights to be safe, to play and be healthy into her everyday practice.

The childminder had developed a range of policies and procedures, and these were available to parents, so they knew what to expect from the service. The childminder was reviewing and updating these regularly to ensure they remained in line with current legislation and guidance.

The childminder was self-evaluating using our quality framework and the United Nations Rights of the Child principles. She regularly issued questionnaires to parents to seek their views and identify areas where she could improve. This was enhancing the service moving forward enabling the childminder to reflect on suggestions and make improvements where required. A parent told us; "We have never had any issues or concerns about the care our child receives. We cannot talk highly enough of [the childminder] and feel we are extremely lucky to have her looking after our child."

The childminder had a development plan in place, with achievable targets linked to best practice guidance. For example: "A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare", "Realising the ambition" and the "Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS)". This was supporting the childminder to reflect on what was working well in the service and what could be improved ensuring children and families continued to have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development of the service.

To ensure the service's certificate of registration is up to date, the childminder confirmed she would make a variation application to remove a condition of registration that is now time lapsed.

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's dedication and passion was supporting children to thrive and flourish. Her warmth, kindness and positive ethos of mutual trust and respect was promoting a very happy, secure and supportive environment for children and their families. She was nurturing in her care and had formed strong attachments with the children and their families. A parent commented; "We feel that we know [the childminder] very well. She always spends time having a chat each morning and at the end of the day. We have spent time in her home during visits and she is always available to answer any questions we may have. We have a very positive relationship with [the childminder] and feel like she cares for our child the way she would care for her own."

The childminder engaged with children in a responsive, and respectful manner which supported their self esteem and confidence. She promoted positive behaviour by role modelling kind words and friendly engagement with the children.

The childminder held a relevant qualification in childcare and kept herself well informed through her membership with The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). For example, she had recently undertaken training with them on children's right and participation which she was now finding invaluable in supporting positive outcomes for the children and their families. She was an experienced childminder who had built up her skills, knowledge and expertise over many years to support children to learn, develop and achieve their potential.

The childminder was committed to her continued professional development and regularly visited the Care Inspectorate "Hub" and the SSSC website, where she had access to best practice guidance and online training to further inform and enhance her practice. She had undertaken recent training in first aid and child protection, and was clear what to do and who to go to should she have any child protection concerns. The childminder demonstrated a very good knowledge and understanding of identifying and managing risk. A parent said "We are delighted with XXXX as our childminder. [Our child] adores her and is happy going to her which gives me peace of mind. She always priorities safety which is key for me and takes him/her on lovely trips. [Our child] loves being outside and [the childminder] always gets him/her out as much as possible."

As part of the ongoing evaluation and development of her service, the childminder intended to utilise a section on her SCMA portal to evaluate and record the impact of training on 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

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