

Park, Ilene Child Minding

Cowdenbeath

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 February 2025

Service provided by:
Ilene Park

Service provider number:
SP2012983497

Service no:
CS2012308059

About the service

Ilene Park operates a childminding service from their family home in Crossgates, Fife. They are registered to provide care to a maximum of six children under the age of 16, of whom, no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom, no more than one is less than 12 months old. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's household.

Children have access to a large living room, kitchen and ground floor toilet facilities. The service is close to local amenities, primary school and nursery, park, green spaces and can be reached by public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Friday 7 February 2025 between 09:15 and 11:15. Feedback was given following the inspection. 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 and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with one child using the service and observed their play
- received feedback from five families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- One child was attending during our visit. They were settled, relaxed and confident to explore.
- Children had formed positive attachments with the childminder that supported their emotional wellbeing.
- Children led their play from a selection of resources that were accessible.
- Children benefitted from regular opportunities to play in nature.
- Personal plans were in place and recorded what was important to children.
- The childminder should further develop self-evaluation processes to support continued improvements.

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

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|--|----------|
| How good is our care, play and learning? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our setting? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| 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 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 benefitted from the childminder's caring and fun approach. They enjoyed cuddles from the childminder which supported their emotional wellbeing, promoted positive attachments and a sense of security. Families commented: "We have a fantastic relationship with Ilene, she is caring and attentive, always ensuring my child feels cared for," "My children have developed a strong relationship with Ilene. It's lovely to see," and "Ilene caters well to our child's needs at all times." As a result, families had confidence in the childminder that supported trusting relationships.

Effective communication with families meant that the childminder worked in partnership with parents. This enabled the childminder to meet children's needs, resulting in positive and effective links between home and the service. The childminder updated parents daily on children's learning and achievements through chats and a messaging platform, giving parents a sense of how children had spent their day. Families told us "Ilene always keeps us up to date with any changes we need to be aware of and has fantastic communication skills" and "I sit and chat every time I pick my children up. Ilene will tell me all about their day and let me know any important information." As a result, families were informed about how their child has spent their time in the service.

Personal plans were in place and completed with detail. These included information about the child's preferences, routines, and development. Plans were reviewed every six months in line with guidance.

Snack time was led by the child's preference. This routine was relaxed and encouraged independent eating. Children had regular access to fresh drinking water to ensure they were hydrated. The childminder was aware of current guidance in relation to healthy food options and encouraged children to choose fruit from their packed lunch. This ensured they were developing an understanding of healthy foods to support their wellbeing.

The childminder now had a system in place for the safe recording and management of medication in line with guidance. They demonstrated an understanding of the actions they should take should medication be required to support children's health and wellbeing.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children had access to a variety of toys that promoted imaginative play and creativity. Younger children enjoyed creating with Lego and using the wheeled toys. The childminder provided drawing materials to promote children to create their ideas. Older children were able to make choices from the resource cupboard in the hall. As a result, they had fun exploring their favourite resources.

Play resources were age appropriate for children attending the service. The childminder knew the toys and activities that older children enjoyed and ensured these were always available. Children told us they liked to play with the Lego, go to the park and play with their friends. They described Ilene as "kind and helpful" and didn't want anything to change.

Play experiences promoted early numeracy and literacy development. Children had access to quality books and attended book bug sessions that fostered a love of stories and songs. The childminder engaged younger children in conversation, they repeated words and spoke with them about what they were doing. One family told us my son enjoys sitting on Ilene's knee reading and singing. As a result, language skills were promoted through everyday routines and fun experiences.

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 experienced an environment that was clean, comfortable and benefitted from natural light. They had access to a large living room, kitchen and ground floor toilet facilities. Offering space to move around and explore.

The childminder carried out regular risk assessments of the facilities. Families commented "Ilene has a warm and friendly environment and is always so welcoming, we feel at ease in the environment," "Ilene provides a safe environment, is friendly and caring to our son and he trusts her implicitly. We feel secure with our son in Ilene's care."

Resources were easily accessible to support child led play. They were age appropriate for children's stages of development and the childminder knew children's preferences. Resources were regularly changed to promote challenge and engagement. As a result, children were able to make independent choices.

Children benefitted from a service that promoted their health and wellbeing. Spaces and resources were clean. This minimised the risk of infection as children played. Children had access to the bathroom on the ground floor for handwashing and personal care. The childminder had reviewed their procedures for personal care and had personal protective equipment (PPE) in place. This reduced the risk of cross contamination.

Some risk assessments were in place that stated how potential risks to children would be managed when on trips and outings. We suggested the childminder now further develop risk assessments for wider experiences.

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

Children experienced a happy, welcoming environment that promoted a sense of security. They were supported to access their local environment regularly and this was reflective of the childminder's aims for the service.

The childminder had undertaken some informal self-evaluation through consultation with families.

They used questionnaires and discussions at drop off and pick up times to gather their views. Families told us "Ilene regularly asks for feedback and is keen to ask my child what activities they would like to do," "Ilene always asks our thoughts, feelings and opinions." As a result, families were involved in the life of the service.

The childminder identified training was needed to support with self-evaluation and had actively explored how to build on their knowledge and understanding. Regular evaluation of the service and the experiences offered to children should take place to identify how they are doing and used to inform a service development plan. We advised the childminder to refer to the Care Inspectorate's 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to provide effective structure around self-evaluation. This would enable children to continue to benefit from a service focussed on delivering high quality care and support that meets their individual needs. This area for improvement has been restated and will be reviewed at the next inspection. **(See 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection'.)**

The childminder had some policies in place to guide the provision of the service. Policies had been updated and demonstrated the childminder understood their responsibilities in delivering a service in line with guidance and best practice.

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 & values

Children benefitted from a range of experiences in the service. The childminder had built positive relationships with children and families which had created a warm and welcoming ethos. The childminder knew each child's individual needs and care routines. Many families had used the service for some time and children spoke about missing seeing the childminders children. This promoted a sense of children being part of the family. Families told us "I could not ask for a more wonderful childcare service, we feel privileged to have Ilene and know that our child is in a safe and caring environment and actively enjoys going," "I couldn't ask for a better childminder. They get to enjoy a home from home environment and are treated like family." As a result, trusting relationships supported positive outcomes for children.

A range of communication methods were used by the childminder to ensure parents were involved in their child's care. These included daily chats at drop off and pick up and sharing children's learning online. This ensured good links between home and the service which supported continuity of care.

The childminder had completed some training to enhance their practice. This included child protection and first aid. They identified ongoing training to support with self-evaluation through the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to deepen their knowledge and understanding. We encouraged the childminder to record future training, to support them to develop their own learning action plan. This would further support reflective practice and the ongoing development of their service.

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 children's safety and wellbeing the childminder should follow medication guidelines. This should include, but not limited to, obtaining written consent, recording clear instructions on when to administer medication and reviewing medication.

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 2 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder has implemented a system to record and manage medication should this be required. This will support them to meet children's health care needs. Progress had been made and this area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children's health, safety and wellbeing, the childminder should ensure risk assessments are developed. These should be clear, easily understood and reviewed regularly. Involving children in developing risk assessments and reviewing these will support a risk benefit approach and ensure they are implemented into practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.17).

This area for improvement was made on 2 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder carried out regular checks of spaces children accessed to ensure risk was identified and action taken to remove these. A risk assessment had been created for trips, detailing how they would promote children safety and wellbeing. We were confident progress had been made and this area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should establish robust infection prevention and control measures in line with guidance to prevent the risk of infection and cross contamination, especially when supporting personal care routines.

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 2 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had taken action to minimise any potential risk of cross contamination during personal care routines. They had implemented the use of personal protective equipment and these were easily accessible. We were confident progress had been made and this area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

The childminder should develop self-evaluation processes using best practice guidance. Developing a more formal approach that enables them to self-assess and evaluate the quality of the service will support improvements.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the health and social care standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having a robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 2 February 2024.

Action taken since then

Developing a more formal self evaluation process using best practice guidance had not been implemented. The childminder recognised further training was needed. **This area for improvement has been restated in key question 3 : How Good is our Leadership?**

Previous area for improvement 5

The childminder should gather the views of families and children regularly. This will help identify what is going well and what can be developed to support and improve outcomes for children and families.

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

This area for improvement was made on 2 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder gathered the views of families through questionnaires and daily discussions. They had implemented a system to carry this out throughout the year to support their improvements. We recognised progress had been made and this area for improvement had 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

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| 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? | 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? | 4 - Good |
| 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values | 4 - Good |

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