

Ward, Wendy Child Minding

Dunfermline

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
26 February 2025

Service provided by:
Wendy Ward

Service provider number:
SP2003904442

Service no:
CS2003007475

About the service

Wendy Ward operates a childminding service from their home in a residential area of Dalgety Bay, Fife. The childminder may provide care to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than six are under 12 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school, and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

The service offers children a dedicated playroom where they have access to a wide variety of activities. The living/dining room is adjacent to the playroom and offers them further space to eat, play and rest. Kitchen and toilet facilities are available on the same level. Outdoor space to the rear of the property offers children a safe and secure area to play and explore. The service is close to local amenities including parks, woodland areas, local nurseries and schools.

About the inspection

This was an announced (short notice) inspection which took place on 26 February 2025 between the hours of 09:45 and 12:00. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

This inspection was part of a pilot to test the 'Quality improvement framework for early learning and childcare sectors' developed jointly with Education Scotland. Because this inspection was part of a pilot, no new evaluations (grades) have been awarded.

During the inspection we:

- spoke with two children using the service
- received seven completed questionnaires
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm and consistent care.
- The childminder understood the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing.
- Positive, trusting relationships had been established with children and families.
- The child-centred approach meant children enjoyed fun activities appropriate for their needs and interests.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces

Quality Indicator – Children experience high quality spaces

Children benefitted from a welcoming, well maintained and homely environment. One family told us, "Wendy is a home from home for our child. She provides a warm and rich environment for them to thrive in. There are plenty of opportunities for them to be creative and play with others as well as opportunities for them to relax when needed."

The childminder had made very good use of available spaces to ensure children's needs and interests were responded to appropriately. The dedicated playroom provided a motivating space for children to play and learn. Children also used the living/dining room where they had space to eat, play and rest. The carefully considered layout supported children to lead their play and learning and gave them a strong message that they mattered.

Children's choice and independence was encouraged as they accessed a wide variety of toys, activities and books. The childminder had an understanding of the importance of promoting diversity and inclusion to ensure all children felt valued and included. This was evident in some of the resources available to children, such as small world resources and characters. As a result, children were developing their knowledge, respect and understanding of differences. To further extend children's play and learning opportunities, we discussed incorporating more open-ended, natural resources. This would further promote children's imagination and creativity.

The childminder had a very good understanding of the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. The garden area was fully enclosed and secure. All-weather surfaces, such as paving and artificial grass, meant that children could enjoy active, outdoor play throughout the year.

The childminder embraced a positive approach to children's risky play activities, where appropriate. Regular visits to the beach and woodland areas provided children with a broad range of interesting play opportunities. They had fun as they climbed trees, explored nature and extended their development and learning. As a result, children were learning skills for life and building confidence in their abilities.

The property was well maintained indoors and outdoors. Risk assessments ensured that children's safety was promoted as potential risks had been minimised. We discussed developing further detailed risk assessments and suggested ways in which children could be involved.

Effective infection prevention and control routines were in place. The childminder had attended a webinar relating to this. They demonstrated a clear understanding and confidence in providing a clean and safe environment. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at key times and effective cleaning procedures meant that the spread of infection was kept to a minimum.

The childminder understood the importance of keeping children's personal information secure and followed General Data Protection Regulations. They asked for permission before taking photographs and shared their policies with families using the service.

Children are supported to achieve

Quality Indicator - Nurturing care & support

The childminder had a very good understanding that positive, nurturing relationships were essential for children's growth and development. They were kind, respectful and responsive in their approach to meeting children's needs and requests. This meant children felt safe as they experienced warm and consistent care.

Positive relationships with children, their families and other childcare settings had been established. The childminder recognised the importance of smooth transitions for children. They promoted clear communication to support continuity of routines and minimise disruptions to children's care. As a result, children's wellbeing and individual needs were being met.

Children's routines were supported with lots of praise and encouragement. For example, as children were learning to use the toilet their independence, privacy and dignity were promoted through kind and sensitive interactions. The childminder also described how they supported children's sense of safety and security. They worked with families to ensure daily routines, such as nap times and personal care respected family wishes and preferences.

Mealtimes were not observed during the inspection. However, the childminder spoke knowledgeably about the benefits of everyone coming together to eat. They recognised the importance of sitting and eating with children to keep them safe as they ate. They also understood that a relaxed, unhurried mealtime provided a positive social experience and was a rich opportunity to promote close attachments.

Nutritious meals and snacks were provided by the childminder. They took children's dietary requirements and preferences into account as they planned their menus. We discussed ways to promote children's involvement in the planning and preparation of menus and mealtimes. This would enhance children's experiences further and encourage independence as they learned important life skills.

At the time of inspection, no children required medication. We were satisfied that appropriate procedures were in place to safely administer, record and share information with families when it was needed.

Personal plans for children had been developed by the childminder. Children and their families were meaningfully involved in providing, and regularly reviewing, key information to support continuity and children's progress.

The childminder knew children and families very well. They spoke knowledgeably about each child's individual strengths, needs and interests. Positive relationships with families and professionals had been

developed to ensure a child-centred approach for transitions. Important information in personal plans was used to support children's overall wellbeing and took account of wellbeing indicators.

All families agreed or strongly agreed that they have a strong connection with the childminder. They told us, "Wendy communicates well with us as parents and involves us in every step. Wendy knows our child very well as she takes the time to seek out their special interests." Another family said, "Wendy is very professional but friendly with it." This collaborative approach ensured care was responsive to children's unique needs and positively impacted on the quality of their experiences.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

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