

Care service inspection report

Carlin, Elaine

Child Minding

Glasgow

Inspected by: Aileen Quinn

Type of inspection: Announced (Short Notice)

Inspection completed on: 25 March 2013



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Service provided by:

Elaine Carlin

Service provider number:

SP2003902644

Care service number:

CS2003004666

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	4	Good
Quality of Environment	4	Good
Quality of Staffing	4	Good

What the service does well

Mrs Carlin had established very good relationships with families. Children and their parents/carers were comfortable in her home and happy to share information with her.

What the service could do better

Mrs Carlin should review her records and written policies to ensure they reflect the service provided. Risk assessments for the home should be recorded.

What the service has done since the last inspection

Mrs Carlin had continued to attend training relevant to her role.

Conclusion

Mrs Carlin provided a safe environment where children were happy. She provided care and support very well for children and their parents/carers.

Who did this inspection

Aileen Quinn

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

Requirements and recommendations.

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.

- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reforms (Scotland) Act 2010 and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Inspectorate.

Mrs Carlin is registered as a childminder to care for a maximum of six children including those in her own family. She is currently minding five children on various days and times over the week. Mrs Carlin provides the service from her family home in the Westerwood area of Cumbernauld. She uses the lower level of her home to care for children. The service is provided Monday to Friday flexibly to meet the needs of families.

Mrs Carlin aims to "Provide all children in my care a clean, safe, comfortable, caring, homelike environment where they can learn and play."

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 4 - Good

Quality of Environment - Grade 4 - Good

Quality of Staffing - Grade 4 - Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website

www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report after a short notice (same day) announced inspection that took place on Thursday 14 March 2013 between 3.30pm and 6.30pm. During this inspection we met with three minded children present and their parents/carers as they arrived to take them home.

As requested by us, Mrs Carlin sent us an annual return and completed a self assessment form. We issued five questionnaires to Mrs Carlin to give to families using her service and three of these were returned before the report was completed.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources including the relevant sections of policies, procedures and records, including:

- observing how Mrs Carlin worked with the children
- looking at information recorded about minded children
- attendance records
- insurance
- medication procedures
- accident records
- risk assessment procedures
- health and safety procedures
- infection control procedures
- behaviour management policy
- emergency procedures
- training records

and spoke to:

- three minded children
- three parents/carers.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

No recommendations were made at the last inspection.

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The self assessment had been completed to a satisfactory level. Mrs Carlin should use the form more effectively to review her service which would help her to make further improvements. We found that Mrs Carlin had a good understanding of how her service should develop, and that she had clear plans on how to achieve improvement. However, she had not reflected this in her self assessment.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Three minded children were present during our inspection. They enjoyed their time with Mrs Carlin and it was clear that very good relationships were in place. Children had good relationships with each other and were encouraged to respect each other.

Taking carers' views into account

We spoke briefly to three parents/carers as they arrived to take their children home. We also received three questionnaires from parents/carers using the service. All feedback we received was positive and no concerns were raised. Parents/carers indicated that they and their child had a positive relationship with Mrs Carlin. Comments included, "Elaine provides a safe, fun and learning environment", and "I have no issues or concerns and am extremely happy with the service provided." The views of parents/carers are included in this report.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

I ensure that parents and families participate in assessing and improving the quality of care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

We found the service performed to a good level in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after speaking to Mrs Carlin and taking account of information in our questionnaires.

Mrs Carlin advised us that she regularly gave parents/carers opportunities to discuss their child's care and support. She also advised us that children were able to make suggestions for new equipment, and activities and outings. We saw that Mrs Carlin consulted with children during our inspection.

Parents/carers who completed our questionnaires indicated that Mrs Carlin had involved them and their child in developing the service. They also indicated that Mrs Carlin asked for their child's views about activities and used these to plan future activities, and that she listened to and acted upon their views about their child's development. Comments included, "I have no issues or concerns and am extremely happy with the service provided."

Although there were no formal written evaluations of the service, feedback from parents/carers after the inspection was very supportive of Mrs Carlin. They gave us very good examples of where Mrs Carlin had provided them with opportunities to assess care and support in her service, and told us that she was responsive to the needs of their child and them. One parent/carer wrote, "I appreciate that paperwork is necessary but I do believe that Elaine communicates very well with the kids and parents and keeps everyone up to date on a daily basis", and "I have regular discussions with my childminder on the service provided and which activities I believe

my son would enjoy. My childminder is receptive to feedback and has adapted her service to accommodate this."

Overall, we assessed this statement as good.

Areas for improvement

Mrs Carlin was not using any formal methods to evaluate her service. This meant that it was difficult to assess how parents/carers and children had impacted on the quality of the service provided. We were dependent on feedback from parents/carers to evidence this statement and have advised Mrs Carlin that her service would be improved through the use of written evaluations or records of discussions with parents/carers and children. (see recommendation 1)

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. Mrs Carlin should ensure that parents/carers and children have regular formal opportunities to assess and improve the quality of all aspects of her service. Where suggestions for improvement have been made, the action taken should be recorded and feedback about this given to parents/carers and children.

NCS Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 13: Improving the service.

Statement 3

I gather information about the child and their needs.

Service strengths

We found the service performed well in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after looking at information recorded about minded children and talking to Mrs Carlin about how this impacted on the service provided.

Mrs Carlin provided a settling-in period and meetings to allow parents/carers to share information about their child before they started her service. She provided contracts for parents/carers to ensure there was agreement about the way the service was provided. Children's enrolment forms provided Mrs Carlin with emergency contact information as well as health and care routine information. Parents/carers were encouraged to provide additional information about their child's daily routines, and likes and dislikes. Consents for activities and outings were in place for all children. This information helped Mrs Carlin plan their care and support in her service.

Mrs Carlin was currently setting up an electronic communication system to allow parents/carers to update their information more easily. She was using this to record children's daily attendance and advised us that she was finding this very effective and reliable.

We saw that Mrs Carlin knew children very well and responded to their needs appropriately. We saw that as parents/carers arrived to collect their children there was very good interaction between them and Mrs Carlin.

Parents/carers who completed our questionnaires indicated that they had been able to visit the service before starting, and that Mrs Carlin took account of their child's needs. They also indicated that Mrs Carlin monitored their child's development and used that information to plan their care. Parents/carers indicated that they were confident that Mrs Carlin would deal effectively with any concern or complaint they made about the service. Comments included, "I am lucky to have such a great support for (my child) and also myself."

Overall, we assessed this statement as good.

Areas for improvement

Enrolment forms did not reflect equality as they referred to "Mother's Name" and "Father's Name" rather than, for example, parent/carers. Mrs Carlin agreed to amend the forms for any future children or when she reviews the information with children currently attending her service.

We discussed personal plans with Mrs Carlin and the requirement relating to these. Mrs Carlin is now aware that she must put in place a personal plan for each child that sets out how she will meet their health, welfare and safety needs, and that the plan must be agreed with parents/carers and reviewed with them at least every six months. Mrs Carlin agreed to further develop the information currently in place to ensure she meets this requirement.

Although Mrs Carlin gathered information about children's likes and dislikes, she did not have updated written information about how children could be comforted and reassured through any fears. This should be addressed through the personal plans when in place.

It was not clear that information about minded children was reviewed regularly. For example, some children had been attending since they were babies and although they now attended school, the information recorded about them remained the same. This should be addressed through the personal plans when in place.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

I ensure that parents and families participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths

Please see Quality Theme 1, Statement 1.

Areas for improvement

Please see Quality Theme 1, Statement 1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 2

My home is safe, hygienic, smoke free, clean and tidy for children using the service.

Service strengths

We found the service performed well in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after looking at the environment and safety records relating to it.

Mrs Carlin used the lower level of her home for childminding. The lounge was the main play area and provided children with space to play games, use construction, and read books. The lounge was furnished comfortably and was bright and welcoming. The dining/kitchen was used for arts and crafts activities, and when eating snacks and lunches. A door leading to the enclosed garden was accessed through the kitchen. The garden provided additional play space for children. A small toilet was on the lower level which meant that children could easily and independently access it when needed.

Mrs Carlin had developed house rules to help children learn about respect and care for each other and toys and equipment in the house. We spoke to children about these. They had a good understanding of the rules and we saw that they shared very well, and were caring towards each other. Children told us that Mrs Carlin taught them

about road and car safety, and that she encouraged them to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating, and after touching the pets. Mrs Carlin had policies in place that detailed the care and attention needed when handling pets and animals.

Mrs Carlin had developed a procedure to follow in the event that a child was absent from her service without notice. This included contacting the emergency contacts on the enrolment forms, and also social work if she became concerned for the child's welfare. Clear emergency procedures were also in place which set out how she would manage accidents and hospital visits.

Mrs Carlin had attended a range of training to help her keep her environment safe. She had completed an SVQ level three in Early Years Care and Education in 2006, and since then had completed training in food hygiene, infection control, first aid, outdoor play, and respect. Mrs Carlin had a range of resources that had supported her training and used these as prompts when planning for children's learning.

We saw that children enjoyed using the space available. They said that they enjoyed coming to Mrs Carlin's house as, "We get to play with the toys and we can make a den". Parents/carers who completed our questionnaires indicated that they were happy with the environment. They indicated that the house was safe and secure, and that a suitable range of equipment was available. Comments included, "Elaine provides (my child) with a safe, fun and learning environment to help him develop."

Overall, we assessed this statement as good.

Areas for improvement

Although Mrs Carlin had written procedures in place about risk assessing activities and her home, she had not recorded any risk assessments about her home. We provided Mrs Carlin with guidance to help her with this process. (see recommendation 1)

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. Mrs Carlin should carry out and record a risk assessment for her home, garden and use of the car. This should be reviewed annually and/or when any changes take place. Risk assessments for outings should also be recorded.

NCS Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, standard 2: A safe environment.

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

I ensure that parents and families participate in assessing and improving the quality of the service.

Service strengths

Please see Quality Theme 1, Statement 1.

Areas for improvement

Please see Quality Theme 1, Statement 1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of recommendations: 0

Number of requirements: 0

Statement 2

I understand my role and responsibilities in relation to child protection and provide a service that promotes the health, nutrition and safety of the children in my care.

Service strengths

We found the service performed well in the areas covered by this statement. We concluded this after speaking to Mrs Carling, looking at training records, and policies and procedures in place to keep children safe.

Mrs Carlin talked to us about her understanding of child protection. She had regularly attended training on this subject, and had updated her training in 2012. Mrs Carlin had developed detailed recording forms should she ever have a child protection concern, and had a clear policy for parents/carers to help them understand her responsibilities. Mrs Carlin regularly researched the Internet for guidance and provided parents/carers with useful website addresses to support them through loss or change.

Mrs Carlin had attended training on respect which helped her talk to children about bullying. Children we talked to knew that bullying was not acceptable. A policy on behaviour management was in place and gave parents/carers examples of strategies

that could be used to help children through any periods of unsettled behaviour. Parents/carers who responded to our questionnaires indicated that Mrs Carlin dealt with difficult behaviour in a caring and sensitive manner.

Clear procedures were in place for nappy changing and other aspects of personal care. Mrs Carlin used the current guidance available to keep her home safe. She had accessed recent guidance on nutrition and used that when planning children's snacks and drinks. Mrs Carlin's policy on food and nutrition provided links to useful website addresses to help parents/carers plan healthy meals for their children.

Mrs Carlin had developed a policy on infection control including exclusion periods for infectious illnesses. She shared this with parents/carers to help maintain good health in her service. Mrs Carlin encouraged children to walk to and from school where possible and made sure there was regular access to fresh air. Although her garden was safe and secure, Mrs Carlin often used the bigger spaces of local parks to allow children to take part in energetic physical play. One parent/carer wrote in our questionnaire, "The childminder gets my (child) out into the community in activities such as walks in the park/woodland trails, trips to the soft play and cafes etc where (child) gets to mix with other children and enjoy outdoor exercise." Mrs Carlin had completed training in Drama which helped her support children in their communication, as well as Inclusion to give her a better understanding of the importance of working in partnership with families.

Children we talked to said that they felt safe with Mrs Carlin. They trusted her and felt comfortable with her. They said, "We have walks every day. Sometimes we walk to school", and "She's a good childminder." Parents/carers who completed our questionnaires indicated that Mrs Carlin provided a range of activities, and that she was responsive to children's needs. They also indicated that they were confident that Mrs Carlin would protect their child from harm. Comments included, "She has been a huge help to me during a very difficult family time", and "I believe she cares for the children as individuals and my (child) has a great relationship with her."

Overall, we assessed this statement as good.

Areas for improvement

There was very little written evidence about how Mrs Carlin planned for and met children's individual needs, including how the children and their parent/carer had been involved in this process. When personal plans have been developed for each child, how Mrs Carlin meets their needs as individuals should be clearer.

We discussed the importance of reviewing policies, procedures and records regularly with Mrs Carlin who agreed that she would review her paperwork to ensure it evidenced her practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

4 Other information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

None.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	4 - Good
Statement 3	4 - Good
Quality of Environment - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	4 - Good
Statement 2	4 - Good
Quality of Staffing - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	4 - Good
Statement 2	4 - Good

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
28 Jan 2010	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership Not Assessed
14 May 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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