

Annual Inspection Report 2023-2024

Nicola Alstead

Childminder

22 May 2023

**Under the Regulation of Care Act 2013 and
Regulation of Care (Care Services) Regulations**



DHSC

We carried out this inspection under Part 4 of the Regulation of Care Act 2013 (the Act) as part of our regulatory functions. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements, regulations and standards associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service.

We carried out this announced inspection on 22 May 2023. The inspection was led by an inspector from the Registration and Inspection team.

Service and service type

Nicola Alstead provides 'childminding' for one or more children under 8 years old by a person at a private dwelling for reward and for more than a total of 2 hours in the same day.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

To get to the heart of people's experiences of care and treatment, we always ask the following five questions:

- Is it safe?
- Is it effective?
- Is it caring?
- Is it responsive to people's needs?
- Is it well-led?

These questions form the framework for the areas we look at during the inspection.

Our key findings

Nicola was observed to be caring and compassionate with the children. She understood their individual needs, abilities, likes and dislikes.

Policies and procedures along with risk assessments supported the care she provided.

The environment was homely, warm, calm and welcoming.

The following are comments from parents

My **** loved Nicola. **** build a great relationship with her. Nicola took time to understand **** needs and helped build up **** vocabulary massively. Her calm and relaxed approach worked wonders with **** and **** never once hesitated to walk straight into Nicolas house each morning at drop off.

About the service

Nicola must not look after more than 4 (four) children at any one time under the age of 8 (eight) years, including the childminder's own children

Of these 4 (four) children:

No more than 2 (two) children must be under the age of 1 (one) year

No more than 3 (three) children must be under the age of 5 (five) years

Nicola lives in Onchan and had been a registered childminder for approximately 18 (eighteen) years. Rooms used for childminding services are located on the ground level. She uses her car to transport children as well as walking on outings.

Notice of Inspection

This announced inspection was part of our annual inspection programme which took place between April 2023 and March 2024.

Inspection activity started on 10 April 2023. We visited the location's office/service on 22 May 2023.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we received about the service since the last inspection. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR), notifications, complaints/compliments and any safeguarding issues.

Feedback was sourced via email from four families who use the service. One response was received.

During the inspection

We used an observational framework for inspection, this is a way of observing care to help us understand the experience of people/children.

C1 Is the service safe?

Our findings:

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm. The service does not require any improvements in this area.

This service was found to be safe.

Prevention and control of infection

Nicola had risk assessed her practice and put in place appropriate action to prevent and control infection.

Parents are requested to provide their child with a packed lunch in a suitable container with an ice pack. This eliminates her having to store the food in her fridge and record daily fridge temperatures.

We discussed her routine for cleaning the premises and toys. Nicola stated that she ensure the premises are cleaned prior to the children arriving and wipes surfaces during the day and once children have gone home. She said that she 'spray' cleans toys with a bacterial spray daily, material/soft toys were washed weekly and that all toys receive a thorough deep clean monthly. The inspected observed that the premises, equipment and toys were all in a clean condition.

Nicola has a policy regarding 'exclusion of a child with an infectious' illness. This is provided to prospective parents along with a contract.

Nicola was aware of good hygiene practices with the children and stated that she ensured children's hands were cleaned prior and after eating meals/ snacks.

Inspection Findings

C2 Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people’s care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence. The service does not require any improvements in this area.

This service was found to be effective.

Children’s care and development needs are assessed, supported and promoted

Nicola informed us that prior to a child starting at her setting, she would have an introductory meeting with parents. At this time she would outline the services that she provides and what she expects parents to provide for their child, for example a packed lunch. Parents have an opportunity to discuss the individual needs of their child and any concerns they may have.

Parents were requested to complete a ‘record of information’ about their child that enables Nicola to provide the appropriate care. She had a daily record sheet that she provided to parents that informed them of their child’s; food/drink intake, naps, nappy changes and ‘what I did today’. This enables Nicola to provide information for parents and to record the child’s progress and development.

Nicola stated that she is aware of ‘developmental milestones’ for children and discusses any concerns parents have with them.

Inspection Findings

C3 Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect. The service does not require any improvements in this area.

This service was found to be caring.

Ensuring children are being treated with kindness, respect and compassion, and are given emotional support when needed.

There were three young children present during the inspection. We observed Nicola to treat each child with kindness and compassion. One of the children was upset when the doorbell rang twice and Nicola was able to provide comfort and reassurance to the child which settled the child quickly. She was able to tell us of the individual needs of each child and their likes and dislikes.

All of the children appeared to be comfortable and happy with Nicola. They choose to sit on her lap for comfort and the interaction was positive and caring.

Maintaining children's privacy, dignity and independence respected.

We discussed the routine for intimate care, such as changing a child's nappy. Nicola described how she would use the corner of the room where the children play as she had risk assessed this to be the best place so that she was in visual contact of all the children. She stated that she would use her body as a barrier to provide privacy and dignity to the child. Soiled nappies were then placed in a bag and disposed of appropriately.

Nicola gave an example of encouraging and developing children's independence at meal times. She said she would give the child a spoon to hold and encourage them to use it whilst continuing to feed the child herself. Small steps to developing skills.

Policies and procedures included Confidentiality and the storage of records. Children's records were locked in a secure setting.

Inspection Findings

C4 Is the service responsive?

Our findings:

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people’s needs. The service does not require any improvements in this area.

This service was found to be responsive.

Delivering personalised care

Parents were requested to complete a record of information about their child to provide information to support and identify individual needs for each child. This information provides details of parental culture and beliefs and enables Nicola to plan activities to support them. An example given was that Nicola chose the location and premises that ‘mums and tots’ groups were held and choose appropriately.

Nicola talked about how she planned activities for the children and how she assessed if she could access premises with prams and the number of children and their abilities that she had on each day. Plans were flexible should circumstances change for example weather conditions.

A daily record of the child’s activities as previously described was given to parents.