

Inspection Report & 2023-2024

Michelle Croft

Childminder

30th August 2023

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



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 30th August 2023 The inspection was led by an inspector from the Registration and Inspection team.

Service and service type

Michelle Croft 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

The property is a two storey building with minding taking place on the ground floor in a light bright and airy lounge /diner. The children don't have access to the kitchen, the door of which is kept shut when children are present. There is direct access to the secure back garden which the children also use.

The area is secure, well laid out to encourage activities and toys are readily available for the children to choose from.

All areas were well presented, in good repair and appeared clean.

The children present appeared to be happy and comfortable in the setting. The children remained the focus of the minder throughout the visit and they were encouraged to interact with each other and to choose their activities. The interactions observed between the minder and the children were appropriate for their age.

Michelle has a learning through play approach which encourages learning and development through play. She was aware of the children's development needs and has clear observation records which show the development on each child.

Michelle had comprehensive records for each child, she was organised and had systems in place to support the provision of her service.

The following are comments from parents

"Michelle is an experienced and effective childminder who has fostered an excellent relationship with our eldest child and we are certain that the same will be true for our youngest child too. She has excellent communication, has never let us down and has been flexible when needed. There is rarely a day that the children are not out and about around the village and she has created a home from home environment where we feel like an extended part of the family."

"Michelle's strengths are building relationships, communicating with parents and really caring about the children she works with"

"Michelle has a very warm character and is great with the children. [...] always eats and naps well at Michelle's and sometimes doesn't want to come home when I pick her up!"

"They always get out for an activity and Michelle has a great selection of toys and activities for the kids to play with at the house."

"Before our [child] started we met with Michelle and she answered all of our questions. She was thorough with her questions about [them]and [their] needs, and we have regular chats at pick up or drop off. She's fantastic."

"she is so caring and helpful."

"We couldn't be happier with the care Michelle provides to our [child]. She is friendly, organized, communicates well, and you can tell she absolutely loves her job. She's a gem".

About the service

Michelle 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

Michelle lives in Port Erin and has been a registered childminder for many years. The areas of the premises used for childminding is a secure light bright and airy lounge /diner. The children also have use of the back garden.

Activities are varied and planned on a daily basis. For activities outside of the home the childminder will walk or transport the children using public transport.

Notice of Inspection

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

Inspection activity started on 11th July 2023. We visited the service on 30th August 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.

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.

After the inspection

Feedback was given to Michelle

SECTION C Inspection Findings

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 require improvements in this area.

This service was found to be safe.

Prevention and control of infection

Michelle has procedures in place to ensure that all resources, toys and the premises were inspected and cleaned on a daily basis. Toys are wiped down daily and washed where possible weekly. There are currently no records made of these checks.

All areas utilised by the children were clean, bright, secure, fit for purpose and in good repair. Michelle has adopted a drop off/collection from the front door of the property to reduce possibility of infection.

All children had their own lunch bags/boxes provided by the parents which contained individual ice packs and were kept on a shelf in the kitchen. Michelle has completed her Food safety training and is registered with DEFA.

There is an exclusion policy in place regarding illness.

Assessing Risk, Safety monitoring and management

Risk assessments were in place but were minimal in content. They need to be revised in a new format to reflect current practices. They need to be dated on completion and reviewed regularly.

There is a Health and Hygiene policy in place covering handwashing and hygiene which had been reviewed in March 2023.

There is a Medication policy in place, however this needed reviewing, signing and dating.

Safeguarding training was up to date but there was no evidence of a definitive safeguarding policy in place.

All equipment was PAT tested with a certificate of compliance available.

All records were stored securely.

Action we require the provider to take

Key areas for improvement:

- Risk Assessment Documents need to be redone using a format which reflects current risk assessment practices. These need to be dated on completion with a review date noted.

- The medication policy needs to be reviewed and dated
- A safeguarding policy needs to be completed to reflect the guidance and requirements of the Isle of Man Safeguarding Board.
- Evidence of daily cleaning and other safety checks made should be recorded.

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

Michelle promotes a learning through play environment. She uses observations of the children to assess their development and records these in their personal files. If there are concerns she would raise this with the parents of the child; parental feedback received confirms this. She uses her knowledge of child development to the benefit of the children in her care. She promotes and observes development in the following areas; motor-skills, learning, socialisation and self-help.

Michelle has a daily diary in which she records observations on the child’s development and daily notes about the child.

Various activities may be planned for the day depending on the needs and ages of the children and the weather. The children are encouraged to have a choice in what they are going to do with choices being offered. During the inspection the children were asked what they wanted to do later in the day, it appeared that the children were listened to and their choices taken into account.

Michelle allows the children to attend trial sessions before they are minded. She also discusses with parents regarding the children’s preferences and will adapt and personalise activities to the individual needs and preferences of the children.

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 require 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.

Information from parents re likes /dislikes and preferences are on the children's records. This is gathered from the parents during the taster sessions which takes place before the child starts. During daily handover and collection any changes are discussed and noted. Parental feedback confirmed that Michelle stays up to date with the children's needs via effective communication with the parents.

During the inspection Michelle was interacting, observing and engaging with the children continually. There was lots of positive praise and encouragement used as well as gentle correction when required. She ensured that the activities were age appropriate for the children present.

During the inspection the children were able to choose their toys and activities in an informal way. There was a wide selection of appropriate toys and resources available from which the child could choose. The children responded well and appeared to be comfortable in their choice of activity.

The children responded well to the minder. The minder took time to listen to the children and answer appropriately

Maintaining children's privacy, dignity and independence respected.

During the visit the children were observed being encouraged to play freely and to choose the toys and books they wanted to use

Parents have access to the confidentiality statement which forms part of the initial contract. However a separate Confidentiality Policy needs to be completed. The childminder is currently in the process of registering under data protection. All records are stored securely. Consents and permissions are in the initial contract signed by the parents.

Action we require the provider to take

Key areas for improvement:

- Michelle needs to complete her data protection registration.
- A confidentiality policy needs to be written, this should be dated, with clear review dates.

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

Records were held for each child including diary notes for daily activities which were shared with the parents when they collected their child. These show activities and routine information such as sleeps, food and nappy changes.

Activities are planned daily with the children dependent on the children present and the weather. Lots of activities involved using public transport or walking and included Port St Mary on the bus to go to the beach and the use of local public parks.

During the visit they discussed what they were going to do later that day, the children were able were able to help choose. The children were fully involved during the inspection in choosing the activities they wanted to do.

There are some toys, books and activities which reflect inclusion being promoted. There are non gender specific toys in the setting.

If areas of improvement have been identified the provider will be required to produce an action plan detailing how the areas of improvement will be rectified within the timescales identified. The R&I team will follow up and monitor any actions undertaken.