

# Inspection Report 2023-2024

## Samantha Comaish-Coole

Childminder

10<sup>th</sup> October 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 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The inspection was led by an inspector from the Registration and Inspection team.

### **Service and service type**

Samantha Comaish-Coole 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 setting is in a converted annex on the ground floor which provides a purpose built light and bright, fit for purpose childminding area. There is direct access to a secure, child friendly garden which the children use when the weather permits. Safety gates are in use throughout the rest of the house to prevent access to other areas.

The play area is well laid out to encourage activities, there is a wide range of toys which are readily available in organised storage boxes for the children to choose from.

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

The child who was present during the inspection appeared to be happy and well settled. They remained the focus of the minder throughout the visit and they were encouraged to choose their activities. The interaction observed between the minder and the child was appropriate. Samantha employs a care, learning, play approach which encourages learning and development through play. She was aware of the children's development needs and observation records which show the development on each child.

Samantha kept good records, she was well organised and had appropriate systems in place to support the provision of her service.

### **The following are comments from parents**

"Sam provides a loving caring environment the house is full of Toys, books, games etc The children have use of a private garden all year round. She takes them out daily so their social

skills are fabulous. They are always doing new things and she communicates with us in a daily basis."

"My children love going to Sam's they have developed so much in her care. We are very lucky to have her look after our children."

"We are given daily updates via a diary and further milestone updates are provided in the back of the books."

**About the service**

Samantha must not look after more than 6 (six) children at any one time under the age of 8 (eight) years, including the childminder's own children

Of these 6 (six) 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

Samantha lives in Ballamodha and has been a registered childminder since 2002. The childminding takes place on the ground floor in a purpose built converted annex used exclusively for child minding. It comprises of one large play room with direct access to a secure child friendly garden.

Activities are varied and planned on a daily basis. For activities outside of the home the childminder will transport the children in her own car.

**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 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023. We visited the service on 10<sup>th</sup> October 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**

Verbal feedback was given to Samantha.

## 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**

The playroom was clean, in good repair and fit for purpose.

Toys were well organised, appeared clean and didn't show any visible signs of damage.

Outdoor areas were secure and equipment was fit for use.

There was a cleaning procedure in place and records were kept regarding this. All toys and equipment were cleaned after use and were deep cleaned more thoroughly on a weekly basis.

There were records in place which evidenced this.

Food is provided by the parents in lunch boxes/bags with an icepack inside. Samantha has completed food hygiene training and has a certificate for this.

There was an illness and exclusion policy, a medication policy and a safeguarding policy in place which had all been reviewed on 6/1/23

There is pet policy in place for dog and parent's contract had signed agreement forms in place.

Risk assessments were completed and showed evidence of having been reviewed in January 2023. These would benefit from being more detailed and robust; discussed using a standardised template for the risk assessments.

#### **Action we require the provider to take**

Key areas for improvement:

- Risk assessments to be transferred to a more robust risk assessment template.

## 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**

There are detailed child records in place for each child. Each child also has a daily diary which Samantha uses to record key information, development milestones and learning during the day which is shared with parents during handover.

Samantha does lots of varied activities with the children which are child led according to their age, preferences and choices.

Outings tend to be in the mornings including walks, visits to parks and playgroups. Sam encourages independent free play whilst observing development.

She does use the garden when the weather is dry and they do lots of walks in the surrounding area. During attendance at playgroups she allows and encourages the children to interact with others freely whilst observing each child to maintain their safety.

During the inspection Sam allowed the child to choose what they wanted to do from the wide range of toys available and interacted with them appropriately throughout.

She uses dance and singing to aid development.

Samantha observes the children continually throughout the day if she had concerns regarding development would discuss these with parents at handover. She focuses on phonics to help speech development where necessary.

## 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.**

During the inspection Samantha encouraged and interacted with the child present in a natural and caring manner. She gently encouraged the use of manners and respected the child and gave attention when needed and when they asked questions. She was observed gently correcting when the child interrupted or was doing something they shouldn't be doing.

Samantha made suggestions to help the child choose toys and encouraged them to complete the task she used praise when they had managed to complete it.

She encouraged independent play whilst continually engaging and interacting. The child remained her priority throughout the inspection.

Samantha's communication with the child was natural and effective and she answered his questions well.

The child responded well to Samantha's guidance and appeared comfortable with her.

During the visit I observed appropriate interaction and use of hugs and cuddles between Samantha and the child.

There is a Care, learning and play policy in place and Samantha uses lots of creative development methods.

Each child has a personal file in which their likes and preferences are recorded. Parents are engaged and informed by the use of the records in the daily diary

#### **Maintaining children's privacy, dignity and independence respected.**

There was a confidentiality policy in place which had been reviewed on 6/1/23. Parents were aware of this as it was a signed agreement in the contracts.

All records are kept securely in the dedicated childminding room.

Samantha does not use electronic methods for work purposes; all records are held manually.

Individual folders are kept for each child.

Independent play was encouraged and observed throughout the visit. The child was encouraged to put one set of toys away before they got the next set out.

## 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**

Information in the children’s folders indicate like/dislikes and interests of the children and these are taken into account when planning activities with the children.

Samantha also speaks to the parents to check in around daily activities and plans. Feedback from parents confirms this.

Awareness of diversity was shown. We discussed alternative family groups, cultures, religion and disability. Samantha was able to give examples of how she uses inclusive practices with the children. There was evidence that diversity was considered within the setting as there were some toys and books which reflected this.

There is an equal ops policy in place and evidence of dealing with additional needs.

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.