

Inspection Report & 2023-2024

Dawn Clark

Childminder

31st 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 31st October 2023. The inspection was led by an inspector from the Registration and Inspection team.

Service and service type

Dawn Clark 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 on the ground floor in an annex separate from the main house which comprises two large playrooms, kitchen area and a toilet. There is a separate entrance via a large secure yard which the children also use if the weather permits. All areas are well laid out, in good state of repair and have a wide range of toys and equipment.

The children appeared happy and content throughout the visit. The interactions between the childminder, and her assistant, and the children were relaxed and natural and appropriate for the age of the children present.

The minder uses a care, learning, play approach which encourages learning and development through play. She was aware of the children's development needs and uses observation records which show the development on each child.

The service was well organised and had appropriate recording systems in place to support the provision of the service.

The following are comments from parents

"She's had a really positive impact on the development of both my children."

"They have an amazing time with her and rarely want to leave at pickup time which is just testament to how well she's bonded with them."

"My Children feel safe and heard in her company."

"Her communication is brilliant, she's great at letting the children express themselves and will always encourage their own interests."

"She does well juggling the different needs of all the children"

"She's helped shape our [...] year old into an independent little girl and we can't to see how much more she develops while in her care."

"We are extremely happy with the care that Dawn provides for our child, we don't think she needs to improve on anything as she's doing an amazing job".

About the service

The childminder 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. Dawn works with an assistant to provide her service.

The back playroom is registered for:

2 (two) children aged 0-2 (zero to two) years OR

1 (one) child under 2 (two) years of age and 1 (one) child aged 2-8 (two to eight) years

OR 3 (Three) children aged 2 (two) years and over

The front playroom is registered for:

3 (three) children aged 0-4 (zero to four) years of which no more than 2 (two) are under the age of 2 (two) years OR

3 (Three) children aged 2 (two) years and above.

Dawn lives in Peel and has been a registered childminder for three years.

The areas of the premises used for childminding are on the ground floor and have been converted for exclusive use with the children.

Activities are varied and planned on a daily basis. For activities outside of the home the childminder will walk with the children or 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 12/10/23. We visited the service on 31/10/23.

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 the childminder

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

There were risk assessments, policies and procedures in place to ensure that all resources, toys and the premises were inspected and cleaned on a daily basis, there were signed and dated. The cleaning procedure covered mats, towels, floors, toilets and records were seen evidencing that these were being carried out.

All areas were light and airy, were well presented and had laminate floors. All areas appeared clean and tidy and in a good state of repair. Surfaces in kitchen were clean and wipeable; there were no trailing wires.

All children had their own lunch bag provided by the parents with ice packs. There were kept on individual child height hanging pegs in the hall way. The premises is registered with DEFA and Dawn had completed their Food Safety training.

The toilet area is clean and accessible, there is a step to allow the children to reach the sink or toilet. The changing mat and potties are stored in the toilet and were clean and in good repair. There were separate handtowels for each of the children.

During the inspection the children were observed being accompanied and helped to wash hands after activities and before eating snacks.

There were exclusion policies in place regarding infectious illness and Covid19

Assessing Risk, Safety monitoring and management

The minding area is secure with separate access through a small secure yard and access between the areas being limited by the use of child safety gates. Access to the rest of the house was from the main playroom via a locked door.

There were appropriate risk assessment documents in place which were detailed, well written dated and showed evidence of being reviewed regularly. There was a separate fire risk assessment and fire evacuation plans in place.

A medication policy was in place which was signed dated and reviewed.

The childminder and the assistant have attended First Aid training but the certificate for the assistant needs renewing

Safeguarding training was up to date and a Safeguarding policy was in place which was dated and reviewed.

All records were stored securely in a locked box.

Action we require the provider to take

Key areas for improvement

- The assistant childminder needs to renew their First Aid Certificate

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

All areas used for minding, including the outside yard, had varied toys and resources for activities.

During the inspection various activities were provided using a range of resources to encourage the children to engage and interact. They used a large white board on the floor for drawing with each child being encouraged to draw and join in.

The service provides regular activities outside of the area in the mornings including attending mums and tots groups or sing along sessions. They limit these activities to one per day so as not to overwhelm the children.

Outdoor activities include the use of the self-contained yard, the use of local parks, local headland fields, Glen Helen and St Johns arboretum. These are checked for safety each time before use.

The childminder keeps detailed daily diaries for under 2’s which she shares with parents each day. They show nappies, feeds, sleeps and activities. She uses these observations of the children to assess their development and if there are concerns she would raise this with the parents of the child.

The childminder promotes a learning through play environment. Activities are planned around themes weekly on Monday and noted in the weekly diary. Notes of the activities and the children’s involvement are noted in this diary on a daily basis. Activities during the week are flexible but tend to reflect the theme planned. There was evidence during the inspection that the theme for the week was autumn; the childminder had collected leaves, pine cones etc and was using these during activities.

Attendance records reflect the children present on each session.

Individual personalised care was discussed; the minder was able to explain how activities and milestones were adapted for each child. Parental feedback confirm the childminder’s input in the development of their 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 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.

Information from parents regarding likes, dislikes and preferences are on the children's records and are updated regularly following communication with parents. This information is used to help with the planning of activities.

During the visit interactions between the childminder and the assistant and the children were observed. Appropriate language was used according to the age of the children, the atmosphere was very relaxed with spontaneous laughing from the children. All the children seemed at ease and engaged well with Dawn and the assistant. The interactions between the children and the childminder appeared natural with appropriate touch being used; carrying children when unsure, sitting on knee to read stories and cuddles used when upset.

The children were given choices regarding their preference for snacks and activity choice. These choices were reiterated with the children to confirm understanding by Dawn.

Maintaining children's privacy, dignity and independence respected.

There is a confidentiality policy in place, all parents are made aware of this. Parents sign a copy which is then kept on the child's individual files.

All records are stored in a locked box which only contains current information. Old records are archived and stored elsewhere in house locked away.

The childminder was observed giving choices during the visit regarding food choice and activities which were led by the children throughout the inspection

The children were observed being encouraged to wash and dry their hands independently but with help where needed.

Personal care, toileting and nappy changes are completed in the toilet by one of the minders to allow privacy, the other minder stays with the other children. There is equipment in place to encourage independence as required. I.e steps, trainer seats, potties.

Consents and permissions are in place with permission to take and use photos.

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

Clear detailed records are in place for each child showing their likes, dislikes and personal preferences. These also contain information such as pets, sibling’s names, points of interest and relevant family information.

There are short notes kept in a development folder and daily dairies are in use.

The children were fully involved during the inspection in choosing the activities they wanted to do. They were also involved in planning and talking about the activity for later in the day

There was evidence that inclusion was promoted; one child with additional needs is minded. They are included generally in the group but can also have 1-1 with assistant in the quieter back play area if needed.

Toys and resources and activities chosen reflected an awareness of diversity.

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.