

Childminders top of the class for delivery of quality services

Wednesday 30 November, 2016

'Childminders provide higher quality services than other daycare of children services' is one of the key findings in the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Statistics 2015 Report, published today (30 November) by the Care Inspectorate. The report states that 44% of childminders were found to have grades of very good and excellent compared to 41.5% of daycare services. Other key findings include:

- The quality of care and support provided by childminders achieved the highest grades of four quality themes at 64.4%.
- In around 92% of childminders, the quality of care, environment and management (and staffing where applicable) was found to be good or better at 31 December 2015.
- Of all categories of ELC, childminding had the second highest set of grades after children and family centres.
- 93.1% of childminders operated during core hours throughout holidays.
- 92.3% of childminders provide meals in their services.

Commenting on the statistics, Maggie Simpson, CEO of SCMA said: "It is really pleasing to know that the quality of Early Learning and Childcare which childminders provide has remained high over the past year and remained better than any of the other types of service registered with the Care Inspectorate, including nurseries. Childminders are registered under the same legislation and meet the same standards as all other Early Learning and Childcare providers. They simply deliver the curriculum in a different way and report against the wellbeing indicators. Their quality and low adult to child ratios are particularly important to raising attainment and to support families with their home learning environment. These results are first class for childminders and SCMA will continue to work with our membership to ensure the continued delivery of quality services."

During inspections, the Care Inspectorate assesses 'quality themes' which cover the main areas of a service's work. How well the service performs in these areas will indicate how good the service is. The four quality themes are:

1. **Quality of care and support:** how well the service meets the needs of each person who uses it
2. **Quality of environment:** where the service is delivered: for example, how clean, well maintained and accessible it is, the atmosphere of the service, how welcoming it is.
3. **Quality of staffing (applies to services who employ someone):** the quality of the staff, including their qualifications and training
4. **Quality of management and leadership:** how the service is managed and led and how it develops to meet the needs of the people who use it.

Each of the themes is evaluated using a six point scale:

- 6 – excellent
- 5 – very good
- 4 – good
- 3 – adequate
- 2 – week
- 1 – unsatisfactory

"The Scottish Government is committed to increasing the entitlement of funded Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours per year by 2020, and high quality will be at the heart of this provision" added Maggie. "Currently, with very few local authorities engaging with childminders to deliver quality childminding services, there is work to be done to ensure that childminders remain a viable option for the future and we do not lose these high quality services."

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