

# Fiona McIntyre Child Minding Child Minding

Stirling

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
25 January 2024

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2009976497

**Service no:**  
CS2009235296

## About the service

Fiona McIntyre provides a childminding service from their family home within a residential area of Stirling. The service is close to a local primary school and nursery, parks, green spaces and other amenities. Within the home children have access to the living room, dining area, upstairs bathroom and an enclosed garden to the rear of the property. Children also have access to the kitchen under supervision.

The service was registered to provide care to a maximum of 5 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 5 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 15 January 2024 between 10:30 and 14:30. Feedback was given to the childminder on the same day. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service;
- gathered feedback from four parents and carers;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice; and
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing and compassionate care.
- Children were happy, confident and having fun.
- Play and learning experiences promoted individual development and wellbeing.
- Trusting relationships promoted positive partnership working with families.
- The childminder was skilled and passionate about offering children high-quality care.
- Young children could be offered increased opportunities to express their views.
- Medication procedures should be updated to ensure all relevant information is gathered.
- Quality assurance could be enhanced to ensure continued improvement.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced nurturing and compassionate care. Positive relationships and secure attachments promoted children's feeling of being loved and well cared for. Inclusive interactions supported children to remain happy and settled with a strong sense of belonging.

The childminder was responsive to the immediate needs of the children, providing loving care, reassurance and soothing cuddles when needed. As a result, children felt safe and secure. Children were supported well to express and manage their emotions. A sensitive approach encouraged children to explore their feelings. Additional tools such as emotion books supported children's learning and understanding of their feelings and emotions. This promoted positive mental health and demonstrated respect for children's individual wellbeing.

The childminder skilfully supported children's learning and understanding of each other's feelings. They were gently encouraged to work together to resolve conflict and disputes. This promoted an inclusive environment where children felt loved, valued and were supported to build emotional resilience.

Personal care was sensitively supported, promoting independence, privacy and dignity. Parents strongly agreed they were happy with the care and support their children received in the service.

The childminder knew the children very well. Personal planning and gathering important information enabled the childminder to provide the right level of care and support. Effective working with parents ensured continuity of care between the home and childminding setting. For example, maintaining a child's individual sleep routine was promoting a positive settling in experience.

Parents made positive comments about the level of communication and information shared about their child's care and daily experiences. Enabling families to continually contribute to their child's care plan further promoted continuity and supported assessment of the children's development and wellbeing.

Children enjoyed unhurried and sociable mealtimes. The childminder sat with them role modelling positive eating habits. Inclusion in the planning of nutritious snacks and meals supported choice and children's learning of healthy lifestyles. Easy access to water encouraged hydration. This further promoted children's health. Children could be given more opportunities to be involved in the preparation of meals. This will promote independence and enhance their ownership of the mealtime experience.

Effective systems supported the safe administration of medication. The childminder should now update medication procedures and specific care plans to ensure all relevant information is gathered as detailed in the best practice document 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services'.

### Quality indicator 1.3 Play and learning

Children enjoyed a wide range of activities and experiences which promoted curiosity, creativity and engagement in play. Children were having fun and confidently interacted with the childminder and each other. Easy access to toys, games and activities promoted choice and independence. This supported self directed play and learning.

Natural play materials and loose parts such as dough, sand, water, pipes, wood and loofahs supported children's individual learning, imagination and creativity. These resources also promoted calmness as children explored different textures.

The childminder skilfully encouraged natural opportunities to promote children's learning and development of language, literacy and numeracy skills. For example, singing, looking at books and using the outside world to explore size, shapes, measuring and positioning.

The childminder had a very good understanding of children's individual development needs. Children continued to achieve as the childminder planned experiences based on observations and discussions with them. Their development and experiences were captured within care plans, photographs and observations shared electronically with families. Recording children's individual development helped the childminder to identify next steps and how they could further support individual learning. To promote enhanced inclusion of families and assessments the childminder should now increase the level of information detailed in individual support plans. Clear recording of next steps and the strategies in place to promote continued learning and development will enable better tracking and evaluation of children's changing interests and needs.

Children were respectfully listened to and had good opportunities to contribute to the planning of daily experiences. This demonstrated their views were valued and they were empowered to have ownership of their time in the service. The childminder should now enhance methods to enable younger children to express their views and wishes.

Children were supported well to maintain positive connections with their local community. For example, visiting nearby parks, regular walks, use of the library, going to the shops and attending toddler groups. This provided opportunities for children to build their social skills, develop new friendships and enjoy new experiences.

### How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant, positive impact on children's experiences.

The childminder created a warm, welcoming, clean and homely environment for children and families. Furnishings were in a good state of repair and appropriate to the children in attendance. This included soft seating where children could rest, relax, be comfortable and set their own pace of day.

The layout of the play spaces enabled children to move freely and fully engage in their chosen activities. Opportunities to play indoors and outdoors promoted choice and enabled the planning of various experiences to support children's interests and continued enjoyment.

Specific space where children could store their belongings promoted their feeling of belonging and an inclusive care setting where all children were valued.

Effective monitoring and maintenance of the care setting reduced the risk of harm and kept children safe. This included regular reviews of risk assessments to ensure the environment remained suitable to meet the needs of the children.

Children experienced some good opportunities to enjoy risky play. This encouraged exploration and children's understanding of keeping themselves safe while enjoying new challenges. This is an area of play that could be developed to support continued learning and enhanced experiences. We highlighted the guidance documents 'My World Outdoors' and 'Out to Play'. This will support the childminder to enhance risky play activities. Both documents can be found on the HUB section of our website.

Children's continued health was promoted as the childminder followed set procedures to ensure a clean and hygienic environment. Children were supported well to follow and understand good hand washing practice and respiratory hygiene. This supported their learning of personal care and limited the spread of illness and infection.

Appropriate measures were taken to protect the privacy and dignity of children and families. This included safe storage of personal information and confidential spaces where families could speak to the childminder. This gave families confidence that information about them and their child would only be shared with relevant people.

## How good is our leadership?

**4 - Good**

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant, positive impact on children's experiences.

Children's experiences reflected the childminder's personal aims and objectives for their service. This included providing a warm, caring, safe environment where children were supported to feel valued and respected.

The childminder remained reflective about the service they provide. They demonstrated a commitment to include families in ongoing evaluations. Daily chats and feedback surveys gave families the opportunity to contribute to the development of the service. This supported the childminder when assessing quality of care and provisions. Three parents who gave us feedback strongly agreed that they and their child were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service and their ideas and suggestions were used to influence change. One parent agreed.

Written policies and procedures were regularly reviewed to ensure information remained up to date and reflective of the service provided. Sharing these with families enabled them to assess the expectations of service delivery.

The childminder used the best practice guidance document 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to develop a formal evaluation process and assessment records. They had effectively used the document to identify what was working well within the service. The childminder should now develop their quality assurance process to include identified improvements and how they plan to secure positive change. This will help to monitor and track the success of desired improvements and further ensure positive outcomes for children and families.

## How good is our staff team?

## 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The childminder's compassionate ethos contributed to children's feeling of being loved, valued and secure. Nurturing relationships and supporting families encouraged an open, respectful and inclusive care setting.

Throughout the inspection it was evident that meeting children's individual care needs and supporting their play and development was at the heart of the service. Children benefitted from the childminder's good understanding of their unique personalities. Care and support was tailored to promote their individuality as they progressed with their learning and development.

The childminder's sound knowledge of children's rights and the 'Health and Social Care Standards' supported children to flourish and reach their potential. Encouragement to enjoy and celebrate their successes and achievements promoted children's confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder was committed to improving children's experiences through continually enhancing their own professional learning and development. They had successfully completed various training based on the needs of the children. This included learning about 'Inspiring Environments', 'Personal planning and development', 'Science -Technology - Engineering - Art and Maths' and 'Adverse Childhood Experiences.' The childminder confidently discussed how this learning had improved their practice and enhanced the quality of provision and daily experiences. In addition, children received effective care and support as the childminder remained aware of best practice documents and legislation. Regular reviews of the HUB section of our website and reviewing our video bitesize sessions helped the childminder to remain up to date with current guidance.

Appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures were in place to keep children safe. The childminder demonstrated a very good understanding of her responsibilities and how to keep children safe. Regular child protection training supported the childminder's knowledge about wider safeguarding issues. This meant children benefitted from appropriate care and support as the childminder was confident in how to identify and report concerns.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good



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