

# Elaine's childminding Child Minding

Kilmarnock

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
29 February 2024

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2022000206

**Service no:**  
CS2022000305

## About the service

Elaine's childminding is registered to provide a care service for up to six children under the age of 16. From 23 October 2023 until 6 December 2025, the childminder may care for a maximum of 7 children at any one time, up to 16 years of age:

- Of whom no more than six are under 12 years;
- Of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and;
- Of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is provided from a detached home in a residential area of Kilmarnock. The service is close to public transport links, local amenities and parks. The children are cared for downstairs and use a dedicated playroom, an open plan kitchen diner and have access to a downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 20 February 2024 between 11:00 and 14:30. 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. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Observed three children using the service
- Received electronic questionnaires from three families using the service
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced kind and nurturing interactions and were happy and settled in the childminders care.
- Children were supported to develop connections with their own and the wider community.
- Children were cared for in an environment that was clean, bright and homely. They were comfortable and confident in the childminder's home.
- The childminder had a positive outlook on change and improvement. They were in the early stages of self-evaluation and had included children and families in the process.
- The childminder was motivated and passionate about developing her skills and knowledge, to support positive outcomes for children and families.

## 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?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

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

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced kind and nurturing interactions and were happy and settled in the childminders care. We observed children approaching the childminder for comfort and cuddles. It was clear to us that the childminder knew children and their families well and was responsive to their needs and preferences. One parent told us, 'my child loves there time here and I am happy my child is safe and cared for to a high standard'. Another stated, 'my child is always happy and well cared for'. As a result, children had formed positive attachments, and families felt included and well supported.

Children experienced a relaxed, unhurried lunchtime where independence was promoted and support was provided when required. For example, children were encouraged to use cutlery but were offered help when needed. The childminder engaged in meaningful conversations which created a positive, sociable mealtime experience.

Interactions during personal care were respectful and supported children's privacy and dignity. The childminder had appropriate personal protective equipment but did not have a changing mat. We advised the childminder that a waterproof, easy to clean mat was required to help prevent the spread of infection. The childminder purchased a changing mat prior to the end of the inspection. This helped keep children safe.

Sleep routines and opportunities to relax were responsive to children's individual needs. The childminder provided a calm, relaxing environment for sleep. Children were provided with comfort items and blankets and could choose if they would like to listen to lullabies. Children were sensitively supported when they woke from sleep and offered comfort and cuddles. As a result children felt safe and secure.

Children's well-being and care was supported through clear up-to-date personal plans. These were completed with families and detailed children's needs and preferences. We discussed developing children's personal plans to include clear next steps, and the childminder should monitor children's progress in achieving these. This would support children to reach their full potential.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children could make choices about their play. They could independently access a range of toys and resources whilst in the playroom. These were suited to their individual interests and stages of development. We observed children engaged in imaginative role play with a toy kitchen and dolls, and having fun with kinetic sand. A parent told us, 'the childminder has made a great effort to ensure my child has the best time whilst in their care and to make sure they know them extremely well. I feel relaxed knowing my child is in great hands and is safe while helping them experience new skills and activities'.

During our inspection, some children went to sleep in the playroom, this meant that children played in the kitchen/dining area for most of the inspection. During this time the childminder provided some ride on toys and engaged in games to support children to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills.

Children were supported to sort colours, identify shapes and to count forwards and backwards. Some children were very engaged in these activities and excitedly told us Spanish words the childminder had taught them. Other children were less engaged and attempted to go back into the playroom but were unable to do so as children were still asleep. We suggested providing a balance of structured play and learning experiences, with more options for children to choose from whilst playing in the kitchen/dining area or changing the location where children slept. This would ensure that all children were engaged and able to independently lead their own play and learning experiences throughout the day.

Children had regular opportunities to play and learn in the community. On the day of our visit children had been to a local toddler group. There were also plans to visit the soft play and a local park the following day with a group of local childminders. One child's individual interest in trains had led to plans to go on a train journey in the near future. As a result, children were meaningfully supported to develop connections with their own and the wider community.

## How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in an environment that was clean, bright and homely. Children benefited from access to a playroom, spacious kitchen diner, large hall and downstairs bathroom. Children were comfortable in the setting and confidently moved around the childminders home. Parents described the environment as a 'very welcoming home environment and child friendly'.

The childminder had put a lot of thought into designing their playroom. This gave a strong sense to children that they mattered. Children could independently access a good variety of resources suited to their interests and their individual stages of development. We suggested incorporating more loose parts, open ended and creative resources, to provide more opportunities for children to develop their creativity, curiosity and problem solving skills. When using the kitchen diner, children could rest and relax on large sofas and enjoyed using ride on bikes and cars in the large space available. We asked the childminder to consider providing more resources for children, to independently access in the kitchen diner if the playroom was not in use.

Children did not have access to the childminder's back garden during our inspection. The childminder told us this was due to the garden being water logged. The childminder had plans in place, to develop the garden to ensure that it is suitable for children to use throughout the year. The childminder took children out daily to local parks and various outings. We asked the childminder to continue to provide children with daily opportunities to play and learn outdoors, while the back garden was being developed. This would allow children to access regular fresh air and physical play.

The childminder was aware of their responsibility to keep children safe. We observed the childminder responsively assessing risk during our inspection. For example, the childminder ensured that food was served at the correct temperature and managed children's access to the family dogs.

We asked the childminder to develop and personalise their written risk assessments, to ensure consideration had been given to all aspects of their service. In particular, the childminder should develop written risk assessments and obtain written parental permission for outings and children's access to the childminder's dogs.

All insurance and maintenance records were in place, the environment was clean and resources were in good condition. As a result, children experienced an environment that was safe, secure and well maintained.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The childminder had a positive outlook on change and improvement and engaged well in the inspection process. The childminder's aims to provide a 'safe and warm environment', 'encourage independence' and 'build positive relationships with parents' were clear throughout our visit. As a result, all children were happy and secure.

The childminder took pride in their service and had used the Care Inspectorate 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to evaluate some aspects of their service. The childminder had included children and families in this process. Parents and one child had completed questionnaires which asked if they were happy with the service, what they liked and if anything could be better. All responses were positive. One parent told us, 'I'm very happy with the service the childminder provides, I would not change anything.' This supported children and families to feel valued and included in the development of the service. We suggested gathering feedback from children and families around specific areas of the service, linked with the focus of their self evaluation. This would support the childminder to gather more meaningful feedback that may lead to change and improvement.

The childminder had identified several areas that they would like to develop. We discussed the next step of this process and advised the childminder to prioritise their targets to ensure they were achievable. This would enable the childminder to ensure that changes become embedded in the service and impact positively on outcomes for children and families.

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children experienced warm, kind and nurturing care; this ensured that they felt valued and loved. The childminder understood the importance of positive relationships with families and was responsive to children's individual needs. One parent told us, 'our childminder is very welcoming and supportive to me and my child'. As a result, children had formed strong attachments with the childminder and felt secure.

The childminder was newly registered and confident in supporting children's health and wellbeing.

They had recently completed paediatric first aid training, gained their food hygiene certificate and were in the process of sourcing child protection training. This supported the childminder, to ensure they had the knowledge and skills to keep children safe.

The childminder was in the early stages of identifying training and learning requirements through reflections on their practice. For example, we could see that they had identified the need for child protection training through their recent self-evaluation. We discussed the benefits of keeping a record of their training, reflecting on their learning and the impact on their practice. This would support the childminder to continuously improve their knowledge and skills and support positive outcomes for children.

The childminder used the Care Inspectorate Hub and emails from the Scottish Childminding Association to keep up to date with changes in best practice. They also met regularly with a group of local childminders for support. The childminder would benefit from continuing to develop their knowledge on child development, child led play and best practice guidance, particularly 'Realising the Ambition'. Through our discussions it was clear that the childminder was motivated and passionate about developing her skills and knowledge. This supported positive outcomes for children and families.

## 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good



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