

# Mel's Childminding Service

## Child Minding

Glasgow

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
2 April 2024

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2013985424

**Service no:**  
CS2013321457

## About the service

The service operates from the childminder's family home in Blantyre, South Lanarkshire. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of seven children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. There is a time limited condition on the service registration, which has now expired, meaning that the childminder will revert to caring for a maximum of six children at any one time.

The service is close to local nurseries, schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room and kitchen, which has direct access to the garden. Toilet facilities used by minded children are upstairs. A stairgate is in place to help promote children's safe use of the stairs.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 2 April 2024 between 14:50 and 16:00. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with the childminder about the service they provided and observed the three minded children in their play
- observed practice including the interactions between the childminder and minded children
- walked around areas of the home used by minded children, looking at resources available and the use of space
- reviewed documents related to the service
- reviewed feedback from three parents whose children attended the service.

## Key messages

- Children were settled and happy as the childminder was kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with them.
- Children enjoyed a range of play experiences both within the childminder setting and the local community, which supported their learning and development.
- Children's health and safety was supported through the risk assessments that were in place for the setting.
- Children benefitted from the childminder's engagement in professional learning. The childminder's extended skills and knowledge contributed to children receiving good quality interactions and experiences.
- To support high quality outcomes for children and families, the childminder should further develop systems to monitor and evaluate their service.

## 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?	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?

4 - Good

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

### **Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.**

There was one minded child present during our visit, who was very happy and settled within the setting. They benefitted from the warm, nurturing approach of the childminder who knew their individual needs and preferences well. We observed the childminder sitting at the child's level, engaging in conversation and play experiences. Parents responding to our survey strongly agreed that the childminder had built meaningful relationships with their children, and understood what was important for their care. Parents' comments included, "Fantastic care received from Melanie my little boy loves going and is thriving" and "Very child centred, has a great relationship with the boys, nurturing environment, very flexible."

The format for children's personal plans demonstrated the childminder had used the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included) wellbeing indicators from Scottish Government guidance 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC), to consult with older children on how best to support their individual needs. This contributed to children feeling their views were listened to and respected by the childminder.

Children's care routines were responsive to their individual needs and reflected their parents' preferences. For example, the child present's napping arrangements sometimes involved them sleeping in a buggy at the family's request. The childminder knew about safe sleeping precautions when children sleep in buggies or car seats and ensured that time in these was limited and that children's breathing was not restricted by their position. We did not observe a nappy change, however the childminder talked through their procedures that took account of children's privacy and risk of infection. We discussed why children's handwashing both after nappy changing and before snacks should be reviewed, using soap and water for hands rather than wipes. This will more effectively support children's health and safety through minimising the spread of germs.

The childminder had Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) templates available for recording children's accidents and to log information about the administration of medication, should this be required. SCMA is a national umbrella organisation whose main aim is to promote childminding as a quality childcare service. This ensured that children's health and safety was appropriately supported and that there was continuity in their care. Children were also safe and protected because the childminder had participated in paediatric first aid and child protection training. This provided reassurance that the childminder would respond appropriately if they were concerned about the welfare and wellbeing of a child.

### **Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.**

Children were encouraged to follow their interests and lead their own play within the childminding setting. The childminder had given consideration to the different age groups and stage of development for the children attending. For example, we discussed older children's preferences for using technology. The childminder agreed it would be beneficial to agree parameters for the use of mobile phones and digital devices with children as well as parents. This was to respect children's choices while also supporting their wellbeing and online safety. We acknowledged the benefits of playing with technology to children, such as improving hand-eye coordination, access to information, problem solving and language skills.

Children enjoyed outings and a variety of activities in their local community. For example parks, toddler groups and soft play sessions. These regular activities expanded children's learning, developed social interactions with their peers and connections with their community.

All parents responding to our survey strongly agreed that children had opportunities to be involved in meaningful, interesting and fun play experiences. They also strongly agreed that they were fully involved and informed about their child's learning and development. The childminder occasionally recorded observations of children engaged in play and their achievements. They captured children's learning experiences through photographs, which they sent to families or printed off to share with children. The child present excitedly babbled when sharing some of these pictures with us. The childminder gently reminded them of the activity and which of their friends had been present, role modelling the use of language and meaning making.

We discussed how the childminder could make their observations more meaningful, this would help them to identify and nurture children's individual talents and interests as well as tracking their progress and achievements. In this way the childminder could plan, with parents, where children might need more support or challenge to reach their full potential. As a member of SCMA, the childminder should consider participating in their course on 'Child Development: Observation, Assessment and Planning' to assist with their planning and observation cycle. This will develop their understanding of the vital role they play in supporting children's play, learning and development.

## How good is our setting?

## 4 - Good

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

### Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

The childminder's home was warm, welcoming, clean and well ventilated. The setting was well maintained and organised to keep children safe and protected. Children's wellbeing was promoted by being included in a homely environment. Children had space to play and also to rest and relax on soft furnishings. Children's stage of development and interests were reflected in the selection of resources offered. On the day of our visit this included books, puzzles, cuddly toys, and construction blocks, which supported children's creativity and curiosity. We noted that most toys and resources offered were manufactured therefore highlighted the value of providing 'loose parts' for children. Loose parts are natural or open ended materials, which help children develop their curiosity and imagination as they explore different shapes and textures. The childminder could give examples of sensory materials children enjoyed at other times either within the childminding setting, including the garden or at the toddler group. For example playdough and the outdoor mud kitchen. The childminder had shared photographs of these experiences with families so they could see the range of facilities and activities their children had accessed, as well as celebrating their achievements.

All parents strongly agreed their children were safe whilst in the setting. To support everyone's safety and wellbeing, the childminder carried out visual risk assessments of the setting, prior to children arriving and throughout their day, to ensure there were no hazards in the way of their safety. For example they ensured that safety gates blocking access to the stairs and kitchen were in place and external door latches secured. The childminder had a pet dog and rabbits but informed families about this when their child first joined the service. Parents were given reassurance that systems in place ensured children's safety and wellbeing would not be compromised. Minded children were familiar with the pets and enjoyed spending time in their company, which meant they were learning about caring for others and respect for boundaries. Pets had enclosed spaces in the garden to ensure that children's play spaces were free from contamination.

Risk assessments were based on the original Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) templates the childminder had completed. We encouraged them to annotate their checklist when new hazards to children were identified. This would ensure that measures, even if temporary, were in place to support children's safety and wellbeing. For example, during our visit the childminder advised us of recent work to the front step and also that the trampoline was no longer safe to use. They had shared these findings with families so that parents could use the alternative entrance or support children to safely negotiate steps.

Children's health and safety was further supported by the effective infection prevention and control measures that were in place. The toilet facilities used by minded children had plenty of liquid soap and individual towels to support good hand hygiene. The childminder had the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure there was no cross contamination while giving children personal care. This meant children were safe from the potential spread of infection.

Children's personal information was stored securely to respect families' confidentiality. The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which demonstrated they followed ICO guidelines on data protection when considering how they stored children's personal information lawfully.

## How good is our leadership?

### 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

#### **Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.**

The childminder had a range of systems in place to monitor the service operation and to support positive outcomes for children. The childminder had continued their membership of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and made good use of their resources to assist with record keeping. For example, they kept a record of children's attendance so that they could account for children's presence and safety. The childminder had appropriate public liability and car insurance in place and their registration certificate was available for parents to view. This helped people understand how the service was regulated and that their children would be kept safe. We highlighted that the childminder's registration certificate was not up to date, as there was a time limited condition to increase the number of children that could be cared for to seven. The childminder agreed to submit a variation to amend this.

All parents responding to our survey strongly agreed that their family had been involved in a meaningful way to help develop the childminder's service and that their ideas and suggestions had been used to influence change. The childminder regularly sought the views of parents, through daily chats, text messaging and questionnaires. This had helped ensure parents felt included within the life of the service and that their contributions were valued by the childminder. Older children's views had also been consulted using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included). Photographs and children's interpretations were recorded in a scrap book, which helped children articulate their views and potentially influence improvements to the service. However, this culture of self evaluation was at an early stage as the childminder did not collate and analyse feedback from families, to help them identify how the service might be developed. Doing so would contribute to supporting positive outcomes for children and families.

The childminder would benefit from introducing formal quality assurance processes to help reflect on and improve their service. For example, ensuring that record keeping was robust and meaningful and making effective use of self evaluation to help assess quality and inform improvement. The childminder agreed that

compiling an improvement plan would help focus the direction of their service and identify what training or resources they might need to implement their plans. We signposted them to the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to assist them with this task.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator 4.1: Childminder skills, knowledge, and values.

The childminder engaged very well with the inspection process and was responsive to improvement discussions. They were professional, welcoming and happy to be at work. The childminder was very respectful when talking about children and families. They demonstrated a sound knowledge of children's needs, wishes and choices. This had created a warm and inclusive ethos for the setting that was greatly appreciated by families. Comments from parents included, "Mel is so welcoming to the kids. It's a friendly and calm atmosphere with lots of activities to do."

Children benefitted from the childminder's engagement in professional learning. All of the parents who responded to our survey strongly agreed they were confident that the childminder had the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to care for their children and support their learning. We could see from the childminder's learning record that they regularly engaged in relevant training to inform their practice as well as professional reading. They also met frequently with two other childminders, including organising community activities, such as a toddler group. This provided opportunities to share ideas, gain knowledge and reflect on practice. We suggested that evaluating professional learning would help the childminder demonstrate the impact of their own learning on outcomes for children, leading to the ongoing improvement of their service.

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

The childminder should further their knowledge and skills on positive behaviour techniques to support them if and when challenging behaviours arise.

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2015.**

#### Action taken since then

The childminder had undertaken professional reading around the topic of promoting children's positive behaviour and felt confident in their understanding of supporting children. They had been unable to put any of the theories and ideas into practice as no minded children had presented with challenging behaviour. We

observed that the childminder had a calm demeanour in their interactions with the minded child present on the day of inspection. This area for improvement had been met.

## 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	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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