

# Dalton, Linda Child Minding

Aberdeen

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Linda Dalton

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003900245

**Service no:**  
CS2003001490

## About the service

Linda Dalton provides a childminding service from their home in Milltimber, a suburb of Aberdeen. Children had access to the living/dining area and bathroom of the childminder's home. The service is situated close to wooded areas, parks and a local primary and nursery school.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of eight 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.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 07 March 2024 between 11:45 and 16:15. 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 previous inspection findings, registration information and information submitted by the service.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with children using the service
- Reviewed six responses to our request for feedback from parents via MS Forms
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and children's experience
- Reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children benefitted from kind and caring interactions with a childminder who knew them well.
- The childminder's home provided a safe, welcoming home from home environment for children.
- Effective communication between the childminder and parents resulted in strong partnerships with parents.
- The childminder made good use of local facilities helping children feel included in their local community.
- Children and families were involved in evaluating and developing the service by sharing their views.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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 and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children and their families experienced a friendly and welcoming service. The children present were comfortable in the childminder's care and had a clear sense of belonging. The childminder was responsive and showed an interest in what children had to say. This supported children's communication skills and sense of being valued. Parents strongly agreed that the childminder was nurturing and responsive to their child's needs. One parent commented, 'Linda provides a safe, nurturing, reliable childcare service.'

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of the children. Personal plans had been developed in partnership with families and contained information that supported meeting children's needs. For example, their interests, favourite things and routines at home. The childminder was in the process of updating some personal plans to ensure they reflected children's current needs. Parents agreed they were fully involved in planning their child's care.

Children experienced relaxed and unhurried mealtimes. The childminder sat with the child at lunch, helping to keep them safe from choking as well as promoting good manners and social skills. Children were offered water to drink, ensuring they were kept hydrated and well.

Children enjoyed eating snack in a covered playground space after school. This was a positive social experience which created an opportunity to meet together and talk about their day. The excitement of this meant that on occasion, children were not always seated when eating. We discussed the importance of older children remaining seated whilst eating to ensure their safety. The childminder agreed to action this.

Children's dignity and privacy were promoted during personal care such as toileting and nappy changing. These took place with sensitive, warm interactions from the childminder. They had implemented some infection control practices to support children's safety. For example, disposable gloves and apron were worn when supporting personal care. We reminded the childminder to use soap and water for handwashing instead of wipes. This would support the prevention of the potential spread of infection.

Children were protected from harm by the childminder's knowledge and understanding of their role in identifying, recording and referring any concerns. There was a child protection policy in place which supported the childminder to carry out her role.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were offered a variety of planned and spontaneous play opportunities which supported them to achieve and develop skills in communication, thinking, imagining and balancing. The childminder was responsive to children's interests and ideas. For example, a child interested in space had been supported to construct a rocket. As a result children had fun, were happy and experienced learning that was meaningful.

The childminder sat alongside children to support them in their play. They engaged with children at their level, making eye contact and chatting about what they were learning. This meant that children were being supported to develop their communication and language skills at a pace that was right for them.

Literacy and numeracy opportunities were embedded throughout the home and within children's experiences. A range of toys promoted children's skills and enhanced learning, such as, books, building blocks and mark making tools. Through play the childminder promoted learning naturally during conversation, encouraging children to count and recognise letters within their surroundings. The childminder and children enjoyed singing and dancing to favourite rhymes and songs. As a result children could progress their literacy and numeracy skills.

Families were included in children's experiences and learning through daily chats and photographs being shared using an online platform. Observations of the children were recorded and used to plan experiences and next steps that supported their progress and development. Parents strongly agreed they were given good quality information about their child's day. One parent shared, 'There are a variety of different activities to keep the children engaged.' Another parent said the childminder, 'Always keeps us up to date throughout the day with videos and photos.'

The use of local amenities supported children to develop their awareness and connection to their local community. The childminder regularly took the children to local groups, parks and walks. These opportunities enhanced children's play and learning experiences and supported their health and wellbeing. A parent commented the childminder was, 'Always arranging play activities for my child and taking them to the park.' Another parent commented, 'My child goes to so many places during the day and has so much fun exploring.'

## How good is our setting?

## 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.

Children benefitted from being cared for in a clean, comfortable, well-furnished environment. They played in the living room, where they had room to move around and explore. Comfortable sofas provided a place to rest and relax and the dining table provided a space for play and meals. This meant children had plenty space for their needs. One parent described the setting as a 'home from home environment.'

Children were provided with a range of age-appropriate toys and games that supported their play. The youngest children enjoyed playing with construction toys, small world and books. There were a range of resources for older children to enjoy. These included board games, Lego and arts and crafts. Parents strongly agreed children had access to good quality toys and play materials.

Children's artwork was displayed in the hallway. This showed they were valued and promoted their self-esteem.

Risk assessments were in place for indoor and outdoor environments to support the safety and wellbeing of children. These documented potential risks and measures in place to support a safe environment. Children were guided and supported to stay safe through discussion. During the walk from school, children were encouraged to consider road safety. They also knew how far ahead they were allowed to walk before waiting for the childminder. This promoted a sense of independence whilst keeping children safe and well.

Children benefitted from visiting nearby facilities in the community, this included the school playground and nearby parks. These provided children with opportunities for physical play and exploration and supported health and wellbeing.

The childminder was aware of the importance of confidentiality and children's information was stored in a locked box. They asked for permission before taking photographs and shared their confidentiality policy with families using the service. This ensured children and their family's privacy was protected.

## How good is our leadership?

### 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.

Children were cared for by a childminder who aimed to provide a 'warm, safe and loving atmosphere catering for each child's needs and interests.' The service aims and objectives were shared with families, helping them understand what to expect from the service.

Children and families views were actively sought to inform planning and the development of the service. The childminder had used questionnaires and daily conversations to capture their thoughts and suggestions. For example, children's views directed their play experiences. Parents strongly agreed or agreed they and their child were involved in a meaningful way. Questionnaires we sampled evidenced that families were very happy with the quality of care provided. We were confident that parents and carers had opportunities to raise any concerns with the childminder should they arise.

The childminder had supportive links with local childminders. This provided opportunities for sharing ideas, developing knowledge and reflecting on practice. This contributed to positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had reflected on the quality of service using 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged children.' This supported the childminder to identify areas for development. This was reflected in the improvement plan which focused on increasing outdoor experiences. This promoted children's health and wellbeing.

## How good is our staff team?

### 4 - Good

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

Children benefitted from the kind and caring relationships they experienced with the childminder. Children were settled and comfortable in the setting. The childminder was responsive to children's cues for support and cuddles. This helped children feel safe and secure.

The childminder had a good knowledge of child development and talked about how they were supporting children. This was reflective in the high quality play and learning children experienced. Parents strongly agreed the childminder had the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to care for their child and support their learning.

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association and used their membership to access relevant guidance and materials to support delivery of their service. The childminder was experienced and had completed core training such as first aid that supported children's wellbeing. To support further development of practice we asked the childminder to review knowledge of current guidance and developments in the sector. For example, some minor amendments were needed to medication and child protection policies to enhance children's wellbeing.

## 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	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good



## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.