

# Duffy, Mary Child Minding

Glasgow

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
2 April 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Mary Duffy

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003903718

**Service no:**  
CS2003006332

## About the service

The service operates from the childminder's family home in Uddingston, South Lanarkshire. The childminding service is registered to provide care for up to seven children up to the age of 16, of whom a maximum of three children can be under school age, and of whom one child can be less than 12 months old. 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 two open plan public rooms with kitchen area, which have direct access to the garden. Toilet facilities used by minded children are adjacent to these rooms and easily accessible by children to promote their independence.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 2 April 2024 between 10:25 and 11:40. 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.

## Key messages

- Children were settled and happy as the childminder was nurturing and loving in their interactions with them.
- Children enjoyed a range of play experiences within the childminder setting and the local community, which supported their learning and development.
- Personal plans should be developed and formalised to ensure they contain relevant information to support children's needs.
- The childminder should complete child protection and paediatric first aid training to refresh their skills and knowledge in these topics. This would contribute to children's safety and wellbeing.
- The childminder should continue to develop effective quality assurance processes to sustain their good practise and ensure positive outcomes for children.

## 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 and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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

Children were settled and happy as the childminder was nurturing and loving in their interactions with them. Children sought comfort from the childminder and were given reassurance and cuddles, which supported their emotional wellbeing.

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and referred to their templates to record core information about children and their individual needs. SCMA is a national umbrella organisation whose main aim is to promote childminding as a quality childcare service. The childminder knew the children in their care well, their unique personalities and preferences. This had been supported through general discussions and information gathered from children and their parents. Children's progress was captured and shared with parents using photographs. Information to support personal planning for children was mainly stored on the childminder's mobile telephone so that they could readily share any updates with parents and ensure continuity in their care. 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 confidentially and lawfully.

We acknowledged the childminder's attention to regular and respectful communication with parents about their children's care but have asked that this is recorded in a systematic way. In order to comply with national guidance, children's personal plans should be formally reviewed with families at least every six months. This will help the childminder and parents to reflect on children's progress and identify next steps in supporting their individual care, learning and development. We sent the childminder a link to the Care Inspectorate's 'Guide for providers on personal planning: early learning and childcare', which can be found within the HUB area of our website. (See area for improvement 1.)

We observed some of the routines that the childminder had in place to create a homely atmosphere where children were safe, healthy and nurtured. For example, the childminder cooked home made meals for children that contributed to their healthy diet. They had registered as a food business to ensure they followed good hygiene practices when preparing food for children. Food safety is very important for childminders because children are a vulnerable group. This means children can be more seriously affected by food poisoning and food allergies than some other groups of people. All three children present had a morning nap and the childminder was sensitive to children's individual comforters, and routines that parents had shared. This ensured there was continuity in children's care and they felt safe.

The childminder was confident about their role and responsibilities for protecting children and keeping them safe. However they had not participated in child protection training for some time therefore we advised that they access this as soon as possible. For example SCMA offer an online training programme. Keeping training up-to-date will ensure children are kept safe and enable the childminder to respond to any concerns in a timely and sensitive manner. We have made a related area for improvement within the section 'How good is our staff team?'

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

There were three children aged three years and under during our visit, who were having fun and enjoying the companionship of each other and the childminder. The pace of the day was relaxed and led by the children. The environment supported children to learn key skills in literacy and numeracy through play. Children could choose from a wide range of toys, games, and books that were easily accessible at their height. We observed children independently accessing resources that supported their interests and play ideas. One of the children gave a commentary on their activities during imaginative play within the toy kitchen, "I'm making tea but I've spilt the hot water." The childminder naturally introduced new language, using lots of open ended questions to extend the child's thinking and learning. For example, how they might keep themselves safe when there were spillages.

The childminder regularly rotated toys and books to ensure they matched children's changing interests and abilities. This helped promote children's curiosity and offer them challenge. We noted that the majority of toys and resources offered were manufactured therefore discussed the value of providing 'loose parts' for children. Loose parts are natural or open ended materials, which help children develop their imagination and problem solve as they explore different shapes and textures. We did not observe the children playing outside but acknowledged that children had opportunities to play with natural materials in the garden, which they had direct access to. Having a deeper connection with the natural world and sensory materials supports brain development, as children explore how their actions impact on what's around them.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were further enhanced through good connections to their wider community. The childminder regularly took children for walks in local parks and the castle grounds, which encouraged them to be active and develop confidence in new skills.

**Areas for improvement**

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should review and update children's personal plans with families every six months, or sooner if requested or required. This will ensure personal plans are a current reflection of each child with agreed next steps for care, learning and development.

This is to ensure that care and support are consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

**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.**

Children's wellbeing was promoted from being included in a homely setting. The childminder's home was warm, clean and well ventilated with plenty of natural light. The childminder had created an enabling environment where children felt welcome and had a sense of ownership of the space. Children had space to play and also to rest and relax on soft furnishings. They enjoyed free flow between the areas designated for childminding purposes, this independence enabled children to choose between individual play, or joining their friends for shared activities.

To support children's safety and wellbeing, the childminder risk assessed all areas used by them. Risk assessments were underpinned by the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) templates but the childminder adopted a dynamic approach that involved the children. This meant children were taking responsibility for their own safety and developing analytical skills. For example, during our visit the childminder noticed a crack in one of the toy storage boxes and immediately removed it while chatting to the children about why this was a hazard and what they could replace the box with. Children were also learning about safe boundaries because if they strayed into the hallway, the childminder gently reminded them of their play parameters, coaxing them back by inviting them to join interesting activities.

Children's safety and wellbeing were further supported through the childminder's effective cleaning procedures for the childminding spaces and resources. This ensured children benefitted from a clean, safe environment. Minded children had access to a downstairs bathroom with handwashing facilities. We advised that this would be enhanced by the provision of a step both to help smaller children reach the sink or to support the childminder's leg when lifting children to wash their hands. This would ensure children's hands were washed effectively and safely. We reminded the childminder that minded children should be provided with a separate towel from that of the household, to prevent any cross contamination. Nappy changing resources were available and stored hygienically, however we stressed the importance of the childminder wearing an apron when changing nappies. Washing children's hands at the end of the nappy changing routine would also promote good personal hygiene habits in preparation for potty training. These measures will assist with infection prevention and control. (See area for improvement 1.)

## Areas for improvement

1. Children's wellbeing and safety should be supported within an environment where the risk of cross infection is minimised through good hygiene practices, in accordance with 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education' (Health Protection Scotland, March 2024). This should include but not be limited to:

- a) the childminder supporting children's effective handwashing, informed by their stage of development;
- b) the childminder wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) during children's nappy changing routines.

This is to ensure that care and support are consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

## 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 was welcoming and engaged well with the inspection process, they were responsive to suggestions and areas for development. The childminder had appropriate public liability 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.

The childminder had built trusting relationships with families, who had used the service for many years. Consultation with and families tended to be verbal and informal, for example children were routinely consulted about resources and activities they would like to support their play. This approach meant children felt the childminder valued and acted upon their opinions, therefore building their self esteem.

Parents were encouraged to share suggestions for strategies and routines that worked well when supporting their children at home. The childminder agreed that formally recording any consultations with parents would ensure that they would feel respected and active participants in the service development. We encouraged the childminder to look at Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to assist them in evaluating their service. The tool is children's rights and play based. As such, it could help the childminder gather evidence as well as formulating more focussed questions to gain constructive feedback from families.

The childminder had previously made good use of Scottish Childminding Association resources to organise their record keeping and quality assurance. We discussed the importance of keeping accurate records that the childminder should routinely update, under the conditions of their registration set by the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. For example children's personal plans and the childminder's own professional development. We noted 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. We advised the childminder to submit a variation to amend this. To support high quality outcomes for children and families, the childminder should further develop systems to monitor and evaluate the service provided. (See area for improvement 1.)

### Areas for improvement

1. Quality assurance systems should be developed to establish an effective culture of continuous improvement that ensures positive outcomes for children.

This should include, but not be limited to, making effective use of monitoring and self evaluation, to help assess quality and inform improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

### 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.

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

The childminder was passionate and professional in their role of caring for children. They had many years of experience as a childminder and enjoyed this role. Children experienced warmth, kindness and compassion from the childminder, who was responsive to their individual cues. As a result children had built positive attachments with the childminder where they felt safe and secure. Through modelling empathy and compassion toward children, the childminder made it more likely that children would learn to be kind toward each other and to develop friendships.

During our inspection visit the childminder was open to ideas for how they could develop their practice thus ensuring that they contributed to good outcomes for children. As a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), the childminder made good use of their materials to keep up-to date with current developments in early learning and childcare. However, we noted that the childminder had not participated in professional development activities for some time. For example, child protection and paediatric first aid training should be updated on a three yearly cycle. This is so that the childminder has the capacity to

competently respond and act on any wellbeing, child protection or safeguarding concerns. We encouraged the childminder to continue to make good use of best practice guidance to support their professional development. We emailed them some links to best practice documents from the HUB area of our website, to inform their professional reading. (See area for improvement 1.)

## Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development the childminder should consider ways to keep their professional knowledge up-to-date. This should include, but is not limited to, refreshing their skills in child protection and paediatric first aid.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

## 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 must keep the records required for each child outlined in the care inspectorate 'records childminder must keep' guidance. This can be accessed using the link <http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/481028/records-childminding-services-must-keep-and-notification-reporting-guidance-v5-.pdf>. The childminder should be fully informed about the children's needs and have the necessary information on children to provide the right care and support.

**This area for improvement was made on 7 June 2018.**

### Action taken since then

The childminder used Scottish Childminding Association contract templates to record core information about children. Parents kept the childminder up to date with children's changing needs informally either verbally or using electronic messaging. This helped ensure the childminder had the necessary information on children to provide the right care and support. We recognised the progress made but have made a new areas for improvement to ensure that all aspects of children's personal plans are formally reviewed at least every six months.

## 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

## 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.