

# Busy Bees Childminding Child Minding

Innerleithen

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
20 August 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Nadine Patterson

**Service provider number:**  
SP2023000025

**Service no:**  
CS2023000033

## About the service

Nadine Patterson, operating as Busy Bees Childminding is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children under 12 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 1 year.

The service is close to local primary schools, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room, kitchen, playroom and downstairs toilet. The garden is accessed through the front door.

## About the inspection

This was an short notice announced inspection which took place on Tuesday 20 August between 13:30 and 16:00. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with with one child using the service on the day of our inspection
- received on line questionnaire feedback from three families
- spoke with the childminder and observed their practice
- reviewed documents.

**Key messages**

- Children benefitted from a home from home environment.
- There was a range of activities available for the children to choose from that catered to their interests.
- The childminder should move forward with their plans to improve experiences in the garden.
- Trusting and respectful relationships had been built with children and families.
- Families held the childminder in high regard.
- The childminder made good use of learning opportunities and experiences in the local community.

**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

The childminder fostered a nurturing and respectful environment through their warm and caring approach. We observed high-quality interactions between the childminder and the minded child, which demonstrated strong and positive relationships. These interactions helped children feel loved, valued, and respected. Parents praised the childminder telling us, 'Overall, I am very happy with the care our child is provided with. My child is always very excited to go to Nadine's and when I drop them off they enter Nadine's home sometimes without saying goodbye to me. This makes me feel reassured that my child is very settled there. Thank you Nadine' and 'Nadine is caring, kind and nurturing'.

The childminder worked well in supporting children and families into the setting. By encouraging families to settle at their own pace, the childminder recognised the uniqueness of each child, their family and the importance of fostering secure attachments. During settling-in visits, the childminder requested parents to complete paperwork and engage in discussions about their child, ensuring an understanding of the child's needs and preferences. This was important for ensuring a smooth transition, as it allowed the childminder to understand the child's needs, routines, and preferences, fostering a secure and supportive environment from the start.

Children's emotional security and wellbeing was supported by routines that reflected their individual needs and family wishes. Because the childminder knew children's routines, needs and interests well, they spoke with affection and confidence about each child and how they supported and met children's needs. This was echoed by a parent who told us, 'She listens and is flexible to my child's needs as they change'. Personal plan folders included important family information, 'all about me' forms and accident records. These were shared with families, as confirmed by a parent who stated, 'We see the personal plan frequently to update any items'. The childminder was aware that some personal plans needed to be updated. We discussed how families could become more central to this. The childminder was receptive and planned to put this in place.

Through regular discussions and the use of technology, families were informed of their child's care, play and learning in the childminding setting. This was confirmed by parents who told us, 'Nadine is available at drop off and pick up to discuss any issues about our child' and 'My child is always happy to go and the photos sent throughout the day show him smiling and happy'! Furthermore, the childminder knew the importance of gathering information from other care givers, as confirmed by a parent who told us, 'Nadine is a fantastic childminder she is friendly and caring and always informs me of any information passed on from the nursery when my child is picked up'. This engagement facilitated a partnership approach to care, play and learning outcomes.

Children enjoyed a relaxed, unhurried and safe mealtime experience. At mealtimes childminder sat with children at the table chatting and interacting with them supporting their social skills whilst they ate at a pace that was right for them. Parents provided packed lunches which children ate at the table or took as a picnic for when they were out and about. Snacks, provided by the childminder included rice cakes, toast, vegetables and fruit. Fresh water was available in individual drinking cups throughout the day which encouraged children to remain hydrated.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

During the inspection, it was evident that the child we met felt comfortable and engaged, happily playing with their chosen toys. With great knowledge of each child, the childminder regularly updated the experiences and spaces based on their interests. A parent confirmed this approach, noting, 'Nadine changes the play experiences after observing my child's interests or speaking to us. She considers my child's needs and likes when planning activities.' Additionally, a child shared, 'I love all the fun things we do together. We do experiments and potions, go to the library and the park, and bake cakes.' These comments highlighted that children enjoyed high-quality play, learning, and development opportunities tailored to their interests and needs.

The childminder had some loose parts materials in the playroom, which were interesting items that could be used in various ways to enhance creativity and imagination. To further support children's development, the childminder should continue to expand these materials and natural resources. This focus should extend to the planned improvements in garden experiences, ensuring that the outdoor play opportunities also fostered creativity and imagination.

The childminder provided opportunities for children to enjoy the natural outdoor environment through walks to parks, and other places of interest. This supported the development of social skills and confidence, as confirmed by a parent who told us, 'There are lots of experiences for my child to explore outside spaces. They also has opportunities to develop social skills by attending local groups. They are encouraged to be creative and is given opportunities for sensory play'. Such opportunities enhanced children's play and learning through strong connections to their own and 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 and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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

A homely environment sent a strong message that it was a place where children would be loved and could have fun. The comfortable and welcoming home was thoughtfully arranged to provide children with ample space to play, rest or relax. In the living room, space was set aside for physical activity while the layout of the play room encouraged independence, allowing children to make choices about where and what they played with. The minded child moved around the spaces with confidence demonstrating a feeling of being at home. The convenient accessibility of the toilet and kitchen on the ground floor, facilitated supervision whilst the children and childminder followed routines.

The dining table in the kitchen facilitated close supervision and interaction while children enjoyed their lunch. Highchairs allowed younger children to sit safely alongside older ones, enabling the childminder to carry out tasks that may take her away from the table while remaining present with the children. This arrangement fostered a supportive environment where children and the childminder could eat together, enhancing social interactions and allowing for continuous engagement and supervision.

The childminder assessed risks in the home, garden, and places visited with children. This, combined with a daily routine of maintaining a clean and clutter-free environment, helped minimise risks to children's health and wellbeing. When changes occurred, such as building works in the home, the childminder took a serious

approach to how these might impact the setting's operation and children's experiences. These proactive measures contributed to a safe, well organised environment that positively supported children's experiences and safety.

Children could play in the garden at the front of the home. As part of their improvement plan, the childminder intended to expand on the variety of toys and play experiences in this area. We supported this plan and the positive outcomes it would bring. Additionally, we agreed that the childminder should consider installing a higher gate to enhance children's safety. In the meantime, the childminder remained extra vigilant with the current gate. This helped keep children safe when playing outdoors.

## How good is our leadership?

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 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

A professional approach and commitment to delivering high standards of care were evident in the childminder's approach. With the needs of children and their families at the centre of their decisions, the childminder constantly worked on improving the setting. This approach led to strong relationships with families and a continually evolving service.

Before starting in the setting, the childminder provided families with verbal and written information about their family, home and childminding service, including copies of policies. This practice was important as it ensured transparency, helped parents understand the environment their child would be in, and set clear expectations from the start. As a result, parents were well informed and could be confident about the care their children would receive, fostering trust and open communication from the onset. This was further confirmed by a parent who noted, 'Nadine is very friendly and communicates very well with me. We have built up a good rapport which enables us to be open and honest with each other'.

Well organised management did not go unnoticed by a parent who commented, 'Nadine is a lovely kind Person who is always smiling enthusiastic and on top of any admin duties involved with her business which makes everything extremely easy'. This organisation allowed the childminder to operate her setting efficiently.

The childminder carried out self-evaluation of their service meaning they assessed the quality of care and planned for improvements. The writing of an improvement plan gave information on how the childminder planned to improve the service. Improvements included sharing more developmental information with parents and enhancing the play experiences in the garden. We agreed that these improvements would further enhance the quality of the setting and outcomes for children.

## 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: Staff skills, knowledge and values

As a result of dedication and hard work since registration, the childminder had successfully created a warm and nurturing home from home environment. Their prior experience in early learning and childcare, combined with her insights as a parent, enabled the childminder to understand the expectations of parents and the needs of children. This helped build trustful relationships as confirmed by a parent who told us, 'My child absolutely loves spending time at Nadine's and I very much trust her completely with the care of my child'.

Although the renewal of child protection training was pending, the childminder was confident and knowledgeable in relation to child development and keeping children safe. Through conversation with us, the childminder was able to demonstrate an ability to recognise and act on any care, development or safeguarding needs or concerns. This ensured children were protected and safe in the childminder's care.

With a positive attitude toward developing their skills and improving outcomes for children, the childminder demonstrated a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. Completion of core training, including first aid and food hygiene contributed to the safety and wellbeing of children. This commitment to continuous learning helped enhance the childminder's knowledge, resulting in improved outcomes for children.

Meeting other childminders and being a member of the Scottish Childminding Association supported the childminder to keep up to date with new developments and explore topical issues. This indicated a dedicated approach with a commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for children and their families. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate bitesize videos and best practice documents on the Hub. This would support the childminder to further update their knowledge of current best practice.

## 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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