

# Troup, Donna Child Minding

Aberdeen

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 August 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Donna Troup

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003907264

**Service no:**  
CS2003019918

## About the service

Donna Troup provides a childminding service from their home in the suburb of Bridge of Don, Aberdeen. The childminder may care for 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.

The service is close to a local primary school, shops, parks and other amenities. The children have access to the open plan kitchen, dining, living room, toilet facilities, and the upper decked area of an enclosed garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 August 2024 between 08:30 and 11:30 and 15:30 and 16:45. 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.

To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke with four children
- Received seven responses to our online questionnaire
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and daily experiences
- Reviewed documents.

**Key messages**

- Children experienced warm, nurturing and caring interactions.
- Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of the children.
- The childminder should ensure personal plans are reviewed at least once every six months or sooner where required.
- Children experienced a variety of planned and spontaneous play opportunities which supported them to achieve and develop skills.
- Children benefitted from being cared for in a clean, well maintained and homely environment.
- The childminder completed regular professional development which supported the childminder in their practice.

**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 different parts of this key question as good and very good, with an overall grade of good. Several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed the areas for improvement.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy, relaxed and confident in the care of the childminder. They experienced warm and nurturing care and had formed strong connections with the childminder. Children's emotional wellbeing was supported as the childminder responded to their cues for affection and reassurance. This supported them to feel safe and secure.

Parents told us they had a strong connection with the childminder and described them as "very easy to talk to", "approachable" and "like an extended member of the family." This supported communication and positive relationships.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of the children. During discussion the childminder demonstrated a good understanding of the children's care and learning needs and how these were being met. Older children had completed 'All About Me' information. However, some personal plans contained limited information and had not been recently updated to reflect children's current needs. This raised the potential for information to be missed. We signposted the childminder to 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning: Early Learning and Childcare' (**see area for improvement 1**).

Children were kept safe by effective medication systems and procedures. Whilst children did not currently need medication administered, paperwork was in place should it be required. A policy supported the childminder's understanding and practice and promoted parents' awareness of their process.

The childminder recognised the importance of rest and sleep for children's overall wellbeing. A sleep mat was available to support safe and comfortable sleep for the youngest children. Older children relaxed on the comfortable sofa. This ensured children had opportunities to rest and relax after a busy day at school.

Children enjoyed eating together at the dining table, in an unhurried and relaxed atmosphere. Snack time was a positive social experience. The childminder was focused on the needs of the children and promoted independence skills. One child told us about their role as snack helper, "we put the water and milk in cups and take the plates to people." Children enjoyed home cooked meals and snacks provided by the childminder which met their individual cultural and dietary needs. One child commented, "Donna's macaroni is the best." This meant children ate foods they enjoyed and were well fed.

Children were protected from harm as the childminder showed a good understanding of their role in identifying, recording and reporting any safeguarding concerns. They also understood factors which may impact on a child's wellbeing and confidently discussed support that may be offered to children and their families.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children were offered a variety of planned and spontaneous play opportunities. These offered children play and learning which included imagining, being creative and problem solving. Experiences included building models, baking, drawing and playing games. The childminder was responsive to children's interests and ideas. For example, a child interested in football had been supported to find out more about their favourite players. As a result, children had fun and experienced learning that was meaningful.

Children had access to a wide range of play resources to support and develop their learning. Toys and games were age appropriate and included construction kits, wooden blocks, puzzles, games and art and crafts. Children told us they liked playing with these resources and proudly showed us clay models they had recently made. This supported their creativity and imagination.

Children benefitted from the childminder sitting alongside them to support them in their play. Children involved the childminder by inviting them to play games. The childminder responded enthusiastically, making eye contact and commenting on what they were learning. This promoted communication and positive relationships.

Language, literacy and numeracy was naturally woven into daily experiences, for example, when playing word and number games together. Children were able to access a variety of books, individual scrapbooks and mark making resources which encouraged literacy skills. As a result, children were happy and developing confidence in their abilities as they learned through play.

Children had good opportunities daily to benefit from fresh air, exercise and to explore their local community. The childminder recognised and valued the importance of this by taking children to groups, going on walks and visiting the local play areas. This supported children to be healthy and included.

The childminder recognised children's achievements. Parents were kept updated with information and photographs regularly through messages and face to-face discussions. A parent commented, "every day we receive updates about what they did with their day." Another parent said the childminder, "goes over and above to share information." This meant parents felt valued and included in their children's play and learning experiences.

#### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's information is current and relevant, the childminder should ensure that all information in personal plans is reviewed at least every six months with families.

This is to ensure that care and support is 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.

Children experienced an environment which was comfortable, bright and well-maintained. Photographs of children and books showing past learning experiences were attractively displayed. This helped to create a space where children felt included and where they mattered.

Children played mainly in the living and dining area. Furniture was arranged to ensure there was enough room to relax on the sofa, play on the floor or draw at the table. Cupboards housed easily accessible boxes containing a range of good quality, age-appropriate resources. Children selected resources and chose where to play, this supported them to be independent and lead their play.

Children were cared for in a clean and tidy environment. Children were reminded to wash their hands at key times, such as before eating and after toileting. They were provided with paper towels to help prevent illness through cross contamination. This promoted a safe and hygienic environment for children.

Children were guided and supported to stay safe through discussion. During the walk to school, Children were encouraged to consider road safety. They also knew how far they were allowed to walk before waiting for the childminder. This promoted a sense of independence whilst keeping children safe and well. Risk assessments were in place for the home and accessing the community. However, these had not been recently reviewed. The childminder should review these regularly to ensure they remain relevant and in line with current guidance. The childminder agreed to action this.

Direct access through the patio doors to a secure garden promoted children's choice in where they played. Although they did not play outside during the inspection, children and parents told us about visiting facilities in the community. A child commented, "I like when we go to the park to play football." A parent commented the childminder, "regularly takes my child out to the park or to feed the ducks." These provided children with opportunities for physical play and exploration and supported health and wellbeing.

## 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

The service aims and objectives were shared with families when registering with the service. This allowed parents to know what to expect from the service and supported a continuity of care.

Children's and families' views were sought to support the continued development of the service. The childminder had used daily conversations and occasional questionnaires to capture their thoughts and suggestions. This included suggestions on experiences, resources and preferred methods of communication. Most parents agreed they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. A parent commented, "any suggestions by the parents are taken on board." This promoted working together to ensure the childminder met the needs of children and families.

The childminder was very experienced and felt they offered a good service which met the needs of the children and families in their care. Through discussion they identified areas for development, including developing effective systems which were easy to update and maintain. We discussed the benefits of using self-evaluation tool 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged children.' This would further support self-evaluation and quality assurance of the service to support continuous improvement and outcomes for children.

The childminder had developed a range of policies and procedures, these were shared with parents, so they knew what to expect from the service. We suggested more detail be included in some policies. For example, reference to national guidance within the child protection policy. The childminder agreed to make the necessary changes.

## How good is our staff team?

## 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children.

Children were happy, confident and relaxed in the care of the childminder. Responsive, respectful and nurturing interactions ensured that children's needs were met. When unsure, children looked to the childminder for reassurance and were given affection and comfort. This demonstrated strong attachments, supporting the children to feel safe and at ease.

Children experienced care which was responsive to their individual needs. The childminder understood individual children's cues and body language. This enabled them to meet the needs and support children who were developing their language, communication and self-regulation skills. The childminder worked with families and other professionals to support children's development. For example, using strategies to support speech and language. This effective communication meant children were supported to achieve their potential.

Children's experiences and opinions were noted and acted upon by the childminder, supporting their confidence and inclusion. For example, the childminder spoke with children about their interests and what they were learning at school and tried to support their learning while in their care.

Children and their families benefitted from a childminder who was committed to providing quality care. The childminder had kept their skills and knowledge up to date through attending training and reading guidance. They had accessed core training in child protection and first aid. In response to children's needs they had attended additional training on children's mental health and neurodiversity. This had positively impacted on practice and children's experiences. The childminder had kept a record of training they had undertaken and reflected on what they had learned to continually improve practice.

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and had supportive links with other childminders. The childminder was aware of the Care Inspectorate Hub and received provider updates from the organisation. The regular access to resources and guidance help promote good outcomes for children.

## 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 ensure children's records are updated every six months or earlier if necessary to help keep children safe in the event of an emergency.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 13: Improving the service.

**This area for improvement was made on 4 May 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place for every child. However, some plans contained limited information and had not been recently updated to reflect children's current needs. Information should be reviewed, at a minimum every six months in line with legislation.

**This area for improvement has not been met, we have reworded it and repeated the area for improvement at this inspection.**

### 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?	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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