

# Milne, Fiona Child Minding

Grantown-on-Spey

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
22 August 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Fiona Milne

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003907674

**Service no:**  
CS2003007837

## About the service

Fiona Milne provides a childminding service for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than six are under 12 years; of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The childminder operates her service from her family home, located in the centre of Grantown on Spey, situated in the Cairngorms. Children have access to an enclosed garden at the rear of the property, which is situated within walking distance from the local school, shops, parks and woodlands.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 August 2024, between 10.15am and 12.45pm. 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 three children using the service;
- reviewed feedback received from one family;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children received warm and nurturing care from the childminder.
- Children had access to a variety of resources, and would now benefit from the addition of more loose parts to support their developing imagination and problem solving skills.
- Play and learning experiences were enhanced through strong links with the wider community.
- The childminder had a warm and welcoming home that made children feel valued.
- The childminder was committed to providing quality care and support to children and families, making improvements to her home to enhance children's experiences

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very 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?

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 1.1: Nurturing Care and Support

Children and their families experienced a friendly and welcoming service. We found that the childminder provided good care and support for the children, which ensured positive outcomes for them. Transition visits had recently taken place for the children attending on the day of inspection. The childminder was establishing close bonds with them, and was attentive and responsive to them. We saw warm, kind and nurturing interactions, smiles, praise and encouragement. As a result, the children were relaxed and comfortable in the childminder's care.

The childminder knew the children in her care well and personal planning information was used effectively. She confidently discussed their routines and responded to their cues when they needed support. She recognised verbal and nonverbal cues, which ensured that children received the support they needed at the right time. Parents were central to sharing relevant information about their child's routines, like and dislikes. Daily communication between families and the childminder supported this. One parent commented "Fiona is lovely, easy to talk to and she's great with my child". Key information was updated when care needs changed, supporting the childminder to provide the care and support children needed at the right time.

The childminder provided a sociable and unhurried lunch experience for the children. She followed dietary preferences and was confident in the prevention and management of choking. The childminder referred to national guidance, such as "Setting the Table" and "Nutritional guidelines for early years (1-5 years) Scottish Government 2006", supporting healthy choices. The childminder offered the children appropriate levels of support and supervision. This meant that children benefited from a positive mealtime experience.

The childminder recognised the importance of rest and sleep for children's overall wellbeing. She followed family routines, ensuring children had opportunities for rest throughout the day. This contributed to children's safety and emotional security.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children were having fun as they played together. One child was busy feeding the 'babies', while another made a den. The childminder supported their developing early numeracy skills, introducing mathematical language such as shape and measurement. The childminder offered a range of resources that were suitable for children's stage of development. Children had access to natural materials in the enclosed garden space to the rear of the house. They had access to sand and water play, and had been growing fruit and vegetables. This supported children to explore and learn about the wider world. We discussed introducing more open ended materials to the playroom, to support children's developing curiosities and problem solving skills.

The childminder supported children's developing literacy, language and communication skills through considered interactions in their play. She labelled colours and repeated words, supporting children to identify new things, and consolidate their learning. She demonstrated a good understanding of child development, matching conversations to each child's needs. Such as, giving children time to respond and repeating questions and answers. As a result, children were learning a range of life long skills.

Planning was informal and responsive to the changing interests and ages of the children attending. The childminder recognised different types of play and provided opportunities for children to consolidate their learning.

Children were developing strong connections within the local community. They regularly visited local groups, and met up with other childminders and their children. One parent commented that their child had "regular socialisation with other young children". This regular access to the wider community enhanced children's play and learning opportunities.

### 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 experienced care and support in a home that was comfortable and furnished to a high standard. The childminder's home was warm and welcoming, which told children that they mattered. Children benefited from a playroom area that was designed to allow them to access resources independently. The recent addition of sliding doors created a separate space from the living room, providing spaces where children could play and learn, or rest and relax.

The childminder's home was clean, as effective infection prevention control measures reduced the risk of possible infection spreading. Children were supported to wash their hands after toileting or nappy changes, and before eating food. The childminder demonstrated confidence around food hygiene, which further promoted a safe environment for children.

Well considered arrangements for security around the childminder's home contributed to keeping children safe. Stair gates were in use, and external doors were locked to prevent children from leaving unattended. The garden to the rear of the childminder's home was surrounded by a secure fence. The childminder supported children to take part in risky play, such as climbing and learning how to ride on wheeled toys in the garden. This meant that children were developing their sense of self confidence.

### 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.

Working in partnership and developing positive relationships with parents and carers was important to the childminder. She recognised the importance of daily communication and information sharing with families, to ensure that she was providing the appropriate care and support to meet the individual needs of the children. Parents spoke positively about how approachable the childminder was and how happy they were with their daily conversations and informal feedback.

The aims and objectives of the service were a true reflection of the care and support children and families received. The childminder shared these with families when they joined the service. This supported families to know what to expect from the childminder.

The childminder had made recent changes to the garden, following reflection on what was working well and where improvements needed to be made. For example, the addition of a permanent sheltered area, supported children to spend time outside throughout the year. She had plans to add raised beds and tunnels to the garden, to encourage children's interest in planting and growing.

The childminder kept up to date with best practice and guidance through regular updates from the Scottish Childminding Association. We discussed using the "Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged children" to further support her self-evaluation.

## 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.

The childminder supported children with compassionate and responsive care. She had developed strong relationships with children and families who had been using her service for a number of years. This supported a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn in.

The childminder had a wealth of experience, and was committed to providing children in her care with quality care and support. Alongside completing core training, such as first aid and child protection, the childminder completed additional training as part of her own continuous personal development. We discussed recording the impact of training, to support the childminder to make links between learning and enhanced outcomes for children.

The childminder met regularly with other childminders, using these opportunities to engage in professional discussion to build knowledge. She engaged well in the inspection process, demonstrating her commitment to improving outcomes for children.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very 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?	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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