

# Cheeky Cherubs Childminding Child Minding

Buckie

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
6 September 2024

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2015986802

**Service no:**  
CS2015336394

## About the service

Cheeky Cherubs Childminding is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six 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 the children of the childminder's family.

The childminder's home is in a coastal village in Moray. The service is within walking distance of local schools and other amenities, such as the community garden, woodlands and the beach. Children are cared for in a playroom within the home and have access to a fully enclosed garden. They have access to the family kitchen, the bathroom and one bedroom.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday, 4 September 2024 between 09:30 and 12:30. One inspector carried out the inspection. 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 the childminder about the service they provided
- Spoke with children during their play
- Observed practice and children's experiences
- Reviewed documents related to the service
- Gathered the views of parents and carers of children who attend the service.

## Key messages

- Strong and caring relationships with children and their families ensured children's individual needs were very well supported and respected.
- Children were empowered to lead their own play and learning, and the child-led ethos was a strength of the service.
- Children benefitted from high-quality experiences both indoors and outdoors and within their local community.
- The childminder involved children and families in evaluating the service and identifying areas for development, leading to improved outcomes for children.
- The childminder was committed to their own professional development and was proactive in seeking training that supported 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very 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?

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

### 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were nurtured and supported through their daily experiences, and as a result were settled and happy. The childminder had formed strong connections with each of the children and offered cuddles, reassurance and gentle guidance as needed. These warm interactions supported children's overall wellbeing.

The childminder used their knowledge of children's and families' preferences to support each child individually. This provided continuity of care between the service and home. Where personal care was required, this was delivered in a warm and caring way, and this helped children to feel secure and nurtured. Parents told us that they were very happy with the care and support their children received. One parent shared, "I am very happy with the care my child receives with Iona. It has a very family feeling set up which my child enjoys."

Mealtimes were enjoyable, sociable and relaxed. The older children were familiar with routines around snack time, such as handwashing and gathering round the table. The children were supported to be independent as they chose ingredients for their wrap. They happily chatted about what they were eating and their plans for the rest of the day. Children were offered a choice of fruit afterwards, and the older children helped the childminder to prepare and serve these. The childminder demonstrated a very good working knowledge of best practice at mealtimes. This helped to ensure that children had choice, were involved in meal preparation and were kept safe from choking hazards. During conversation with children, the childminder made very good links with growing vegetables in the community garden. This helped to promote good eating habits, and enhance their understanding of the wider world. Water was on offer throughout the day, and this helped to promote good hydration.

Children were supported to sleep in accordance with the information provided by their parents. The childminder knew children's and families' sleep preferences well and was aware of best practice guidance for safer sleeping. A travel cot was available in the bedroom which offered privacy and peace to sleep. This helped to promote good habits around sleep.

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through effective use of personal planning. The childminder gathered detailed information from families on their child's needs and preferences and reviewed this with families regularly. This ongoing sharing of information enabled the childminder to provide continuity of care and respond sensitively to any changes in a child's life. Where medication was required, it was stored and delivered safely and in accordance with best practice. We discussed with the childminder, the addition of some information to their medication overview. This would ensure all relevant information was always accessible, for example when on outings.

The childminder had a sound knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities in safeguarding and protecting children. They had attended child protection training and used this to keep their child protection policy and procedures up to date. This would enable them to take appropriate action if they had any concerns for the welfare and wellbeing of children.

### 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun as they experienced high quality play, learning and development opportunities. They expressed joy as they played at the activity table, played with wooden book characters, and ran and explored in the garden. The wide variety of high-quality play and learning experiences on offer was stimulating, challenging and appropriate to the ages and stages of the children.

Children were supported to lead their own play both indoors and outdoors, and could choose toys and resources independently. The childminder supported them as they played, following their interest. They added key words and questions to help them to explore their thinking further and made links to previous play experiences or knowledge. This allowed children to play and learn at their own pace and helped them to build skills for life, including problem solving and teamwork. The older children were encouraged and praised for modelling play for the younger children. This further helped to promote curiosity and learning. When all the children became involved in role play, making dinner for a horse, the childminder supported this with enthusiasm and let play develop. This demonstrated their very good understanding of child development and how best to support free play.

Play experiences helped children to develop skills in language, literacy and numeracy. Children were eager to listen and interact when the childminder read aloud to them. The childminder had been developing more opportunities for numeracy as part of their improvement plan. For example, they had added numbers and dot patterns to natural materials, such as pebbles and sticks, which the children had collected themselves. The childminder had reflected on all the numeracy developments they had undertaken and had identified how they had enhanced children's play and learning. We suggested that next steps may be to link these experiences to the new tracking systems they had recently introduced. This would provide another means for the childminder to share children's successes and achievements with families.

Children's opportunities for learning were enhanced through strong connections with the local community. Regular trips to the community garden enabled children to plant vegetables and make connections with food at home. These trips were organised with other childminders and as a result, children also had good opportunities to play and socialise with other children and adults. Parents strongly agreed that their children had lots of good quality opportunities to explore the local community. One parent shared with us, "The childminder likes to spend lots of time outdoors, they have learned so much. She also takes them to local groups if they have any events on that may be good for the children."

Children's learning journeys were carefully summarised in folders with photos and comments, which clearly showed fun, development and learning. These were supplemented by more formal observations through a digital platform. In addition, the childminder had engaged well with new tracking documents provided by the local authority. All parents strongly agreed they were fully involved and informed about their child's learning and development. The very strong and well-established ethos of partnership working with families ensured a consistent approach to meeting children's needs.

#### 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 were welcomed into a home that was comfortable and well furnished. The playroom was well laid out to enable children to access things they were interested in and gave a strong message to children that they matter. In the garden, the very well thought-out layout and resources helped to capture and maintain

children's interest. This led to the children becoming deeply engaged in their play. For example, the well-stocked mud kitchen enabled one very young child to play there for an extended time whilst the older children took turns on trikes and cars. These experiences supported children's independence and freedom of choice.

The garden was a particular strength of the service. A large grassy area provided space to run and cycle, and a covered deck area with boat and sand pit enabled children to play outside in all weathers. Children could independently access sheds full of resources, one of which contained photo displays of their play and "wow" moments. Children enjoyed reflecting on these and they helped to inspire next steps for discovery and learning. Overall, the layout and resources available reflected the children's interests and were appropriate for their ages and stages of development.

Children benefited from the childminder's benefit-risk approach to outdoor play. This enabled children to take part in a broad range of interesting play opportunities, to challenge and extend their learning. This helped to build confidence and develop skills for life. The childminder took appropriate steps to minimise risks to children, both indoors and outdoors. They had undertaken clear and comprehensive risk assessments and consulted with families when developing them. For example, the childminder had considered the SIMOA campaign when assessing trips into the community and had asked parents for their views on this. We discussed with the childminder further ways of involving the children in assessing their own risks when heading out to the garden or further afield.

The childminder had undertaken training on minimising the spread of infection and was confident in providing a clean and safe environment. This included arrangements for personal care, cleaning and food safety. Children's information was securely held on digital systems, and policies on the secure storage of personal information were clear and informative for parents.

## 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 benefited from the childminder's shared vision for their service, which was ambitious and reflected high standards for children and families. The aims of the service were in line with best practice in childcare, including a focus on wellbeing, being child centred, and promoting high quality play and learning. It was clear from communications with families that continuous improvement was central to the service and that planned developments focused on meeting the children's interests and needs.

The childminder had worked hard to involve children and families in their development plans, and regularly sought parents' views through discussions and surveys. Questionnaires were varied and focused on different aspects of the service. This made it easier for parents to contribute their views in a purposeful way. Parents strongly agreed that they were involved in developing the service. One parent told us, "The childminder regularly asks for feedback on how the children are enjoying their days and asks for suggestions as to how this could be improved." It was clear that families had confidence in the childminder, to support their children to reach their full potential. The childminder had identified ways to capture children's views and preferences and demonstrated that these were at the heart of the service. For example, they would discuss an aspect of the service with children and ask them to draw or write about it in any way that was meaningful to them.

The childminder's approach to self-evaluation was reflective and enabled them to identify areas of the service to make improvements in. They had undertaken training to support this and as a result, had a clear understanding of how to implement changes that would benefit children. All policies and procedures had been reviewed against and linked to the most recent best practice guidance, which was very good practice.

### How good is our staff team?

### 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 benefited from nurturing and responsive care by the childminder. They spoke with the children with warmth and kindness, and focused on making sure everyone was supported, listened to and valued. Conversations with the children helped to stimulate curiosity and the childminder recognised the importance of fun in children's play, to enable learning to be taken forward. This helped to build children's confidence. Parents strongly agreed that the care their children received was of a very good quality. One parent said, "She really cares about providing an excellent service to the children and she is fully invested in them."

The childminder had developed very strong relationships with children and families, enabling them to support children's wellbeing through compassionate care. For example, they skillfully supported each individual child to settle in to the service, extending this over time where appropriate and in line with families' wishes. They offered meetings with other care providers such as the local nursery, which helped to provide consistency and continuity of care between home, the childminder and the other services. Parents told us that they valued this, and one parent told us that their child received, "Excellent care, health and wellbeing always priority."

The childminder demonstrated a very good understanding of best practice in childcare and development. They had used national guidance such as Realising the Ambition to reflect on and make changes to their practice and policies. They were fully committed to professional development and had sought training that would support them to further develop the service and enhance experiences for children. They had carefully reflected on how any such training had impacted their practice and had recorded the positive impact they had made on children's experiences. The childminder had developed a network of childminder colleagues and friends, which gave them opportunities to share ideas and challenges.

### 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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good



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