

O'Hara, Rhona Child Minding

Greenock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 January 2025

Service provided by:
Rhona O'Hara Rhona O'Hara

Service provider number:
SP2005952224

Service no:
CS2006117047

About the service

Rhona O'Hara provides her childminding service from her family home in Greenock, Inverclyde. The service is close to local schools, a nursery, parks and amenities. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor garden and play area, kitchen, toilet and sitting room.

At the time of the inspection, four children attended the service over the course of the week with varying patterns of attendance. Three children aged from two years to four years were present on the day of the inspection.

The childminder is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. The numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 January 2025 between 09:30 and 12:30. 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with the childminder.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.
- Received feedback from one parents/carers

Key messages

- Good community links supported and enhanced children's learning within their local community.
- Spaces for children were well organised and provided opportunities for children to move around freely and unhindered.
- The childminder engaged well in the inspection process, and was open to ideas and suggestions we shared during the inspection.
- Respectful and supportive relationships with children and families ensured that the childminder was responsive to meeting children's needs.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

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 experienced warm and nurturing care and they were confident and comfortable with the childminder. They appeared relaxed in the childminder's care and looked to the childminder for cuddles and comfort. For example, seeking out the childminder to read a story or join in their play. This supported children to feel loved and secure.

Children's information, including medical needs and emergency contacts had been recorded within enrolment forms. This supported the childminder in keeping children safe. The childminder knew children and families well and worked with parents to ensure they supported children's emotional, health and wellbeing needs. One parent told us: "Rhona will always have conversations with me about my children's development and what would be suited for them." Whilst the childminder could confidently discuss children in their care and their individual needs, this was not recorded within a personal plan. To continue to ensure children's needs are fully met and ensure continuity the childminder should ensure all children have a detailed written plan which is reviewed every six months as a minimum. (See area for improvement 1)

Meal times were calm and unhurried and were a good opportunity for children to develop their social skills. The childminder sat with children and offered support if needed. The children enjoyed chatting with the childminder about their day and about what they would like to do in the afternoon. As a result, children experienced a quality mealtime.

Medication forms and a policy were in place to support the administration of medication should it be required. At the time of inspection, no children required medication. Accident forms recorded relevant information and were shared with families. As a result children were kept safe and their health needs met.

Good communication and strong relationships supported families to be involved in their child's day. The childminder told us they shared relevant information during drop off and collection times. The use of WhatsApp allowed the childminder to share important updates and any photographs of children during their day. One parent told us: "Rhona will always chat at the end of the day at pick up about what's been happening that day and on days when I'm not rushing for work will make a cuppa and chat."

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were happy and having fun in the childminder's care. The childminder was responsive to children's current interests and provided resources to engage children in meaningful play experiences. For example, the childminder told us they had sourced a princess castle after the children in their care had expressed an interest in small world play. As a result, children were encouraged to learn in a context that was meaningful to them.

Planning was mainly child lead and the children could freely choose what they would like to do. The childminder had trackers in place to support them in identifying children's milestones.

We discussed with the childminder some simple ways to develop basic planning systems. This would support them in identify children's next steps and promote progression across children's learning.

The childminder understood the importance of children being outdoors. Regular access to a well resourced outdoor play space and daily walks provided daily opportunities for children to benefit from fresh air and exercise.

There were some opportunities for children to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. For example a variety of books, some games, jigsaws and some mark making tools were available for children to engage with. We discussed with the childminder how opportunities for numeracy could be further developed to support children's learning in this curricular area.

Good community links supported and enhanced children's learning within their local community. One parent told us: "My children will go to the park, soft play, walks round the dams. They will play in the garden and go visits to local places like the museum and Garden centre. Rhona also takes them to book bug every week which my children really enjoy."

Areas for improvement

1.

To support the childminder in ensuring children's emotional, health and wellbeing needs continue to be met, a written personal plan should be in place for all children within 28 days of them starting the service. This should be done in consultation with parents and reviewed every six months as a minimum.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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 were cared for in a warm, welcoming, and homely environment. The entrance way to the childminders home was well organised and children had individual spaces to leave their shoes and hang their coats. A variety of children's artwork was displayed at children's level for them to see and share with their families. This gave children the message that they mattered.

Spaces for children were well organised and provided opportunities for children to move around freely and unhindered. Some cosy spaces and soft furnishings including, pillows and blankets provided children areas to rest and relax if they wished.

A variety of resources were available for children to choose from. During our visit children enjoyed reading books, small world play, dressing up and creating cakes with playdough. Resources were easily accessible and children were able to self select. This supported children to choose what experiences they would like to participate in.

Children benefitted from regular access to the outdoors. A large, well resourced and enclosed garden area provided children with opportunities to develop their gross motor skills. The childminder told us children had the opportunity to plant and grow their own vegetables.

Children information was stored securely and to further support data protection, the childminder was registered with the Information Commissioners Office. The use of WhatsApp supported the childminder to share information and photographs of children's time at the service. This supported parents to be involved in their child's day.

Children's safety was promoted as measures were in place to minimise risk. Risk assessments were reflective of the current environment and identified potential hazards. This helped ensure children's safety.

Good infection control procedures supported children to be cared for safely. For example we saw children washing hands before lunch time. Protective equipment was used during nappy changing times and the childminder ensured children were changed in a way that promoted their dignity.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder engaged well in the inspection process, and was open to ideas and suggestions we shared during the inspection. It was evident that the childminder was committed to the children and families they cared for. As a result children and families felt valued.

The childminder had a range of policies and procedures in place to support the running of their service. Some of these had been updated to reflect current good practice. This supported children and families experience in the service.

The childminder was aware of but had not yet accessed guidance to support them in developing self-evaluation. We suggested they become familiar with the best practice document 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare'. This will support them in identifying areas for improvement and support them in developing their service. (See area for improvement 2)

Families were welcomed into the service to spend time with their children. The childminder told us they sought the views of children and families, informally, through observations and daily discussions. One parent told us: "Rhona has become part of our family and she treats my kids like they are just that. Rhona supports my children in all areas of their lives and goes above and beyond for them and us." To ensure children and families feel listened to and that their views were taken into account we encouraged the childminder to develop a more formal method of feedback that can be tracked and used to support improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. To support the childminder in evaluating and identifying improvements within their service they should develop and embed a programme of self evaluation using best practice documents, for example, 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare'.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23) and "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Quality Indicator 4.1 - Skills knowledge and values

The childminder had created a warm and nurturing environment and children benefitted from a calm and caring approach. Respectful and supportive relationships with children and families ensured that the childminder was responsive to meeting children's needs. One parent told us: "Rhona has become part of our family and she treats my kids like they are just that. Rhona supports my children in all areas of their lives and goes above and beyond for them and us."

The childminder understood their role in ensuring children were safe and protected from harm and we were satisfied they knew the steps to take should they need to involve other professionals. We reminded the childminder that child protection updates should be accessed annually. This will ensure the childminder is up to date with any new changes in legislation and guidance.

The childminder discussed how they had found it difficult to source relevant training opportunities. Therefore they had not accessed any additional training or professional reading to support and develop their knowledge and understanding. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate Hub and advised they prioritise sourcing training relevant to their practice. This will support continuous improvement and promote positive outcomes for children and families. (See area for improvement 3)

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for children, the childminder should identify and access training and professional learning to develop their skills and knowledge. They should record learning and demonstrate ways in which it has improved experiences and outcomes for children.

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, and 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 should ensure safe sleeping practices are maintained and appropriate resources are readily available to support the needs of individual children, in line with the current best practice guidance: Scottish Cot Death Trust safe sleeping guide.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3 – Health and Wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 12 June 2017.

Action taken since then

Children now sleep on firm, flat sleeping areas. Outer garments are removed for sleeping.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at 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?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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