

# Gwen's Childminding Service

## Child Minding

Greenock

**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
7 February 2025

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2020991428

**Service no:**  
CS2020381578

## About the service

Gwen's childminding service is registered to provide a care service to 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 any children of the childminder's family.

Children have access to a large living room, kitchen/dining room and dedicated playroom. They also have access to an enclosed garden area. This was not in use at the time of this inspection due to recent storm damage to the boundary fencing. The childminder was awaiting a maintenance contractor to repair this.

The service is located in a residential area of Inverkip, Inverclyde and is close to local amenities including parks, shops and schools.

## About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on Friday 7 February 2025. 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 one child using the service
- consulted families using an electronic questionnaire and received three responses
- spoke with the childminder
- observed one child at play
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children experienced warm, nurturing and respectful interactions.
- Positive relationships with families supported effective communication to ensure continuity of care for children.
- Daily experiences were planned to support children's play and learning.
- Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through positive connections with the local and wider community.
- Quality assurance and continuous improvement contributed to the provision of high quality care and children's ongoing learning and development.

## 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.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder. They experienced warm and nurturing care which supported them to feel safe and secure. Strong connections formed with the childminder supported children's emotional wellbeing. Families told us, "I am welcomed with a smile and a comforting hug by Gwen in the morning, she gives me cuddles when my mum and dad aren't there" and "Gwen greets you with a smile every morning. The children in her care are so loved."

Children's overall wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of their needs. The childminder spoke confidently about individual children's needs and the strategies used to support them. For example, when encouraging children's language development through daily routines, stories and songs. The childminder worked closely with families to ensure individual routines and preferences were consistent with home. This informed each child's personal plan. All parents who responded to our questionnaire strongly agreed they were fully involved in developing and reviewing personal plans.

The childminder recognised the importance of rest and sleep for children's overall wellbeing and followed routines from home. Travel cots were provided for younger children to rest and sleep. The childminder was aware of safe sleeping guidance, had attended training and told us children were supervised while sleeping and given lots of physical comfort when waking. This promoted good sleep habits and supported children's emotional security.

The childminder had a very good knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities in safeguarding and protecting children. They had completed child protection training and were confident in appropriate action to take if concerns for the welfare or wellbeing of children should arise. This meant that children's safety and wellbeing was well supported.

Families provided snacks and packed lunches for their children which were stored safely to ensure foods were kept fresh. The childminder sat with children throughout mealtimes to ensure their safety while eating. The childminder should transfer foods from storage containers onto plates to fully promote a homely meal time.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy and enjoying a variety of opportunities which met their needs, interests, and curiosities. They were leading their own play, exploring cars and tracks using their imagination. This meant that play was meaningful. Parents told us, "Gwen always offers interesting and engaging experiences" and "There is always variety in the play experiences that Gwen provides. My child loves the theme days."

The childminder knew children's interests well and ensured there was a balance of resources to meet their needs. Children were able to access a variety of books, imaginative, sensory and mark making activities. One particular interest to children was the lending library and the option to receive a mystery book. This

provided a sense of wonder and excitement whilst supporting children's enjoyment through books. The childminder provided a literacy rich environment which supported children's development in communication and language skills.

Planning for play and learning was mostly based around books that children and their families suggested. The childminder planned experiences that provided children with challenge to help support their interest. One parent told us, "Gwen often takes her learning outdoors. They will use a story book as a stimulus and take their learning to the forest, play park, beach." This told us that the childminder valued children's interests and ideas.

Observations of children at play, demonstrated the childminder had good understanding of child development and individual children's progress. Families were informed of achievements through daily updates and children's successes were recognised and celebrated. This created a sense of accomplishment, supporting children's self-esteem.

Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections with the local and wider community. Visits to local parks, the beach and nature walks enabled children to explore different experiences. One parent told us, "Outdoor learning is big with Gwen and the experiences provided are great for our little ones. From building camp fires to camping Gwen always has new and exciting opportunities for the children." The childminder's commitment to outdoor learning contributed to children being active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Arranged experiences with other local childminders provided further opportunities for children to make friends, social connections and feel included within their community.

## 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.

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

The childminder had created a warm and welcoming environment for children. Areas used by children were clean, tidy and well ventilated. Children accessed play spaces that met their needs. This included a designated play room and enclosed garden. There was ample space for children to play and relax. As a result, children were confident and relaxed within the childminder's home.

Written risk assessments for specific areas within the home, garden and for activities and outings were clear and identified potential hazards and actions taken to ensure children's continued safety. The childminder's approach to risk enabled children to recognise hazards and negotiate ways to play safe whilst respecting boundaries. This supported children to develop lifelong skills.

Children enjoyed a range of toys, games and activities which were developmentally appropriate and offered challenge. Natural and open-ended play materials provided further opportunities to extend children's learning and develop their problem-solving skills. The childminder had developed their curiosity area which provided children with authentic items to explore such as a vintage telephone and jewellery/trinket boxes. The play resources available supported children's fun, curiosity and sustained engagement in play.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through good infection prevention and control measures to ensure a safe and hygienic environment. Children were encouraged to develop self-care skills and follow

good hand hygiene procedures. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as aprons and gloves were available to further prevent the spread of infection. This meant that children were cared for in a clean environment.

Children and families confidentiality was maintained. The childminder had procedures in place to ensure personal information was stored in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and they were registered with Information Commissioner's Office to ensure information was stored and processed lawfully.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to providing and improving positive outcomes for children. Trusting relationships and effective communication had supported children and families to feel valued and included in the service. All parents agreed that 'My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service.'

Clear policies and procedures were in place that supported the childminder to deliver a very good service. Policies were reviewed and updated regularly and reflected current legislation and best practice documents. Policies were shared with parents when starting at the service and when changes were applied. One parent told us, "Gwen is a professional, any updates to policies are shared with parents and I love the fact she is so thorough in all that she does." This contributed to parents feeling included and well informed.

The childminder gathered parents' views verbally, using electronic platform 'Whatsapp' and through feedback questionnaires. Parents confirmed that communication was a strength of the service and that they were very happy with the level of information shared and the opportunities to share their views and develop the service.

The childminder was passionate and motivated about their role. They had engaged in self-evaluation and developed an improvement plan. The processes in place resulted in the childminder having several separate development plans, making it difficult to track meaningful improvements. We suggested ways to streamline the plan to support the childminder to clearly track their progress and successes. This would enable the childminder to undertake a deeper level reflection to identify potential gaps in children's experiences and to promote sustainable and continuous improvements within the service.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge, and values

Children benefitted from the childminder's warm and responsive approach, and we saw positive interactions which helped children to feel respected. Positive relationships had been built with families which supported strong relationships. Parents spoke positively of their childminder and comments made included, "It's clear that Gwen has a great relationship with all the children she cares for" and "Overall we as parents are

confident that our child is safe and happy whilst at Gwen's. He gets to enjoy a home from home experience with someone who really cares about his wellbeing and progression."

A variety of methods were used by the childminder to stay informed about changes in the sector. They linked with other local childminders, which helped promote professional discussion of new guidance, challenges and practice sharing. This encouraged them to reflect on their service and supported them to further develop and enhance children's experiences. They regularly accessed updates from the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). This helped them to identify new best practice guidance documents and learning opportunities to support their development.

The childminder drew on their personal experience and professional learning to provide a high-quality service. They were committed to their ongoing professional development and had participated in a range of training. Professional learning undertaken included; loose parts play, book bug and brain development. The childminder maintained a log of learning and we suggested this could be further strengthened by completing a more detailed reflection to identify how new learning could improve outcomes for children and their families.

A professional ethos was evident within the setting. The childminder had a very good understanding of their professional responsibilities and worked within the conditions of their registration. This included ensuring policies and procedures were in place that would support positive outcomes for children and keep them safe.

## 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 service should have a personal plan for each child in their care. These should show how the children's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met and must be reviewed at least once every six months.

This ensures health and social care standards that state; My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a carer plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices. (1.15)

**This area for improvement was made on 22 October 2021.**

#### Action taken since then

The childminder had developed personal plans for all children attending their service. They had consulted parents when setting targets for children which ensured plans contained accurate information. We suggested that support strategies could be more individual for each child to ensure their interests are fully considered.

This area for improvement was met.

## Previous area for improvement 2

In order that children experience high quality care and support, the childminder should review support strategies for managing children's behaviour. This should ensure:

- a) incidents where children have difficulty in regulating their emotions are recorded to inform decision making and all incident records shared with parents.
- b) children's care plans are updated to identify the support strategies to be put in place, and monitor and record if interventions are successful.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.19: My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.

**This area for improvement was made on 6 May 2024.**

### Action taken since then

The childminder had developed personal plans for all children attending their service. They had consulted parents when setting targets for children which ensured plans contained accurate information. Through discussion, the childminder demonstrated good knowledge of how to support children who have difficulty regulating their emotions. They were clear on how to record support strategies and document incidents.

This area for improvement was met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

In order that children experience high quality care and support, the childminder should ensure that where a specific need is identified:

- a) parents are timeously informed of any incidents involving their child.
- b) conversations which directly impact on the care and support needs of children are documented and shared with parents.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 4.23: I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed.

**This area for improvement was made on 6 May 2024.**

### Action taken since then

Through discussion the childminder demonstrated sound understanding on the need to record and inform parents of incidents. Incident forms and a diary were available to record conversations and any agreed actions.

This area for improvement was met.



## Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

## 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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