

Wright, Linda Child Minding

Alexandria

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
11 February 2025

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2003909686

Service no:
CS2003015219

About the service

The childminder is registered with the Care Inspectorate to care for a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months.

The childminder provides a before and after school care service to primary school aged children. At the time of inspection, nine children were registered to attend on a variety of patterns. Three children were present during the inspection.

The service is provided from the childminder's home in West Dunbartonshire. The service is within walking distance of the local park and primary school. It is accessible on foot, by car, bus or train.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 11 February 2025 from 13:30 to 16:30. 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 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 and three of their families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The children had developed very positive relationships with the childminder. They were safe and secure. Good information was available to ensure the childminder knew each child very well as an individual, although this needed to be reviewed more regularly.
- The children were very happy and relaxed in the setting, enjoying a good range of experiences. They told us about what games and activities they enjoyed.
- The childminder had developed positive relationships with the children in her care and worked closely with parents to ensure the children's needs were met and their routines respected.
- Families were very happy with the quality of the service provided to their children. They valued the strong and effective channels of communication the childminder had established.
- The childminder could take a more formal approach to assessing the strengths and quality of the service and identifying any improvements.

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?	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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Three minded children were present during the inspection. They were happy and confident within the childminding setting. They were happy to explore the toys and resources and were comfortable to move about the childminder's home freely.

The childminder had appropriate processes in place to collect pertinent information about minded children and their families before they started. This assisted with the settling in process and enabled the childminder to plan to meet children's individual needs and personal preferences. The childminder discussed the importance of the settling in stage to children for building trust and becoming confident in her care. The childminder needed to ensure that parents were involved in a six monthly review of the information held about their children to ensure that the childminder was working from the most up-to-date information. We directed the childminder to a Care Inspectorate publication, which provided useful information on completing and reviewing personal plans - <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/personal-planning-guides-for-providers/>

Families agreed that the childminder knew their child well, including what they liked and what was important for their care. Comments included: "Linda gives me feedback regularly and if there are any issues we address them together" and "Linda and I have conversations several times a week regarding my child. Linda is very patient and reassuring during these conversations and she updates me always if there's anything I need to be aware of and I do the same for Linda including our daily life to make sure she knows everything about my child."

The childminder advised that some children were collected by their families at the front door of her home while others came indoors. We discussed the benefits for both children and their families of being invited into the childminding home. Families commented positively about the childminder's warm and welcoming manner.

The childminder discussed the individual needs of the children with the parents on a regular basis. Families accessed a social media page that contained information about the service. The positive relationships that had been developed between the childminder and families facilitated effective communication, consistency and continuity of care. Families valued this communication with the childminder.

The childminder provided a healthy breakfast and snacks for the children in her care. The childminder had not yet registered the food preparation aspect of her business with the local authority to ensure compliance with food safety standards. This needed to be done. Appropriate seating was available to ensure children could eat at a table to enjoy safe and sociable mealtimes.

The childminder had not been required to administer medication to any of the children in her care. Appropriate paperwork was in place for parents to give written consent to administer medication should this be required. We suggested that the childminder obtained a copy of our guidance document to ensure that families could be reassured that her procedures were in line with best practice - https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/6086/management-of-medication-in-daycare-of-children-and-childminding-services_dec-2024.pdf

The childminder's approach to play and activities was child-centred and responsive to the children's interests, wishes and level of skill. At the time of inspection, the minded children were happy playing with the toys available to them in the playroom including playing board games and decorating their own individual boxes. Children showed us some of the Lego models they had made and told us they could store them safely to work on later. This demonstrated that the childminder valued their creativity. They told us they were awarded points for being kind, winning at games and helping the childminder and each other, and the winner with most points chose from the prize box. Children had regular opportunities to be active and access fresh air on walks to and from school and visiting the local play park.

The children told us how happy they were to come to the service and none had any suggestions for improvement. They commented: "I like playing with the other kids; dancing, doing crafts and going to the park" and "I have fun playing games. I get to see some of my friends." They told us the childminder "makes good food" and "is kind and takes us to the park and we draw and have a snack."

Families were happy with the range of activities their children could experience and told us: "Linda takes the children to the park most days when dry outside which my child loves. My child enjoys playing games with the other children promoting confidence and fair play and also loves drawing, building Lego and arts and crafts" and "My child loves going to Linda's Childcare and recently declined an opportunity to attend an after school club as they would miss Linda's. Linda is always tuned into the emotional needs of the children and addresses any issues if they arise. Linda promotes positive behaviour with her reward charts and games to earn points for prizes which is an incentive for my child. My child loves going to Linda's and feels safe, happy and confident in her care. As a parent I am more than happy with the standard of care Linda provides."

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.

We found that the childminder had created a warm, comfortable, welcoming and homely environment for the children to play and relax in. Families enjoyed a warm welcome and told us: "Although I don't enter the house, we have a discussion on the doorstep morning and night at drop off and pick up. Linda is always keen to support my child with their development as they navigate their school journey" and "Linda always invites us in. Her home is very welcoming and clean and the place looks well stocked for a different range of kids. Each time when I go in I can see the children are well entertained warm and fed and happy."

The home was in good repair, clean and a good standard of health and safety was observed throughout. Appropriate arrangements were in place for cleaning the home and resources. Children were able to access the lounge, kitchen, hallway and downstairs toilet. There was a good selection of play resources available. These resources were well-organised and accessible to the children to allow them to make choices. At the time of inspection, the childminder's garden was not used by the minded children.

The childminder provided appropriate activities, materials and experiences for the children, both indoors and outdoors. This reflected the interests, development and learning stages of the children in her care. Children had daily opportunities to play outdoors and get fresh air. They particularly enjoyed visits to the local park. Families commented: "Linda takes the kids to the park weather permitting", "Linda takes the children to the local park most days to let them play outdoors. They have games such as football and use the play park facilities" and "I've seen Linda taking the kids to play at the park."

The childminder was confident about her responsibilities to keep children safe and had developed risk assessments for her home which recorded all identified hazards and control measures needed to keep children safe. The childminder reviewed these regularly to ensure they remained up-to-date. However, the childminder needed to ensure similar risk assessments to cover outings were available, these could not be located at the time of inspection.

The childminder had developed a policy detailing her approach to controlling and preventing the spread of infection within her home and there were satisfactory arrangements in place to prevent and control the spread of infection within the service to protect children. Children would have benefited from the use of separate towels for use after handwashing to minimise the risk of infection.

We confirmed that the childminder held appropriate insurance to operate the service, and that annual maintenance arrangements were in place to ensure the gas boiler and central heating were working safely.

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.

We found that the childminder used daily discussion to ensure that children and their families could be consulted on the day-to-day running of her service. The childminder ensured that parents were involved from the outset and through the settling in period. She shared policies and procedures at enrolment and was willing to respond to ideas and routines highlighted by parents. This was particularly relevant where the childminder and families needed to develop a consistent approach to children's care routines.

Through regular communication with the parents and children, the childminder was able to provide a service that met the needs and interests of the children she was caring for. The childminder regularly shared the children's experiences with their parents. This approach helped parents feel they were included in their child's day.

The childminder respected the views of children and parents and used their views to improve the service, where possible. We were told that most feedback came from informal discussions with children and their families. The childminder used verbal feedback from the parents and children to reflect on the type of experiences they were having. This helped her develop informal plans and reflect on the care and activities she provided to the children and families. One parent commented: "Linda likes to check in with myself to see how we feel things are going."

The childminder was aware that there was a need for a more formal approach to self-evaluation to enable her to assess the quality of her service against the Care Inspectorate document, A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare. Using this document to identify and record strengths and areas highlighted to improve outcomes for children and families, would have formed a good evidence base for a service improvement plan. Information on self-evaluation can be found at: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/quality-improvement-programmes-and-topics/early-learning-and-childcare-improvement-programme/>

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 childminding service had been operating for over 20 years. Over this time, the childminder had become skilled and experienced with well-developed procedures and processes in place. Most paperwork was comprehensive, well-developed and maintained to ensure positive outcomes for children and families.

The childminder had a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the skills and qualities required to provide an effective childcare service. The childminder told us that she kept up-to-date with best practice guidance and changes to legislation through accessing online resources. The childminder was unable to develop working relationships with other childminders as there were none in the local area, which meant she missed out on the mutual support and development opportunities these relationships brought. However, the childminder also had membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) which was a good source of information and advice.

The childminder had not participated in any training for some time and could have improved the approach to continuous professional development. The childminder was aware of the need to develop her approach to continuous professional development to ensure that her knowledge, skills and practice were updated and refreshed regularly. The childminder could have participated in more regular training sessions and made use of informal self-reflection techniques to consider her skills, practice and development needs. We highlighted the Care Inspectorate Hub as a good source of information and practice guidance. We suggested that the childminder accessed this resource, where possible, to enhance her approach to continuous professional development - <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

The childminder was sensitive, kind, caring and consistent in her approach to children which helped them feel safe and secure. She was committed to ensuring high quality outcomes for children and families. The childminder had developed very positive relationships with families which was reflected in their comments to us and resulted in a warm and welcoming ethos within the service. Families were very happy with the quality of the service and commented: "Linda does a fabulous job as a childminder and she has a positive, cheery outlook which influences the children in her care" and "My child is happy, secure and confident attending Linda's childcare and as a parent that's all you want for your child. Linda loves the children like her own."

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 continue with plans to access further training.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 13: Confidence in Staff.

This area for improvement was made on 24 August 2012.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not participated in any training for some time.

This area for improvement was not met.

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?	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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