

Patrick, Claire Child Minding

Kilmarnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 January 2025

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2009974859

Service no:
CS2009230337

About the service

The childminder provides a service from their property in a quiet residential area of Stewarton, East Ayrshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own children.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living/dining area and can use an upstairs bathroom. The part of the premises not to be used is the front garden. During the inspection three minded children were present.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 January 2025 between 11:30 and 13:45. 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 the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- we issued Microsoft form questionnaires to be circulated to parents, however, none were returned to us.

Key messages

- The childminder supported children through nurturing interactions.
- The childminder identified and removed some risks to children.
- Parents were provided with opportunities to influence the development of the service.
- To support positive outcomes for children the childminder made use of the resources available to them to support their continuous professional development.
- Personal Plans should detail children's current needs and how the childminder is supporting them with this.
- To keep children safe the childminder should accurately record children's attendance.

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.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The childminder supported children through nurturing interactions. They were warm and caring and offered children cuddles and reassurance when needed. This enabled children to feel safe and secure.

Children's routines from home were generally supported, though on some days, their lunch was delayed due to visits to the local soft play. We observed children asking for snacks around this time. We discussed with the childminder reviewing this routine to ensure they are meeting children's individual needs. This would enable children to eat at a time that was right for them.

The childminder recorded information to support children's health, welfare and safety needs when they started at the service. They used the wellbeing indicators, safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included to help them support children's learning and development. Whilst information was recorded regarding some aspects of children's development, personal plans did not fully reflect children's current needs and how the childminder was supporting them with this. We discussed with the childminder ensuring that children's needs are fully reflected in their personal plans and shared with parents. This would ensure that the children's needs were met and supported by the childminder.

The childminder supported children in their interactions with each other. For example, they encouraged sharing and offered children praise and encouragement to support with this. Although on occasions children did not understand what was being asked of them. We discussed with the childminder how they could further support children and implement age appropriate strategies and play experiences to help children develop their individual skills and confidence.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and Learning

Children had fun as they played with toys and materials. For example, they enjoyed making sounds with the musical instruments, and we heard lots of laughter as they played together.

Children were mostly engaged in play, however on occasions they were distracted by the television which was on in the background. We discussed with the childminder having the television on for a purpose. This would support children to stay focused and engaged in play.

The childminder used some opportunities to challenge children's thinking and used some questioning to develop their ideas. For example, they supported children completing a number puzzle, they used language such as "Can you find number eight, it looks like two circles joined together". This supported children to problem solve and enhanced their experiences.

There were some opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in play. For example, through extended discussions and talking about colours, shapes and numbers during play experiences. This included considering children's ideas and comments and learning from their experiences.

Children had access to some toys and materials to meet their needs. There were some opportunities to support children in developing their creativity, curiosity, and imagination. For example, children were engaged in imaginative play with cars and trucks. We discussed with the childminder how this could be further enhanced by introducing more natural resources and loose part play experiences. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, redesigned, and used in multiple ways. This would further support children's curiosity, imagination, and creativity in play experiences. We signposted the childminder to The Loose Parts Toolkit on the Care Inspectorate's Hub to extend and explore further opportunities.

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

The childminder's home was warm and welcoming with plenty of natural light and ventilation. The children had floor space to play, as well as rest areas which supported their wellbeing.

The childminder identified and removed some risks to children. For example, children were using small pointed wooden utensils to create pictures and the childminder encouraged them to sit at the table to prevent any accidents. Although this helped keep children safe, risk assessments did not accurately reflect the current risks within the childminder's home. We asked that the childminder review these risk assessments to ensure they are relevant and relate to their home environment. This would support them to put relevant mitigations in place to keep children safe.

At the time of the inspection the playroom used by children within the childminder's home was not accessible following a recent leak. Although children could not self select toys and materials from the playroom, the childminder told us they consulted with the children regarding which resources they would like to play with. This supported them to explore toys and materials of interest to them. The childminder told us the leak was due to be repaired which would enable children to access the playroom, toys and materials independently. This would support children to take ownership in their play.

Children were kept safe as some infection prevention and control procedures were followed. For example, toys and materials were clean and the childminder told us they use a wipeable mat and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when changing children. This helped reduce the spread of infection.

Whilst the childminder had kept electronic records of children's planned attendance, they did not reflect children's actual attendance. We asked the childminder to ensure they kept accurate records of children attending the service so that they can plan how children's needs will be met (**see area for improvement 1**).

Although the children did not have access to the childminder's garden, they regularly engaged in outdoor play experiences as they visited the local parks and nearby grass areas with the childminder. They took resources with them, such as balls, and were able to engage in physical play as they explored resources at the park. This supported their wellbeing.

The childminder had developed links within the local community. Children attended local toddler groups, soft play and storytelling sessions. This supported children to become familiar with their local and wider environment.

Areas for improvement

1. To keep children safe, the childminder should ensure they keep accurate records of children attending the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I receive high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources.' (HSCS 4.27)

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.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality Assurance and improvements are led well

The childminder shared their policies and procedures with parents when they started with the service and any changes or updates to policies were shared with parents by email. This supported parents to be aware of the services aims and objectives.

The childminder was working towards a relevant qualification and they had started to use this to support them to highlight improvements in their practice. For example, they were actively supporting children to take the lead in their play. As a result, this supported more positive outcomes for children.

The childminder reflected on updates to guidance and incorporated these into their practice. For example, they were in the process of revising their policies and procedures regarding medication, in line with new guidance. This supported them to keep children safe.

Through informal verbal communication and information sharing, the childminder provided parents with opportunities to influence the development of the service. They regularly sent pictures of children engaging in experiences to parents, which they could comment on and discuss further with their child. This enabled the childminder to highlight what was working well and areas for improvement. We discussed with the childminder implementing a more formal approach and having a specific focus in relation to their consultations with parents and children. This would enable the childminder to make more informed decisions about particular areas of the service, enabling them to provide the best outcomes for children. We signposted the childminder to 'Self-evaluation for improvement - your guide' to support this.

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.

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder supported children's wellbeing through compassionate and responsive care, and their interactions supported children's confidence. As a result, they positively influenced children's lives as they developed and learned.

The childminder had developed positive relationships with children and families, and they knew the children in their care. The childminder shared information about children with their individual parents through What's App. This ensured ongoing consistent communication, and as a result, children were happy and settled.

The childminder had good links with other childminders and they were part of a closed Facebook page. They had used this to support their continuous professional development and share practice. This enabled them to reflect on their practice and provide better outcomes for children.

The childminder made use of the resources available to them to support their continuous professional development, such as The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and the local community hub to access training and development opportunities. They had completed some training, such as Child Protection and First Aid which supported them to keep children safe.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 22 February 2023, the childminder must ensure they are working to their conditions of registration.

This should include but not be limited to keeping registers of children attending. This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of the Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (HSCS 4.27);

and

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

This requirement was made on 27 March 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

At the inspection, the childminder was observed to be working within their conditions of registration and discussions with the childminder regarding children attending did not breach their conditions. Therefore, this requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

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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