

Twinkling Stars Child Care Child Minding

Perth & Kinross

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 March 2025

Service provided by:
Emma Perrin

Service provider number:
SP2014986546

Service no:
CS2014333637

About the service

Twinkling Stars Child Care is a registered childminding service provided by Emma Perrin. The service is delivered from the childminder's home in Milnathort, Perth & Kinross.

The home is in a residential, quiet area. Children can use the ground floor of the home which includes a living room, kitchen/dining space, hallway, toilet and direct access to an enclosed garden.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school; and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 4 March 2025 between 13:15 and 15:30. One inspector carried out the inspection 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.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with two children using the service;
- spoke with the childminder;
- received feedback from five families;
- observed practice and children's experiences; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Kind, caring and nurturing interactions had been formed between the childminder and the children which supported a happy and relaxed environment.
- The childminder must ensure that families review personal plans at least every six months to confirm they are accurate and up to date.
- The childminder had trusting relationships with families and regular communication with parents meant that they were actively involved in their children's care.
- The childminder should document their reflections, implementing a more formal approach to self-evaluation and quality assurance systems.
- The childminder engaged well with the inspection process and demonstrated an open and honest approach about their service.

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?	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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

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

Children were happy, settled and secure during our visit. The childminder had formed positive relationships with the children and was kind and nurturing towards children. For example, cuddles and reassurance meant children experienced support at the right time.

The childminder worked in partnership with parents and regular information sharing took place through message functions. For example, personal care, experiences and achievements were shared through chat functions and photographs. This supported the development of trusting relationships between the childminder, children and families.

The childminder spoke confidently about individual children's needs, likes and family circumstances. All families completed a personal plan for their child. Two parents told us "we regularly communicate with the childminder on our child's development every day at pick up" and "we exchange updates on X through a shared WhatsApp channel and regularly discuss likes/dislikes, development milestones and what's going on in X wider life".

Recorded information within personal plans did not always reflect children's current needs or routines. We discussed the reviewing of personal planning and asked that these are reviewed with parents every six months, or earlier if needed, to help ensure information was up to date. This would support the childminder to ensure children's needs are fully met and children receive care that is right for them. We signposted the childminder to the 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning', on the Care Inspectorate Hub, to support the development of personal planning. We accepted by the time of writing the report the childminder had started to update plans.

Snack time was an unhurried and relaxed experience for children, it supported opportunities for social interactions between children and the childminder. Children were supervised, ensuring they were safe whilst eating. Furniture, space and infection prevention and control measures were considered.

Although we did not see a nappy change, the childminder talked through a procedure that considered children's dignity and risk of infection.

Safeguarding of children was enhanced as the childminder had appropriate training. They were confident in identifying signs and symptoms of abuse and understood their role in safeguarding children. The child protection policy had not been updated since moving home. We encouraged the childminder to review this as soon as possible. This would support the childminder to have information readily available to support them keep children safe and protected.

We discussed safe sleep arrangements with the childminder as arrangements for children's sleep was not in line with best practice guidance. For example, during our visit children were sleeping in buggies. We discussed safe sleep guidance and suggested the childminder reviews their policy and approach to ensure families are aware of risks. We signposted the childminder to safer sleep for babies: guide for parents and carers (Scottish Government, 2022)

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children enjoyed outings to a variety of places in the local and wider community. For example, visits to playgroup, parks and local facilities were regular activities on offer. Parents told us "children have been out for walks to the local playgroup recently which X really enjoyed". "We have seen a huge change with X social skills". "Walks to the local forest, walking to playgroup, playing in the garden are the types of outdoor experiences on offer". These regular outings increased children's learning, developed social interactions and connections with their community.

The childminder had good knowledge of child development and individual children's interests. Resources were well organised, accessible and included a range of language, literacy and imaginative toys. We observed the childminder down at children's level and responding to children's requests to play with particular resources. The use of open-ended questions were part of the childminder's practice and supported children's thinking and learning.

Planning was mainly child led with children choosing what they wanted to do. We discussed ways to further develop planning to include children and help them to revisit learning. For example, through reintroducing floor books and using mind maps to help gather and record children's ideas to enhance the feeling that their ideas were valued.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

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

Children were cared for in a welcoming environment. The childminder's home was friendly and homely. Members of the childminder's family and pets were present during the inspection, and we could see the positive relationships that had been built with children. This contributed to children feeling valued and that they belonged.

The childminder understood the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. The garden area was accessible, free from hazards and secure. Opportunities for planting and growing and access to a range of physical toys and resources was available for children. To further support and capture children's imaginations and learning the childminder discussed plans to develop literacy, numeracy and creative thinking within the garden space. This had yet to be fully implemented. A parent shared with us "we feel comforted to know X is in a place where they can thrive and develop..."

Measures were in place to minimise risk and support children to be safe. A checklist and fire risk assessment formed part of the childminder's approach to keeping children and spaces safe. We encouraged the childminder to further develop their approach to risk assessments. For example, to record identified potential hazards and note clearer control measures across key areas and tasks.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was available and regular cleaning of equipment and surfaces took place to ensure children benefited from clean spaces. Parents told us "the childminder provides a safe, nurturing and happy environment for our child" and "I know that my child is safe with Emma and has a wonderful time".

The childminder confidently discussed how children's personal information was kept safe. They were a member of the ICO (Information commissioner's office) and understood their responsibilities on keeping information confidential. Information about children and their families was secure and in line with general data protection regulations (GDPR).

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where there are some strengths and these just outweigh weaknesses.

The childminder was welcoming, engaged well with the inspection process and was responsive to our suggestions for further development.

The vision, values and aims of the service were shared with families. These included:

- to provide a happy, caring, warm and friendly environment;
- incorporate special events and festivals; and
- work closely with the child's parents.

These helped families understand how their child's needs would be met. Two parents shared with us "Emma is personable, reliable and clearly cares about the children she cares for" and "there are lots of personal touches that make a big difference".

The childminder had policies and procedures which related to the service. We found a number of policies contained limited information, were not in line with current guidance and had not been updated for some time. We discussed the importance of families having clear expectations of what to expect from the service by having policies in place and regular reviews being undertaken. This would help support the childminder with continuous improvement of the service (see area for improvement 1).

Regular communication with families took place at pick up and drop offs and through methods such as, message functions. Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes were limited. The childminder had gathered some views on the service she provided through chat functions. For example, families shared feedback with the childminder about activities that had taken place. However, the information gathered was not informing service improvements. We suggested that using more open ended or focused questions that could encourage families to give detailed feedback and support self-evaluation. In addition, we discussed ways in which quality assurance processes could be strengthened through better use of calendars

and diaries. This would enable the childminder to plan improvements and contribute further to children and families influencing positive change across the service (see area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To underpin service delivery, improve practice and inform families of what to expect from the service, the childminder should implement, review and update policies and procedures in line with relevant best practice documents.

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 based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

2. To ensure continuous improvement the childminder should further develop quality assurance and self-evaluation processes to identify service developments.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) actively seeking the views from families and children to inform improvement; and
- b) implement a quality assurance process to identify what is working well and what could be improved.

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

'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership.' (HSCS 4.7); 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?

4 - Good

Quality indicator: 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

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

The childminder was enthusiastic and professional in their role in caring for children. For example, the childminder was very respectful when talking about children and families who accessed her service.

The childminder had several years' experience and enjoyed being a childminder. The trusting relationships with families and a flexible approach supported families' needs and wishes. Parents told us "my child looks forward to going. What more could you ask for?". And "Through gradual and gentle encouragement, X has become trusting and completely familiar with the childminder and her home".

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and had built relationships with other local childminders. This provided opportunities to share ideas and collate suggestions around the delivery of her service.

The childminder had participated in training and made use of professional development opportunities. For example, recently they had undertaken training in child protection. We discussed how this could be strengthened. We suggested the childminder could update and record post training evaluations to include a detailed reflection of learning. Reflections of learning would enable the childminder to revisit and reflect on how learning opportunities developed their practice and could support future practice.

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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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