

Loudon, Jennifer Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 February 2025

Service provided by:
Jennifer Loudon

Service provider number:
SP2003906393

Service no:
CS2003012671

About the service

Jennifer Loudon provides a childminding service from their family home in the village of Colinton, and is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three children are not yet attending primary school and no more than one child is under 12 months. The childminder currently only cares for children after school two days a week.

The service is close to local shops, schools, parks, and transport links. The children are cared for in the large lounge with dining area and have access to the downstairs bathroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 February 2025 between 16:00 and 18:15. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with four children using the service
- spoke with two families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to the care of children and the management of the service.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and confident in the childminder's care.
- Positive and warm relationships had been developed with children and the childminder.
- Daily communication with families supported the childminder to meet the needs of all children in the service.
- Children had opportunities to take part in a range of play experiences including art activities.
- The childminder should ensure the environment is well maintained and safe for the children.
- The childminder should ensure that she updates personal plans in line with legislation.
- To support the childminders practice in delivery of a quality service and good outcomes for children the childminder should familiarise herself with current best practice and legislation.

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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
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?

3 - Adequate

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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were supported by the childminder who was warm, patient and nurturing in their interactions. They had developed respectful relationship with children and their achievements were acknowledged and praised during their play. This helped to support the children's confidence and positive relationships had been built. Children were happy and relaxed in the setting.

The childminder knew the children well and demonstrated how they supported children's needs. However, these were not reflected in children's personal plans, they only held basic details. They did not have sufficient information about how children's needs, interests and ideas would be met. We made an area for improvement at the last inspection for each child to have a written personal plan that demonstrated how their needs will be met. This had not been met therefore we have carried this area for improvement forward (see area for improvement 1).

Children told us they enjoyed a variety of snacks whilst at the childminders, they included, 'bread, honey, peanut butter, pasta, scones and fruit.' Children were encouraged to carry out good hand hygiene and to sit at the table to have their snack. As a result, children's wellbeing was supported, and they were kept safe.

We evaluated this key question as good as there were important strengths with some areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The childminder was an artist and used these skills to encourage children to be involved in arts and to be creative. Some of the items children had made were on display and these were shared with parents. Photographic evidence showed children making cushion people, biscuit faces and enjoying dressing up with wigs, old curtains and beads to take part in a dance competition.

Families were kept up to date about their child's experiences and achievements through daily verbal feedback as well as sharing of information by text and photographs. Feedback from families included, "My child is settled and very happy, trying to get them out the door at the end of the day is a challenge".

Children were able to lead their own play by choosing and exploring resources that they wanted to play with. The childminder responded positively to children's requests for further items to extend their play, as well as supporting children's play through discussions, encouragement and guidance when needed. As a result, children were engaged and confident during their play.

Children's language, literacy and numeracy skills were encouraged through play experiences. They discussed shapes, numbers, letters, minutes and seconds and geographical areas. Children visited the library and were interested in reading books. Older children enjoyed reading and supporting younger children during their play. It was evident children were making friendships and having fun.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should ensure each child has a written personal plan that demonstrates how their needs will be met. These should be updated at least every six months and when a change occurs to a child's needs or circumstances.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state: "My personal 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?

3 - Adequate

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

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

Children experienced a homely and welcoming environment, in which they were familiar. There was ample space for the children to move around and play and areas where they could relax and be comfortable. Children enjoyed gathering around the large table for activities and to play games together. As a result, children were comfortable and happy.

Children were encouraged to be physically active and get fresh air, as they explored the woods and local parks in the community as part of their daily routine coming home from school. They had opportunities to be involved in the community, visiting the library, and taking part in local events.

The childminder had taken some action to keep children safe in the home by means of using a fire guard. The childminder should carry out daily checks to identify and elevate hazards to children within the environment. For example, removing electrical sockets and cords in the lounge for the safety of the children. In addition, keeping the front garden well maintained. This included, cutting back plants and bushes and moving the hosepipe which was a potential trip hazard (see area for improvement 1).

Children were aware of the routine and encouraged to wash their hands when they returned from school and before having snack. This supported children to understand the importance of keeping healthy.

Children's information records were stored safely. This contributed to providing confidentiality to children and families.

Areas for improvement

1.
To keep children safe, the childminder should carry out daily checks of her home and make sure the environment indoors and outdoors is safe and well maintained. This included, removing electrical sockets and cords in the lounge for the safety of the children, cutting back plants and bushes and moving the hosepipe in the front garden which was a potential trip hazard for children.

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

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.'

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

Families experienced a warm and welcoming ethos as the childminder provided a home from home supportive atmosphere. Parents shared, 'the childminder is so patient and good, always very punctual, dependable and communication with us is good' and 'I am very happy with the service and have no concerns'. This meant children and families needs were catered for.

Informal ways were used to gather children and families' views. This was done by daily chats. Children told us, 'It is so good coming to see our childminder, as good as food is'. 'We get to play with a million toys, a train track, connects and read stories.' We observed positive conversations between the childminder and parents as they arrived to pick up their children.

The childminder was reflective of their practice during the inspection. However, they were not yet using quality assurance processes including self-evaluation and best practice documents. This would help them identify what was going well and any areas for improvements. To support a culture of continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children, we directed the childminder to the Care Inspectorate's website and 'The Hub' for best practice guidance. For example, for information about self-evaluation and personal planning as well as documents 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school aged childcare' (Care Inspectorate 2022) and 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (Education Scotland 2020) (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support a culture of continuous improvement and positive outcomes for children, the childminder should increase their knowledge and use of current best practice in Early learning and childcare. This should include using the Care Inspectorate's website and 'The Hub' to support self-evaluation and personal planning as well as the use of best practice documents including but not limited to:-

- Realising the Ambition (Education Scotland 2020); and
- A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare (Care Inspectorate 2022).

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).

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 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children's wellbeing was supported by the childminder having a welcoming, respectful and responsive approach. As a result, positive relationships had been built with children and their families. The childminder

had a good understanding of each child's personality and interests. The childminder engaged the children in activities and they shared humour together. This led to children being happy and experiencing positive outcomes.

The childminder held a childcare qualification. Children and their families would benefit from the childminder expanding on their skills and knowledge to further support their care and support needs. Moving forward, for the wellbeing and the safety of the children, the childminder should undertake child protection, food hygiene and paediatric first aid training.

The childminder needed to familiarise themselves with current best practice and legislation to ensure that she is up to date with how her service should be operating. She should then review and update her policies and procedures accordingly to make them consistent with current best practice guidance. As a result, there were some gaps in their professional knowledge and skills which could limit children's experiences. We had made this an area for improvement at the last inspection. This had not been met therefore we have carried this area for improvement forward (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support the childminders practice in delivery of a quality service and good outcomes for children the childminder should familiarise herself with current best practice and legislation. She should then review and update her policies and procedures accordingly to make them consistent with current best practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'(HSCS 4.11)

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

1. To support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should ensure each child has a written personal plan that demonstrates how their needs will be met. These should be updated at least every six months and when a change occurs to a child's needs or circumstances.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state: "My personal 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).

This area for improvement was made on 23 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Personal plans only held basic details. They did not have sufficient information about how children's needs, interests and ideas would be met.

This area for improvement had not been met and will be restated in key question 'How good is our care, play and learning'.

Previous area for improvement 2

1. To support the childminders practice in delivery of a quality service and good outcomes for children the childminder should familiarise herself with current best practice and legislation. She should then review and update her policies and procedures accordingly to make them consistent with current best practice guidance.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'(HSCS 4.11)

This area for improvement was made on 23 October 2023.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement had not been met and will be restated in key question 'How good is our 'Staff skills, knowledge and values'.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.