

McKinlay, Maureen Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 April 2025

Service provided by:
Maureen Mckinlay

Service provider number:
SP2003906119

Service no:
CS2003012394

About the service

Maureen McKinlay provides a childminding service from their property in the residential area of Redhall, in the West of Edinburgh. 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 room and have access to the kitchen and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 2 April 2025 between 13:30 and 15:30. One inspector carried out the inspection.

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 children using the service and some of their families
- considered feedback from two families through an online form
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to the care of children and the management of the service.

As part of the inspection we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's need are met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children received nurturing and responsive care.
- Children could lead their own play based on their interests.
- Children's personal plans were detailed and regularly reviewed including tracking of progress and achievements.
- The childminder's commitment to continuous improvement supported children to learn and develop.
- The childminder made good use of local facilities which helped children feel included in their local community.
- The childminder's commitment to self-evaluation ensured children and family's needs were met.

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 experienced warm and loving care as the childminder had a nurturing and caring approach. The childminder had a very good understanding of individual children's needs and how to support them. One parent commented, "Maureen provides a caring, educational and supportive environment".

Children's overall wellbeing and development was supported well with the use of personal plans and progress development records. The childminder knew children and families very well and it was clear positive trusting relationships had been formed. This allowed the childminder to work closely with families to identify appropriate next steps in children's learning and development. Their partnership approach promoted continuity of care. One parent told us they valued the open, trusting and honest relationship they had. Another parent commented, "Maureen is very informative and keeps me updated on what my child has been doing. My child loves going to Maureen".

Children's achievements were recognised and shared with families daily using a mobile phone messaging service. The childminder shared information about children's day and routine, as well as their play and learning experiences. This helped families feel included in their children's experiences when in the childminder's care.

Children benefitted from a positive and relaxed eating experience. Lunches and snacks were provided by the parents/carers. Children were seated safely and comfortably and given appropriate support to enjoy the sociable experience in an unhurried way. This encouraged positive social interactions and learning experiences associated with eating and drinking together.

Quality Indicator 1.3 - Play and learning

Children were actively involved in leading their play and learning. There was a balance of spontaneous and planned activities which promoted children's choice and independence. Planning was responsive, with children's interests at the heart of it. One parent commented, "Maureen is a real life Mary Poppins". A range of activities and experiences gave children opportunities to develop their imagination and creativity. There was a good variety of easily accessible toys and resources, such as building blocks, games, jigsaws, books, dolls and kitchen play equipment. One child enjoyed telling us about the card they had made for their Mum. The childminder understood the importance and benefits of providing play experiences that took account of children's interests and stages of development. This ensured experiences met children's needs and enhanced their learning, and children were happy and having fun.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported by good opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Children benefitted from use of an enclosed garden, walks in the community and trips to local parks. The childminder regularly visited local toddler groups. This helped children lead active healthy lives, feel included in their local and wider community, and socialise with other children.

Children told us about many activities they enjoyed at the childminder's including playing with the kitchen and tea set and feeding the dolls. The childminder made good use of activities to promote children's social skills, such as turn taking and problem solving. Children regularly visited the local library and enjoyed attending Bookbug sessions. The varied activities and the childminder's effective approach, supported the development of children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy.

The childminder's understanding of child development supported them to enhance and extend children's play. Their rights based approach supported children's wellbeing and promoted their rights to play and have their voices heard. This further supported children to feel valued, loved, and respected.

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 quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder had created a warm, welcoming and homely environment for children. All areas they used were well maintained and benefited from natural light and ventilation. Children were confident accessing all areas of the home, which demonstrated their sense of security. One parent commented, "My child really loves the days they spend at Maureen's. They are happy and safe when with Maureen".

Children were safe and secure in the setting. Risk assessments that were regularly updated and reviewed, identified and minimised any risks in the indoor and outdoor environments. The childminder spoke with children about keeping themselves safe, for example, supporting children to understand the need for the floor to be free of toys or trip hazards. This ensured children enjoyed a variety of activities and play experiences that provided challenge and fun in a safe way.

There was appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. Thorough hand washing procedures were embedded and children understood the need for good hand hygiene. As a result, children played in a safe environment and the spread of infection was minimised.

Information about children and families was stored safely and securely. The childminder understood the importance of protecting information as they were registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This demonstrated their commitment to understanding and following guidance on data protection.

The childminder confidently discussed the fire drills and procedures in place in their home. They ensured these measures were regularly reviewed to ensure the setting, equipment and emergency plans were effective.

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 quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Positive relationships had been developed between the childminder and children and their families, which enabled everyone involved to contribute to the service development. Children and families views were actively sought through the use of questionnaires. Responses were used to plan for activities and supported the childminder to self-evaluate the service provided. For example, questionnaires asked for comments on several aspects of the quality of the service. The childminder used these to reflect and review the experiences offered, to ensure they were meeting the needs, wishes and choices of children and their families.

Clear policies and procedures were in place including child protection, emergency evacuation and complaints. These were regularly reviewed and shared with families. This helped families know what to expect from the service and feel well informed.

The childminder was dedicated and motivated to continually develop their service. An improvement plan had been created, following their self-evaluation based on the new quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare. One area for improvement identified was to reflect and further develop their own training and knowledge. This was planned to support with the upcoming changes in best practice and guidance materials. This approach benefitted children as they accessed a service ran by a trained, competent and skilled childminder.

The childminder had appropriate insurance for the safety and wellbeing of children. Record keeping was well maintained including attendance records. This supported the delivery of a quality, professional childminding 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 quality indicator as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values

All of the interactions between the childminder and children were warm, kind and compassionate. Children approached and responded to the childminder in a loving and affectionate way. The childminder's approach recognised children's rights to have their views considered and ensured children's voices were heard.

The childminder used a variety of methods to stay informed about changes in the sector. They were a member of the Scottish Childminding Association and often met up with other childminders. This provided opportunities for the childminder to discuss their ideas with other professionals; develop knowledge; and reflect on practice. They regularly accessed updates online and on social media. They had recently obtained new guidance in relation to children's nutrition. There were plans in place to review this and familiarise themselves with any changes ahead of the implementation later in the year. This contributed to positive outcomes for children as practice was based on up to date relevant guidance.

The childminder knew children well and responded to their individual interests. They used skilled questioning to support children's natural curiosity and extend their learning. They spoke positively with children and recognised their individual strengths. This allowed children to develop a positive view of themselves and develop trusting and secure relationships.

The childminder had good understanding of child development and how to support individual children. They recognised the importance of play which ensured children were having fun whilst learning. This contributed to children being happy and progressing well.

The childminder had a very good understanding of their professional responsibilities and was committed to their own learning and development. They had participated in a range of training including paediatric first aid, child protection, understanding children's rights and equality and diversity training. We suggested this could be further strengthened by completing a critical reflection following any training or professional development. This would support them to identify how the learning could improve outcomes for children and their families.

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?	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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
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