

McIntyre, Amanda

Child Minding

Cupar

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 March 2025

Service provided by:
Amanda McIntyre

Service provider number:
SP2003904118

Service no:
CS2007158067

About the service

Amanda McIntyre operates a service from their home in a residential area of Strathmiglo close to community amenities. The childminder may provide a care service to a maximum of seven children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of who no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

The service offers a large living room and dining room where children can choose to play with a variety of toys and books. Children have access to a bathroom area, to independently go to the toilet and for younger babies and children to be changed within. At the rear of the service there is a large secure garden for children to access.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 6 March 2025 between 09.15 to 11:45 and Monday 10 March 12:45 to 13:15. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with a child.
- Reviewed feedback from families.
- spoke with the childminder.
- observed practice and daily life.
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The childminder knew children and families well and worked with parents to ensure they supported children's emotional, health and wellbeing needs.
- Children had opportunities to develop language, literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children's personal care was well supported.
- Families benefitted from a detailed welcome pack about aspects of the service.
- The childminder promoted kind and responsive interactions and supported children to feel loved and secure.

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?	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?

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

We evaluated this quality indicator as **good**, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were cared for with warmth, kindness and a nurturing approach. They experienced care which meets their individual needs. The childminder understood the importance of developing positive relationships with families. Good communication and strong relationships supported families to be involved in their child's day. The childminder told us they shared relevant information during drop off and collection times which demonstrated a consistent approach for children. A parent shared "As parents we have a great relationship with the childminder and communication is great and she is always willing to help".

Children's information, including medical needs and emergency contacts had been recorded within enrolment forms. This supported the childminder in keeping children safe. The childminder knew children and families well and worked with parents to ensure that children's emotional and wellbeing needs were met. To continue to ensure children's needs are fully met and ensure continuity the childminder should put in place a detailed plan which is reviewed every six months as a minimum. **(See area for improvement)**.

Medication forms and a policy were in place to support the administration of medication should it be required. At the time of inspection, no children required medication. Accident forms recorded relevant information and were shared with families. As a result, children were kept safe and their health needs met.

Families provided meals and snacks for children. The childminder supported families with children's eating habits, for example encouraging children to try a variety of new foods. They supported a child to access their snacks, offering them choice and respecting the child's response. The childminder spoke through the options and did this in a relax manner. This created a pleasant and positive eating experience for the child. The childminder was aware of the importance of sitting with children as they ate to ensure their safety while eating.

During the inspection no children slept, however the childminder told us that there is a travel cot available to provide a safe sleeping environment. Discussions with families took place to ensure that sleeping arrangements were appropriate for the child and family.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as **very good**.

Children had opportunities to develop language, literacy and numeracy skills. Books were readily available, and children had access to paper, pens and pencils. The childminder told us they take children to the visiting library van, where they could choose books to read and share within the service. The childminder engaged in singing and provided props to support rhymes.

For example, a washing basket was provided as a pretend boat for singing 'Row, row, your boat'. As a result, language skills were promoted through everyday routines and fun experiences.

Play resources were age appropriate for children attending the service. The childminder knew the toys and activities that older children enjoyed and ensured these were always available. The childminder reflected on the interests of the children, building on these interests to sustain a good level of engagement. For example, Lego was a particular interest to a child, the childminder followed this up and provided additional Lego pieces to support the child's interest. We discussed with the childminder the use of loose parts such as pine cones, sticks and corks to provide children with further opportunities for developing curiosities and imagination.

The childminder had a good understanding of child development. They had implemented trackers to support achievements within children's development and established next steps for children. Significant milestones for children were celebrated and shared with families. Photographs of learning were taken of children in the service and shared with families via messaging. A parent shared "I feel like I can discuss any aspect of my child's care. Our relationship has developed over the past 10 years as she has been our childminder for both our children".

Effective use of questioning by the childminder extended children's thinking. The childminder recognised each child's individual needs and reflected upon this when communicating, thinking about the pace and the vocabulary being used. For a child who was at the very early stages of communication, the childminder implemented strategies to continue to develop the child's skills to increase their vocabulary. As a result, children were making good progress at a pace that was right for them.

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should develop the use of children's personal plans which should include the views of children and families. These should be reviewed at least every six months.

This is to ensure I experience high quality care and support that is right for me and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that;

'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?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

We evaluated this quality indicator as **good**, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were cared for in a homely environment that was comfortable and offered them space to play, rest and relax. The layout of the lounge and dining area supported children to move freely between the two areas and independently access toys and activities. This allowed them to make choices about where and how they played, ensuring they had enough physical space to meet their needs and wishes. This gave children a message that they mattered and made them feel welcomed.

As a result, children were happy and at ease in their environment.

The childminder understood the positive impact that outdoor play had on children's overall wellbeing. The garden was currently out of bounds due to weather damage to the fence. However, the childminder used alternative outdoor experiences to ensure that children had opportunities for fresh air and exercise. These included walks to the duck pond, the park as well as visiting the childminders horses. Children were actively involved and encouraged in planning future improvements to the garden area, this was an area that was identified as a development area by the childminder. The outdoor experiences on offer meant children were learning about the benefits of an active lifestyle that promoted their health and wellbeing.

Risk assessments helped to ensure children's safety was promoted and were regularly reviewed. When discussing risk benefit assessments, the childminder was reflective about highlighting the positive outcomes from experiences whilst reducing the risks. We also suggested involving children when reviewing and developing new risk assessments. This would promote opportunities for them to learn important life skills.

Children's personal care was well supported. A child was keen to show us where they were changed and was excited to show us the changing mat that they used to get changed. This demonstrated that nappy changing was a positive experience for the child. Older children were encouraged to access the bathroom area independently. All areas were clean, well-maintained, and accessible, giving children a sense of ownership over their space.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

We evaluated this quality indicator as **good**, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder had devised a shared vision, values and aims for the service. This let families know what they aspired to provide for parents and their children. Families benefitted from a detailed welcome pack about aspects of the service, including the aims of the service along with policies to guide the provision of the service. The childminder understood their responsibilities in delivering a service in line with guidance and best practice. The childminder had plans to review the vision, values and aims of the service and wished to involve the children and families within this process. As a result, parents felt involved in the service, and children received the right care when needed.

Although there were no formal systems in place for quality assurance, self-evaluation and service development, the childminder could tell us about the service's progress and their improvement plans. They confidently spoke about the areas of development, for example the garden development and setting up a closed group on an app to share experiences with families. We discussed with the childminder methods of continuous self-evaluation to continue to improve outcomes for children and families in conjunction with a quality assurance schedule. This would ensure that the childminder regularly reviews and evaluates progress of their service.

The childminder spoke fondly of the children and their individual needs. They demonstrated high aspirations for them and how they supported them to grow and flourish. Families shared: "When discussing my child's play and learning the childminder always makes time for this and welcomes my ideas concerns and expectations".

The childminder asked parents for feedback on different aspects of the service. This gave families the opportunity to complete a questionnaire, sharing their experiences and suggesting any activities they would like to add to their child's experiences. They used the information within the questionnaires to make changes. This helped ensure that children and parents' wish, and preferences were met.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children/people, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as **very good**.

Through reflective practice, the childminder identified areas for their own professional development which would further promote positive outcomes for children. The childminder had achieved recognised early learning and childcare qualifications and made links with social media pages in relation to childminding to be creative with the experiences on offer within the service. This meant children and families benefited from a well-trained and skilled childminder who was dedicated to meeting their needs.

The childminder had completed some training to enhance their practice, this included first aid. They identified ongoing training to support continuous professional learning through planning to attend course delivered by the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). The childminder had started to record training that they have attended and are planning to attend, to support them to develop their own learning action plan. This would further support reflective practice and the ongoing development of their service in line with best practice guidance.

The childminder promoted kind and responsive interactions, which supported children to feel loved and secure. The childminder understood the importance of listening to children and families. Cuddles and comfort were on offer to support children feel secure and families shared that the childminder's service was like "home from home". This enabled the childminder to build strong relationships and provide appropriate care and support for individuals. As a result, children's emotional wellbeing benefited from positive attachments.

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	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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