

Tots Toilichte Child Minding

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 March 2025

Service provided by:
Lisa Ralston

Service provider number:
SP2014986578

Service no:
CS2014334003

About the service

Tots Toilichte childminding service is provided from the childminder's family home setting, situated on rural farmland bordering the village of Torrance in East Dunbartonshire. Minded children are cared for in the living/dining room, kitchen, mezzanine play area and bathroom. They also have direct access to a large garden with an artificial grass pitch. The childminder makes good use of local community and parks to extend the quality of children's experiences.

The childminder 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 no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and, of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family/household.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 and 6 March 2025. 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 we:

- observed care for a total of three children using the service
- gathered feedback from four families using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm nurturing care and respectful interactions.
- The childminder knew all children very well and was responsive to their individual needs and interests.
- Children benefited from a childminder who spoke both Gaelic and English, supporting their language development and helping them feel connected to their family values.
- Opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through positive connections outdoors and in the local and wider community.
- The childminder was experienced, knowledgeable and committed to training and professional development.
- The childminder should continue to carry out regular self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.

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

The childminder was kind, caring and gentle in her approach and interactions. Children received cuddles, reassurance and loving care from a childminder who knew them well, this strengthened strong connections and trusting relationships. One parent told us, "our child stretches out to our childminder when they meet in the morning for a hug straight away". This resulted in children being happy, confident and settled in the childminder's home.

A welcoming home from home environment was created by the childminder, where children felt comfortable and familiar. Both Gaelic and English was spoken which respected family values. Parents told us, "The Gaelic influence, it's like a second home" and "The benefit of learning the Scottish Gaelic language alongside English is amazing". This promoted a strong sense of belonging and identity.

The childminder supported children's overall wellbeing by demonstrating a strong understanding of their individual needs. Families actively participated in creating personal plans for their children which included key information, such as their interests, likes, dislikes and health care needs. Regular personal plan reviews helped the childminder provide the best support for each child's current needs. All parents agreed, they were involved in developing and reviewing their children's care plans, with one parent commenting, "they were consulted about their child's preferences and likes, so the best care could be provided". This meant children could develop at a pace that was right for them and flourish as an individual.

Lunchtime was relaxed, sociable and unhurried. Friendly conversations at the table supported children's communication skills. Thoughtful seating, with dining chairs and a high chair adjoined to the table, ensured children felt included. The childminder used best practice guidance to menu plan and demonstrated a commitment to providing nutritious meals and snacks, including a range of fruits and home cooked meals such as chicken broth, mince and potatoes. This encouraged children to explore different tastes and develop healthy eating habits. Independence was encouraged at snack times. For example, children chose and spread their own toast toppings. Children had access to fresh drinking water, this kept them hydrated, which resulted in positive mealtime experiences that supported children's overall wellbeing.

The childminder was highly responsive to children's personal care needs, these interactions were carried out in a sensitive and compassionate manner where children were consulted. For example, during personal care routines such as nappy changing. This ensured that children's privacy and dignity was maintained at all times and children felt respected and were well cared for.

At the time of inspection, we noted that no children required medication. The childminder confidently told us about their procedures, a clear policy and recording system was in place. This ensured that medication was well managed and kept children safe.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were extremely confident and happy to lead their own play, a child centred approach provided children with opportunities to explore a wide variety of age appropriate toys and resources, some including books, puzzles, cars and dress up. These were easily accessible, in low-level storage units, boxes and bags within the living/dining room and mezzanine areas. This empowered children to make independent choices and decisions, exploring resources that sparked their interests and engaged them in play.

We observed that children particularly enjoyed playing with a train set, cars and tunnels, toy animals and engaged in imaginative play. The childminder was highly responsive, they skilfully interacted to offer challenge and support when needed. For example, helping build the train track, extended conversations and promoted turn taking during a pretend tea party. These positive interactions supported deeper engagement in play, resulting in children feeling valued, confident and motivated to have fun, learn and explore.

Planning was child-centred and responsive to children's needs and interests, a balance of meaningful planned and spontaneous experiences were provided each day. The childminder valued a strong partnership with parents and regularly shared photos of children's learning, progress and achievements with their families. One parent told us, "We have conversations every day after every session, photos and daily activities are documented and sent to us, we are very well informed of our child's development". This boosted children's self-esteem and instilled a strong sense of pride in their learning.

Outdoor play and learning was a key strength. Although the garden was not in use during the inspection, we saw that children clearly benefited from a wide range of outdoor experiences. These included mark-making with chalk and toy tractors in mud, imaginative play in the mud kitchen with natural materials such as sticks, gravel and leaves as well as active play on the low-level tree swing and sunken trampoline. The pitch area was frequently used, the childminder demonstrated responsiveness to children's individual interests, notably a child's passion for football. One child told us, that their favourite thing to do at the childminder's home was play football on the pitch.

Literacy and numeracy was promoted through daily conversations, positive interactions and enriching experiences. The childminder told us they particularly enjoyed taking the children on regular shopping trips, as this provided valuable learning opportunities at quieter times. We saw that children enjoyed this experience and could be seen using small trolleys to navigate the shop and find items from the list, such as "4 yellow bananas". They were involved in weighing, packing and helping to carry the shopping. These high quality real world learning experiences offered numerous benefits, including fostering a sense of responsibility, achievement and developing skills for life.

The childminder provided experiences and opportunities that were unique to the needs of the children and their families. They understood the importance of daily access to fresh air and its positive impact on children's wellbeing. In addition to outdoor play in the garden, the childminder enhanced children's learning through strong connections in both the local and wider community. Experiences included nature walks, visits to local parks, Gaelic book bug sessions, gymnastics and participation in at Gaelic toddler group. This supported their language development and fostered a strong sense of belonging to the Gaelic community.

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 key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder's home was warm, spacious and inviting. Cosy spaces had been created indoors with the use of soft furnishings such as large beanbags, rugs, cushions and soft toys. This provided a homely feel where children could play, relax and rest. One parent agreed and told us that their child benefitted from, "a family home setting". Large windows surrounding the living/dining room filled with natural light, encouraged children to actively observe the outside world including weather, birds and planes. We saw particular excitement and happiness shown by children when spotting a pheasant in the garden, this nurtured their natural curiosity and connection to their environment.

Being situated within a farm setting offered children meaningful opportunities to observe and learn about animals such as sheep, cattle, and a horse. This enabled children to explore the wonders of nature. The farm environment encouraged children to connect with animals and farm life. The childminder told us a particular interest included watching a range of tractors pass by, this provoked lots of questions and extended conversations. Further enriching their curiosity and learning. All parents agreed the farm setting was a strength, and one parent told us, "our childminder lives on a farm which has provided the amazing experience of being with animals, open space, fresh air and freedom".

The large outdoor area provided a variety of surfaces, including grass, concrete, and an artificial grass pitch. The childminder carefully thought out how to best use the outdoor space, it was sensitively structured to take account of children's interests and needs, including the layout of the space available for children. For example, a sheltered den had been created nestled among the trees with colourful hanging bunting and tree stumps to sit on, this area offered a tranquil space for children to relax, hide, and observe their surroundings. In addition, a large rock at the side of the garden known to the children as the "reading rock," was used for outdoor reading sessions. The childminder explained that this area was used regularly to encourage the love of storytelling.

To maintain a safe environment the childminder carried out daily risk assessments and routinely checked the areas used for minding. The childminder promptly addressed any potential hazards. For example, following recent high winds, damaged resources were removed. This enabled children to explore freely and securely in an environment that was safe.

Very good infection prevention and control practices were in place. The childminder's home was clean, tidy and well-maintained. Regular hand washing was promoted, with children responding well to encouragement and praise. Gloves and aprons were worn by the childminder when changing nappies, to minimise the spread of germs. These practices created a safe and clean environment, helping to keep children healthy.

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 key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvements are led well

The service vision, values and aims alongside a welcome pack with Gaelic cultural information and service information policies enabled families to choose a setting that was right for them and aligned with their values. This created a nurturing environment where children and families experienced a strong sense of cultural identity and belonging and a positive impact on their emotional wellbeing and confidence.

A range of consultation and communication methods were used to gather parents' views, including, regular questionnaires, WhatsApp, and informal daily chats during drop-off and pick-up times. The childminder maintained an open and transparent approach, welcoming feedback as they were committed to making the service the best for families. Almost all parents strongly agreed that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. One parent told us, "they were always welcomed in". Strong partnerships were valued, this supported children and families to be actively involved in shaping the service.

The childminder was committed to improving the service and used best practice guidance to support self-evaluation. Through consistent reflection and the use of an improvement plan with a monthly improvement focus and self-evaluation audit tool, alongside parent feedback. This enabled the childminder to identify areas of strengths and areas for further growth. They fostered a culture of continuous improvement to ensure positive outcomes for children and families.

The childminder was part of a supportive childminding network through the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). They had built strong connections with others as part of a recent self-evaluation peer support and review programme. The childminder shared that they found the experience beneficial and increased their confidence with self-evaluation audits. These opportunities supported connection and collaboration with other professionals to share experiences and best practice. As part of the childminder's on-going improvement journey, they were committed to ensuring the best outcomes for children and were open to make any changes that would further enhance their practice.

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 key question as very good.

Quality Indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

The childminder was passionate in their role, and had a genuine love for the children in their care. They had a very good understanding of their professional responsibilities and worked within their conditions of registration.

The service values were clear to see throughout the day, through the use of Gaelic and sensitive, kind and nurturing interactions as well as wanting the children to be happy and have fun. One parent agreed and told us, "Tots Toilichte is the best place for children to learn, be confident, be kind and have lots of fun".

A compassionate, kind and responsive approach supported positive relationships between children and families. They were committed to their role and ensured they were getting it right for every child. One parent commented, "we feel so lucky to have such a lovely person, mentor, and carer look after our child, we are truly privileged", and another commenting, "We fully trust the childminder with our child and know that they provide the best care possible".

The childminder was committed to their professional development. They had engaged in a range of learning and development which further enhanced their knowledge and skills. Some examples of training include, food hygiene, first aid and book bug which inspired the childminder to develop the outdoor reading rock. They used a learning log to record and reflect on their development. The childminder demonstrated a strong passion for outdoor learning, and expressed a commitment to further training in this area, whilst this was recognised as a strength, they aimed to refresh, expand knowledge and gain new ideas to further enrich children's play and learning within natural environments.

Children were kept safe and protected from harm. The childminder understood her role in child protection, there was a clear policy in place to support this, they confidently spoke about the steps they would take if they had a wellbeing concern.

As a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), regular updates on best practice guidance and care inspectorate updates through the hub were received. To maintain the high quality of care provided and ensure positive outcomes for children and families, the childminder should continue to consistently refer to relevant, up to date guidance and legislation when reviewing policies, risk assessments and self-evaluation. This proactive approach will ensure that children continue to thrive in a safe, nurturing environment.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 7 July 2023 the childminder must ensure that the service conditions of registration are maintained at all times.

This is in order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011: 78 (3) (b) Failure to Comply and 74 (d) (i) Conditions as to numbers in Childminding

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

This requirement was made on 11 April 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had been operating within the conditions of registration since 7 July 2023, to further support this the childminder had applied for a variation that was granted, ensuring the number of children cared for remained within the conditions of registration.

Met - within timescales

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

To support children's wellbeing and development, the childminder should develop personal plans for all children registered to attend her service. Personal plans should identify how the childminder plans to meet children's needs and should be reviewed with children and parents at least every six months or sooner, where required.

In developing personal planning processes, the childminder should refer to the 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning Early Learning and Childcare' which can be found on the Care Inspectorate Hub.

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

This area for improvement was made on 6 July 2023.

Action taken since then

The childminder had reviewed and developed children's personal plans to ensure that they identified and reviewed children's needs at least every six months or sooner. To achieve this the childminder had referred to the Care Inspectorate personal plan guidance and has agreed to keep updated with any changes.

This area for improvement has been met.

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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