

Cosmic Kids Childminding Child Minding

Mauchline

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 April 2025

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2023000104

Service no:
CS2023000156

About the service

Cosmic Kids Childminding (Tania O'Neil) provides a childminding service from their family home in Tarbolton, South Ayrshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. The service is close to the local primary school, village shop, park and woodland. Children have access to the living room, kitchen and the downstairs family bathroom.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 April 2025 between 9:45am and 13:00. We gave feedback to the service virtually on 17 April 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. This was the first inspection of the service.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the service was registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed and spoke with six children using the service
- sent out a family questionnaire and received two responses
- spoke with two families by email or by telephone call
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- All parents strongly agreed they were happy with the support their child received.
- Children attending the service were settled, happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder.
- The childminder had a friendly, nurturing and welcoming approach with children and families which supported the development of trusting relationships.
- Children's social and emotional wellbeing was supported by a caring childminder.
- The childminder was proactive in seeking training opportunities to enhance her service.
- Safety practices should continue to be reviewed.

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?	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

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

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children attending the service were settled, happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder provided reassurance and kind interactions to children throughout our visit. This helped children feel loved, safe and secure. All parents had positive feedback about the care their child received. Comments included: "My child loves Tania like family, and she feels more like family to us" and "Tania could not be anymore welcoming."

The childminder knew the children and their families very well. The childminder knew each child's interests, personalities and preferences. As a result, children had a positive relationship with the childminder. Information held within personal plans was up-to-date. This helped ensure each child's individual needs were met. The childminder was trialling a new Daily Connect App with a small number of children and families, to see if an electronic personal plan would be as effective. Feedback about the app, from families we spoke with, was positive. All families strongly agreed that they were fully involved in their child's care including developing and reviewing their personal plan.

Children experienced a sociable, unhurried lunch and snack experience. The childminder was aware of the benefits of sitting beside children while they ate. They understood how to use this time to provide praise and encouragement to children, for example to try new foods and to keep them safe from any choking hazards. One parent told us "My child is fussy and Tania always has just the right thing in for them to be happy with her choices." Younger children sat comfortably and securely in low chairs helping to keep them safe. Children were encouraged to stay hydrated and drink water throughout the day. This supported children to be healthy and develop positive eating habits.

Nappy changing was a relaxed, nurturing experience for children. The childminder took a respectful approach to children's personal care and chatted to the child as they changed their nappy. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) was worn. We reminded the childminder about continuing to ensure effective handwashing was undertaken. This will help children to be healthy, safe and well.

Medication policies and procedures were in place. We asked the childminder to ensure names and details of each child's medical practitioner were available in case of emergency.

The childminder was aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm. A child protection course had recently been completed, which kept them up-to-date with current guidance.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were happy and having fun with the resources that were available to them. The childminder told us children could freely access additional resources from a cupboard. The childminder's interactions during play supported children to learn, develop confidence and feel secure. As a result, children played happily throughout our visit.

We could see through photographs, big book displays and records how children enjoyed a variety of activities such as baking, arts and crafts, messy play and bug hunts. The children proudly showed us the caterpillars they had found, and eagerly told us they were waiting for the cocoon to form. The childminder had facilitated this learning experience with butterfly habitats for the children to use. Children regularly played outdoors either in the garden or by visiting local parks and play areas. Parents agreed that there was, "Lots of outdoor play" and that children were "Learning new things".

Literacy and numeracy development was promoted with a suitable selection of resources available such as books, matching cards, mark making materials and jigsaws. The childminder's interactions supported early literacy skills as they sat together identifying animals. We saw happy children singing and dancing along to music videos, using words and rhythm. The childminder provided lots of praise as they had fun together. This supported children's literacy and language development.

The childminder understood child development and used this to plan for goals and next steps for each child. The childminder worked with children's interests and parents' comments to provide varied activities that helped support children's wellbeing and learning. For example, the children engaged happily in preparing their lunch, they took turns, used utensils and spoke about the food on offer. As a result, children were socialising, making friends and learning from each other.

Children's opportunities were enhanced through connections with the local community. Children attended local playgroups and visited local attractions. They enjoyed time at the other childminders' houses, playing in the local outdoors and shopping in the village store. This supported children to become familiar with their community and have a sense of belonging. A parent told us: "Nothing is too big or too small when it comes to my child's needs and Tania treats my child like one of her own."

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a warm, relaxed and comfortable environment. The children had access to a living room, kitchen and garden. A parent told us "It is a home from home environment, a safe space for my child and myself and my child can speak to Tania about anything." We reminded the childminder to be vigilant with locking the front door to keep the children secure (see area for improvement 1). This will help to keep the children safe at all times.

The childminder's home was welcoming and the children clearly felt comfortable and relaxed within the setting. The living room was arranged to allow children to freely access resources and lead their own learning. There was a large floor space for children to play, with a large couch for children to rest and relax on. There was also a table with mark making resources, children were excited to show us their drawing and writing. The childminder should continue to encourage the children's creativity, curiosity and inquiry with challenging open-ended resources.

The childminder was making good use of the outdoor space to promote physical activity and develop the children's gross motor skills. For example, there was a gymnastics bar and an assortment of balls and toys for children to play with. There was a large outdoor mud kitchen. We encouraged the childminder to further develop this by adding mud and other resources to facilitate further play and learning.

The childminder had a variety of risk assessments, policies and procedures in place. We saw she was making good use of a risk matrix to assess risk and control measures which supported her to provide a quality service. We requested that daily checks of the outdoor area are undertaken to ensure all dog dirt is removed (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To help keep children safe, the childminder should ensure a clean and secure environment. This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring that:

- animal faeces are promptly removed and the area cleaned
- risk assessments of the environment are updated to reflect how potential hazards are managed
- access to the environment is secure at all times.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My environment is secure and safe" (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder was achieving her aim of providing a "warm, safe and friendly home from home environment where children can play, grow and learn whilst having fun" as children were clearly enjoying themselves in this setting. Social interactions between children were kind and caring, reflecting the similar kindness and care the childminder showed the children. As a result, social skills were being developed.

The childminder had effective self-evaluation processes in place; she was using a hybrid model which supported improvements to her service. We were able to see the improvements she had already made. For example, she had reorganised the children's resources to allow better access and promote independence. Improvements had been effective and we observed the children freely accessing these resources.

The childminder was pro-active in seeking out training opportunities to further develop and improve her own practice. She had updated her child protection and first aid certificates and had ensured her good hygiene knowledge was up-to-date. The childminder had a training plan in place to access regular training opportunities. As a result of this training, we saw evidence in her policies reflecting the skills and knowledge gained. For example, she had increased physical activity in line with recently updated national guidance.

The childminder had developed close, positive relationships with families and was supporting them in a variety of ways. A parent told us "I have only good things to say about Tania, she has been a saviour to myself and my husband. Without her I wouldn't be able to work as family support is far away from where we live, I rely a lot on Tania". Another parent told us "Tania is the best childminder. She provides support not just to my daughter but to me on a personal level".

The childminder was using the Daily Connect app to encourage parents to be more involved with their child's learning. Parents also told us that they "love" the app with one parent telling us that it allows them to be "well informed of development plans".

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children benefited from compassionate and responsive care. The childminder took the time to listen to children and hear what they had to say. They shared positive interactions, encouraged language and had discussions as well as promoting children to think about their views and thoughts. This resulted in confident children who were able to express themselves.

The childminder had a good understanding of child development and ways in which to support their progress. The childminder recognised the importance of positive attachments and interactions with families. Regular communication with parents meant that the childminder was able to respond to children's individual needs and preferences. This enabled them to provide appropriate care and support to ensure children's wellbeing was benefitted.

The childminder's skills and knowledge had recently been enhanced by their achievement of a university degree in Childhood Practice.

The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). This membership, along with local childminding network involvement and social media use, kept the childminder's knowledge current and up-to-date. The childminder was aspirational for her service and for the achievements of children. Tania actively sought opportunities to develop her own practice and had a commitment to delivering a quality service for children and families in Tarbolton.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the service registered. Details of 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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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