

Munro, Helen Child Minding

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 May 2025

Service provided by:
Helen Munro

Service provider number:
SP2007966607

Service no:
CS2007160248

About the service

Helen Munro provides a childminding service from their home, which is a terraced house within the Bothwell area of South Lanarkshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom 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 children of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local nurseries, schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room and kitchen, which has direct access to the garden. Toilet facilities used by minded children is upstairs. At the time of the inspection six children were registered to receive care, all on a part time basis. There were six minded children present during the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which began on Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 12:30. As there were no minded children present, we returned on Wednesday 14 May 2025 to complete the inspection and give feedback. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with the childminder about the service they provided and observed the six minded children in their play
- observed practice including the interactions between the childminder and minded children
- walked around areas of the home used by minded children, looking at resources available and the use of space
- reviewed documents related to the service
- reviewed feedback from five parents whose children attended the service.

Key messages

- Children were settled and happy as the childminder was kind, caring and nurturing in their interactions with them.
- Children's personal plans would be strengthened if children had the opportunity to contribute their views on their interests and preferences. This would demonstrate that their perspective was listened to and respected.
- Children benefitted from being cared for in a clean and homely setting, with direct access to active outdoor play.
- The childminder was welcoming and engaged well with the inspection process, they were responsive to suggestions and areas for development.
- The childminder should continue to participate in professional development activities to support them in their role. These should be evaluated to record outcomes for children and the overall development of the service.

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 where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support.

Children were observed to be happy and settled within the childminding setting. They benefitted from the warm, caring approach of the childminder who knew their individual needs and preferences. As a result, children felt valued, safe and secure. During our visit, there was lots of laughter and friendly chat where the childminder modelled and encouraged children to be kind to each other, ensuring everyone felt included. Parents responding to our survey confirmed their children experienced responsive care, they strongly agreed that they had been involved in devising their child's personal plan. Comments included, "Helen is very in tune with my child's needs. She takes the time to get to know each child individually. I also feel that Helen takes the time to listen to my thoughts on what my daughter may need". Positive relationships and effective communication with families ensured that children's needs were met.

All children had a personal plan that contained information to support the childminder to meet their health, welfare and safety needs. No children required medication while attending the setting, but we could see that the childminder had templates for recording appropriate information should this be required. The childminder regularly shared information with parents, both at children handover times and via text messaging, to ensure there was consistency in children's care.

Children were clearly accustomed to the childminder valuing their ideas and achievements, which built their confidence and self-esteem. We discussed how children's personal plans would be strengthened if children had the opportunity to contribute their views on their interests and preferences. This would formally demonstrate that their perspective was listened to and respected by the childminder.

We could see that children were accustomed to having choices in their routines, for example, at mealtimes. We observed that they mainly chose crisps for snack, however, children told us about other options they enjoyed - "We have different snacks sometimes Watermelon or other fruit, crackers" and "(Childminder) makes the best toast!" Children could help themselves to water to keep hydrated. This contributed to children's balanced diet. None of the children had allergies or special dietary requirements. The childminder only provided snacks for children and had participated in food hygiene training to ensure they followed safe practices in handling food. They had previously been advised by the local authority that it was not necessary to register as a food business. We referred them to the childminder guidance available from Food Standards Scotland - <https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/business-and-industry/industry-specific-advice/childminders>. This will ensure that they are following the most up to date legal requirements for registered childminders, including whether they need to register as a food business.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

On the day of our visit only school aged children were attending the setting and they told us about their preference to play outdoors. Children were having fun and self-selecting resources to enrich their play. For example, three of the children cut up a large cardboard box, sharing out pieces to decorate. Providing open-ended materials, supports children's imagination, curiosity and creativity. Children knew where to get additional coloured pens to extend their ideas. Children's comments included, "I really like arts and crafts."

Helen has plenty of stuff – sometimes we make things for special occasions like Mother's Day. Yesterday we were tying stuff like flowers to the railings at the pitch but it got too windy".

The childminder recognised the value of outdoor play opportunities. Children walked each day to and from school and nursery. They made good use of community facilities, such as the adjacent playing fields and regularly visited local parks. Younger children were taken to toddler groups. This supported children to develop meaningful connections with their wider community. For example, meeting new people can build children's confidence, promote their empathy for others and boost their own self-esteem.

All parents told us that their children always had opportunities to be involved in meaningful, interesting and fun play experiences. Their comments about these included, "The real life experiences are what I love. Helen provides these. Trips on bus, to shops etc. I love that younger children attend toddler groups and book bug. They are always outdoors in all weathers and it's great they have access to this freely each day. The park and local play parks are also such an advantage which Helen frequents".

How good is our setting?

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 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

The childminder's home was warm, welcoming, clean and well ventilated. Children had space to play and also to rest and relax on soft furnishings. Children's emotional wellbeing was promoted from being included in a homely environment. This included direct access to the safely enclosed garden, which in turn led to playing fields. Daily opportunities for outdoor play supported children to be physically active in the fresh air and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. There was a variety of resources for children to play with which included wheeled toys, balls and a basketball net.

The childminding setting was well-maintained. The childminder explained how they made sure their home was fit for the care of children through a dynamic approach to risk assessment. It included identifying potential risks within external areas or activities that children accessed while in the childminder's care, and actions they had taken to minimise these. This contributed to children's safety and wellbeing.

Children's safety and wellbeing was further supported through the childminder's infection prevention and control practice. Areas were clean and toys and equipment were cleaned regularly. Good hand hygiene was encouraged, for example, the childminder prompted children to wash their hands as soon as they came in from school and before handling food. There was plenty of liquid soap and children were provided with a separate hand towel from that of the childminder's family. This reduced the risk of any cross infection and kept children healthy and safe.

The childminder had booked in to update their paediatric first aid training so that they were able to respond appropriately to any accidents involving children. We could see that the childminder had a clear format for recording accidents/incidents to ensure that correct information was exchanged with parents, and that there could be continuity in children's care.

All parents responding to our survey strongly agreed that their children were cared for in a safe, secure and well-maintained environment. They appreciated that their children had plenty of opportunities to play

outdoors. Their comments included, "Helen has a wonderful garden which all the kids love to play in no matter what the weather. Helen will also take the kids to different parks and play areas" and "Never had any worries about safety in Helen's home. All the toys my daughter plays with are age appropriate."

How good is our leadership?

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: 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The childminder had continued their membership of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and had used their resources to develop their knowledge and understanding of best practice to support children's health, safety and wellbeing. SCMA is a national umbrella organisation whose main aim is to promote childminding as a quality childcare service. The childminder had taken steps to improve their quality assurance processes since the last inspection. For example, through updating their complaints policy and registering with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO gives guidelines on data protection when considering how to store children's personal information confidentially and lawfully.

Written policies and procedures developed by the childminder were made available to parents which meant they knew what to expect from the service. However, we advised that the childminder's registration certificate be visibly displayed during the times of their service operation. We also asked that any reference to the Care Inspectorate, within information given to families, only contain the national contact details for the organisation. The childminder agreed to action both points. During our inspection visit the childminder was open to ideas for how they could develop their practice, therefore ensuring that they contributed to positive outcomes for children.

Parents' comments within our survey indicated that they were very happy with the overall quality of the service provided. They either agreed or strongly agreed that they and their children were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. Transparent communication ensured there was continuity in their child's care. Their comments included, "Helen has always appreciated my thoughts and feelings about anything to do with my child" and "Helen is always very warm and welcoming. Always happy to discuss any worries or concerns".

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Quality Indicator: 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values.

Children's emotional wellbeing benefitted from strong and positive attachments with the childminder. The childminder was responsive to children's stage of development and used their knowledge to provide compassionate care. They engaged well with the children, informed by the time they had taken to get to know children's unique personalities and interests. For example, the childminder encouraged and promoted positive behaviour. We observed that they used distraction as a way of diffusing any challenging situations. This contributed to children feeling safe and secure, in the childminder's care.

The childminder had a child protection policy and had plans to refresh their child protection training online in the near future. This gave families reassurance that the childminder was well prepared to act on any concerns for a child's welfare.

Parents responding to our survey strongly agreed that their family had a good relationship with the childminder. Their comments included, "Helen is very approachable, accommodating and kind. I feel happy knowing my children are safe with her" and "Helen is very in tune with my daughter's needs. She takes the time to get to know each child individually. I also feel that Helen takes the time to listen to my thoughts on what my daughter may need".

We discussed the professional development activities that the childminder engaged in to support their practice. They regularly met with other childminders, which enabled them to share skills, knowledge and values around quality experiences for children. This had included collectively organising formal training, such as first aid. Being a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) helped the childminder keep up to date with national developments. We signposted the childminder to professional development materials available on the Care Inspectorate HUB that were specific to their context. The childminder should now consider explicitly recording and evaluating the professional development activities they participated, whether formal or informal. This would help the childminder demonstrate the impact of their own learning on outcomes for children, as well as to the general development of their service.

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

The childminder kept records on children's personal details, needs and interests. Files need to be well organisation and contain all the required information. To achieve this the childminder needs to ensure they have a personal plan for every child, parents sign medication forms, accident forms include time of occurrence.

National Care Standards in Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:

Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing
Standard 6: Support and Development
Standard 16: Well-managed Service

This area for improvement was made on 2 March 2018.

Action taken since then

The childminder was using SCMA templates to assist with how they recorded core information about children, and supported their care. They consulted with parents, and sometimes children, about how best to support children's individual needs and preferences. Although there was evidence that the personal plans

had been updated, the childminder agreed they should be more diligent about recording the dates on different entries. This would ensure information was current and relevant.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The service complaint procedure should be updated to include the Care Inspectorate contact details and to outline that complaints will be addressed within 20 days.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 16: Well-managed Service.

This area for improvement was made on 2 March 2018.

Action taken since then

The complaints procedure had been updated as requested. The childminder agreed to remove the Care Inspectorate local office details from the procedure. This is because members of the public should only use the national office contact details in Dundee.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The service should have a policy and procedures to ensure the safeguarding of children when using social media to share information with parents.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 16: Well-managed service

This area for improvement was made on 2 March 2018.

Action taken since then

The childminder advised that children did not use social media while attending the service. However, they were using technology to support children's care such as sharing photographs of activities with parents using an online platform. On the first day of our inspection we advised the childminder to register with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). This would help ensure they were adhering to general data protection guidance when storing children's personal information, and thus safeguard children. The childminder had registered by the second day of inspection.

This area for improvement had 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?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - 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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