

Lamb, Angela Child Minding

Aberdeen

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
9 May 2025

Service provided by:
Angela Lamb

Service provider number:
SP2015987102

Service no:
CS2015338774

About the service

Angela Lamb provides a daycare service from their property in the residential area of Westhill. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are aged one year to not yet attending primary school, of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. Overnight service will not be provided.

The service is close to a local primary school, parks and green spaces. Children are cared for in the downstairs areas of the family home. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden with decked area for play. Meals are provided and prepared by the childminder. Access to the service is by foot, car or local bus route.

About the inspection

This was a short notice inspection which took place on 09 May 2025 between the hours of 08.30 and 13.00. 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. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children
- observed children's experiences
- received five completed questionnaires
- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed documents.

As part of this 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:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being 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 attending the service were settled, happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder. They had fun, laughing and smiling with the childminder. Older children told us they enjoyed attending.
- Children were supported by a childminder who knew them well. The childminder had a kind and caring approach with children, giving individual care such as cuddles and conversations.
- Children enjoyed home cooked meals prepared by the childminder and were well supported during mealtimes.
- Most children had opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air. This could be further improved.
- The childminder should continue to find ways for parents and children to give regular feedback to help further develop the service.
- The childminder had not completed ongoing professional development including child protection. The childminder should find suitable ways to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills.
- Most areas for improvement that were made at the previous inspection have not been met and have been carried forward. The childminder should seek support that is available to further improve their 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

1.1 Nurture care and support

Children attending the service were settled, happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder had a kind and caring approach with children, giving individual care such as cuddles and conversations. This helped children feel nurtured, safe and secure. The childminder had built positive, trusting relationships with children and most families. Comments from families included "Angela is very approachable and friendly" and "Angela is very friendly and caring."

Children were supported by a childminder who knew them well. They knew children's individual personalities, interests and needs and used this to help support children in a way that met their individual needs. For example, developing play activities and resources to support children in their interests such as animals and drawing. The childminder worked in partnership with parents to provide personalised approaches where children required some extra support, such as with language and communication, behaviour and emotions or encouraging children to eat well. Support for all children could have been strengthened further had there been up to date personal plans with effective information on each child's support and progress. Most parents disagreed that they felt involved with their child's plans. Comments included "I've never been informed about any developments or a personal plan." An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward. **(see area for improvement number 1 in the section of this report 'what the service has done to meet areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection')**

Nappy changing was a relaxed, nurturing experience for children. The childminder took a respectful approach to children's personal care and chatted to the children as they changed their nappy. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) was not in place. We discussed this with the childminder and this had been rectified by the time of writing this report. The proper use of PPE will help contribute to children being kept healthy, safe and well.

Children who needed to nap during the day were supported to do so. Home routines were followed and the childminder communicated with the parents each day to agree any changes to these routines. We discussed safe sleeping with the childminder, as children often slept in a buggy or on the sofa. Spending too much time sleeping in a buggy can restrict children's movements and quality of rest. The childminder should look at ways of offering other, safe, sleeping routines.

Children enjoyed home cooked meals prepared by the childminder. On the day we visited, children enjoyed vegetable pasta with sweetcorn for lunch. The childminder knew each individual child's needs and provided consistent support over time to encourage children to eat well and try new foods. As a result, the children present had made good progress with their eating habits and routines. The childminder sat with the children, using this time to support and talk with children. Children were happy to chat and enjoyed this sociable experience. Some parents praised the childminder for the help and support their child was given. Some, however, did not feel informed of what foods were offered. The childminder had recently begun to share weekly menus using online tools such as 'WhatsApp.' This was as a result of feedback and designed to help parents know the planned meals of the week.

1.3 Play and learning

Most children's play benefitted from a variety of activities and experiences, supporting the range of ages using the service. Children's interests were encouraged such as a love of animals, drawing and going to the playpark. The childminder interacted with children in a fun way during their play. The childminder knew children's favourite activities and used this during their play. Together they had a play picnic, played ball and drew pictures. The childminder sat and played with children at their level, often on the floor. This nurturing and interactive approach meant that children had fun with laughter and smiles. Children had opportunities to develop speech and language through story telling. Younger children enjoyed reading story books with the childminder on the sofa, often wanting more and more stories read.

Most children experienced regular opportunities to benefit from fresh air, exercise and to explore their local community. Children were very familiar with the area and places that were available to them. Regular visits to parks and local green spaces after school, gave older children opportunities to play and develop physical skills. Younger children would benefit from more outdoor play experiences. Younger children were outdoors in the buggy daily; however, these walks did not always include a play destination. This meant that children could spend longer periods of time in a buggy instead of exercising. The childminder should monitor this and ensure all children get good opportunities for outdoor play.

The childminder had an informal approach to planning for children's learning and development. They were responsive to the changing interests and needs of the children attending. For example, the childminder sourced additional books about animals to support one child with their interests. The childminder kept some records and observations of children's progress. We discussed with the childminder ways in which this could be further improved. This would further help in providing challenging and stimulating experiences for children to reach their potential.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's overall wellbeing, up to date personal plans must be in place for all children. These should take into account the wellbeing indicators and be effective in supporting children.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as my care 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

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder's house provided a homely environment for children to play. Children used the downstairs of the childminder's home and did not have access to the upstairs. Space for children included soft furnishings to relax and spacious floor areas to play. The living area provided the main play space for children.

A dining table provided a place to eat meals and have fun with art and craft activities. Children were supervised while they accessed the handwashing sink in the downstairs bathroom. The bathroom was kept in a clean, safe and orderly fashion for children to use safely.

Children could easily access the toys they wanted to play with, as they were stored safely within their reach in the play spaces. This allowed children to shape their play in a way that mattered to them. Resources reflected the individual interests of children. The childminder knew these well, sourcing and adding resources to support this. We would encourage the childminder to look at loose parts resources and how they can support the play and development of children. Introducing more of this type of play would further support children of all ages.

The childminder worked well to ensure that children had access to a homely environment that was clean and tidy each day. Pets' cages and play areas were regularly cleaned, ensuring the safety of children. The kitchen area was free from clutter and had clean surfaces. This helped provide a safe place to prepare children's meals. Some recent emergency work on the home had been carried out which had meant that some re-decoration work needed to take place. This was planned by the childminder, but no date had been organised yet. Completing this would further support a positive well-maintained environment for children.

How good is our leadership?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder had a set of aims in place for their service which were shared with parents during induction. They stated, "As a childcare provider it is my job to ensure each child feels happy, safe, and secure, allowing them to develop freely in a safe environment. I will work closely with parents and carers to provide the best service I can." This reflected most parts of the service for children. A few parents felt they would like more exchange of information.

Children and families had informal opportunities to discuss the service and make suggestions for improvements. Parents gave us mixed feedback as to how well they felt they could do this. Some parents disagreed they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. Comments included: "There isn't any communication to make that happen" and "Never been asked anything like this." Other parents agreed they were involved and commented: "Free to voice my opinion if I wanted to." The childminder had made some recent improvements to practice as a result of parent feedback, such as sharing weekly menus with parents in advance. Parents had told the childminder they found this helpful and would like it to continue. The childminder should continue to find ways for parents to give regular feedback to help further develop the service.

The childminder used the same informal approach to self-evaluate the service provided. This had led to changes already discussed within the report such as menus for parents and books for children. The childminder had very recently begun to seek and receive support from the local authority childminding development officer and from SCMA (Scottish Childminding Association). This was planned to support evaluation work against best practice documents and the self-evaluation toolkit 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare.' This work should continue to ensure that outcomes and experiences for children improve.

An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward. **(see area for improvement number 5 in the section of this report 'what the service has done to meet areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection')**

The use of effective risk assessment did not yet fully support the ongoing safety of children. The childminder was in the early stages of reviewing risk assessments for the home and children's activities. Policies and procedures in place for the childminder to follow were not always up to date and reflective of current best practice. This did not fully support the work of the service to provide high quality care for children. Membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) provided them with templates and support to do this. The childminder should continue to ensure these are updated. An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward. **(see area for improvement number 3 in the section of this report 'what the service has done to meet areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection')**

Areas for improvement

1. To support ongoing improvement and the changing needs of children the childminder should ensure that:

- parents, children and other stakeholders have opportunities to meaningfully feedback to the service
- feedback is used to promote positive development
- self-evaluation using quality indicators and best practice influence ongoing improvement and development.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

2. To support the ongoing improvement of the service to provide consistently high quality care for children the childminder should ensure that:

- risk assessments are up to date, relevant and are consistently carried out to ensure the safety of children
- policies and procedures are reviewed, updated when necessary to reflect guidance and good practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact on outcomes for children, key areas need to improve.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values

The childminder had a friendly, nurturing and welcoming approach with children which supported the development of trusting relationships. The childminder recognised the importance of nurture and provided children with reassurance through cuddles and kindness. They initiated conversations with children and listened to children when they had stories to tell or something to say. This led to a comforting and friendly place for children to be.

The childminder, on most days, spoke with parents during arrival and departure to exchange information. Photos and messages were shared regularly through social media apps, which supported parents to be involved in their children's experiences. However, parents told us they would like more information about their child's day and progress. Parents disagreed that they were welcomed into the childminder's home to discuss their child's care, play and learning. Parents commented; "Since my child started, I haven't been inside her home" and "Have done this before and know I can ask Angela about it anytime if I wanted to." The childminder should work with parents to agree ways in which everyone (including the childminder) can feel comfortable to have meaningful conversations and interactions that further support the positive relationships already in place.

The childminder had not completed up to date training in the core area of child protection. Through discussion, based on a scenario, the childminder was able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of procedures related to addressing child protection concerns. However, up to date training and professional development is essential in ensuring that knowledge remains current to help keep children safe. An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward. **(see area for improvement number 4 in the section of this report 'what the service has done to meet areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection')**

The childminder had not completed ongoing professional development. This limited opportunities for the ongoing development of the service and quality care for children. The childminder now needs to identify more ways to engage with guidance and best practice documents in order to shape and inform their practice. We encourage the childminder to use support from the local authority and SCMA. We have directed the childminder to guidance, best practice documents and support for their continued professional development, and spent time discussing a range of ways where professional development can be met such as reading, free webinars and guidance videos. An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward. **(see area for improvement number 4 in the section of this report 'what the service has done to meet areas for improvement we made at, or since the last inspection')**

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure high quality care and learning for children, the childminder should now take part in continued professional development opportunities and use this to improve practice. This should include but not be limited to:

- child protection
- quality assurance and self evaluation.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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 should keep a note of when children's care plans have been updated. This will confirm that they have the most up to date information logged.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 - Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2016.

Action taken since then

All children had a personal plan in place; however, these did not always hold up to date information. These were not reviewed every six months or sooner if needed. Parents were not involved with any review of information. Support for all children could have been strengthened further had there been up to date personal plans with effective information on each child's support and progress.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should create a simple way to record observations of children. This will enable the childminder to highlight children's individual needs.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 - Standard 6: Support and Development.

This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2016.

Action taken since then

The childminder was responsive to the changing interests and needs of the children attending. The childminder kept some records and observations of children's progress.

This area for improvement has met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should develop risk assessments to ensure risk assessments have clear details and dates of actions taken to prevent risk. This will allow the childminder to keep children in their care safe.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 2:
A Safe Environment.

This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2016.

Action taken since then

The use of effective risk assessment did not yet fully support the ongoing safety of children. Policies and procedures in place for the childminder to follow were not always up to date and reflective of current best practice. This did not fully support the work of the service to provide high quality care for children. The childminder was in the early stages of reviewing risk assessments for the home and children's activities along with policies and procedures. Membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) provided them with templates and support to do this. The childminder should continue to ensure these are updated.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded.

Previous area for improvement 4

The childminder should look at attending regular training to ensure they stay up to date with the latest practice and guidance. This will allow the childminder to provide enhanced opportunities for children in their care.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 14: Well-Managed Service.

This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2016.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not completed ongoing professional development. This limited opportunities for the ongoing development of the service and quality care for children. The childminder now needs to identify more ways to engage with guidance and best practice documents in order to shape and inform their practice. We encourage the childminder to use support from the local authority and SCMA. We have directed the childminder to guidance, best practice documents and support for their continued professional development, and spent time discussing a range of ways where professional development can be met such as reading, free webinars and guidance videos.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded.

Previous area for improvement 5

The childminder should look at developing their self-evaluation plan to make use of parent and child input.

National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 13: Improving the Service.

This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2016.

Action taken since then

The childminder used an informal approach to self-evaluate the service provided. This had led to changes already discussed within the report such as menus for parents and books for children. The childminder had very recently begun to seek and receive support from the local authority childminding development officer and from SCMA. This was planned to support evaluation work against best practice documents and the self-evaluation toolkit 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare.' This work should continue to ensure that outcomes and experiences for children improve.

This area for improvement has not been met and has been reworded.

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?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate

How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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