

Hazel's Childminding Services

Child Minding

Larbert

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 May 2025

Service provided by:
Hazel Donaldson

Service provider number:
SP2012984191

Service no:
CS2012312613

About the service

Hazel Donaldson provides a childminding service from a detached property in Larbet, Falkirk. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for 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 whom 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 children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is close to local amenities, school and park. The children are cared for downstairs and use kitchen, lounge and have access to a toilet. Children also have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the property. The service works in partnership with Falkirk Council to provide funded childcare.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on 13 May 2025 between 13:15 and 14:15. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed children using the service
- received feedback from six families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice
- reviewed documents

Key messages

Children experienced warm, kind and nurturing interactions which supported them to feel comfortable, safe and secure.

The childminder had good working relationships with the families which supported effective communication and information sharing.

Strong attachments had been formed between the childminder and the children which supported their overall wellbeing.

Children spent times outdoors on a daily basis, which supported them to be healthy and active and explore their local community.

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.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, nurturing, and caring interactions and as a result, they had formed positive attachments with the childminder. Their individual needs and cues were understood and responded to effectively. For example, when children sought comfort, the childminder offered cuddles and reassurance. This helped them to feel safe and secure. Families were very positive about the care their children received. Their comments included, 'Hazel is the most caring, calm and kind woman. She is always the same every single day and just seeing how relaxed and happy the kids are in her setting speaks volumes' and, 'Hazel is a wonderful childminder. She ensures she puts the children and their needs at the centre. My child enjoys coming to Hazel's setting. She is such a genuinely lovely person. Gaining that connection with children is key, and she ensures she does this'.

Children's personal care needs were met with dignity and respect. For example, children were sensitively asked if their nappy could be changed. Warm interactions during nappy changing created a relaxed experience which supported positive attachments.

On the day of the inspection, two young children were present. Both appeared happy, settled, and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminders warm and attentive approach supported the development of strong emotional attachments, allowing the children to feel loved, confident, and safe in her presence. One parent commented, 'Hazel is a wonderful childminder. She ensures she puts the children and their needs at the centre. My child enjoys coming to Hazel's setting. She is such a genuinely lovely person. Gaining that connection with children is key, and she ensures she does this'.

Children were cared for by a childminder who knew them and their families well. Children attending the service had personal plans in place that were up to date and had been reviewed with families. This ensured children's current health, well-being and developmental needs were supported appropriately by the childminder.

Children were safe and protected because of the childminder's understanding of what to do if they had concerns about a child's health, safety or wellbeing. We discussed ways in which to strengthen the childminders policy and procedure to support her with reporting concerns.

No children required medication at the time of the inspection. The childminder had a medication policy and procedure in place which was in line with Care Inspectorate's best practice guidance 'Management of Medication in Day care and Childminding Services'. This meant that should children require medication; the childminder was well placed to administer medication safely.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were observed to be happy and enjoying their time with the childminder. They had a variety of opportunities which met their developmental needs, interests, and curiosities. These experiences offered children play and learning which included exploring and problem solving. As a result, children were engaged in their play.

The childminder was playful in their interactions with children. She took time to pick up on their nonverbal cues to support their development. This contributed to children feeling valued and respected.

The childminder had a good understanding of the children's development and provided effective support to meet their needs and to help them to achieve. Children's development in language and literacy was well supported through effective interactions such as using repetitive language and singing. These skilful, age appropriate, interactions supported children to extend vocabulary. As a result, children appeared happy and content.

Children's opportunities for play and learning were enhanced through strong connections with their local community. Daily outings to local parks, and regular visits to the nearby allotment supported them to experience active, outdoor play and have opportunities to explore, investigate and learn about nature. These experiences had a positive impact on children's wellbeing and development.

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.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced care in a well-furnished, comfortable, and welcoming environment. Families commented very positively on the setting. Their comments included: 'Hazel offers a very calm and well-organised environment. Everything is clean and tidy', and 'Safe, enclosed garden that is well looked after with several plants and vegetables. Utility area is always clean, bright and cheerful with various displays. Resources look clean and well cared for and children are encouraged to look after them'.

Children had space to play, rest and relax. The homely environment took account of children's needs, stages of development and interests. For example, cause and effect and sensory toys were available, this stimulated and engaged children in their play. Resources were well-presented and inviting which enabled the young children to make choices in their play.

Robust infection prevention and control measures supported children's health and wellbeing. For example, children were well supported by the childminder to wash their hands effectively at key times throughout the day. This helped to minimise the spread of infection.

The childminder managed their environment well to promote children's safety and wellbeing. Relevant risk assessments were in place which had been reviewed to support children's safety as they played. All parents strongly agreed that their child was safe while attending the setting.

The childminder demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of maintaining confidentiality. They secured children's personal information, obtained parental consent before taking photographs, and shared her privacy notice and confidentiality policy with families. Well organised record keeping supported their ability to uphold confidentiality and manage information responsibly.

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.

3.1 Quality Assurance and improvement are led well

The vision, values and aims for the service were evident in the warm interactions and positive attachments we witnessed throughout the inspection. The nurturing nature of the childminder meant that children felt loved, safe and secure. The childminder demonstrated a very good understanding of her role as a registered childminder. She was conscientious and professional in her role to deliver very good quality care for her minded children.

The childminder valued families and children's views, and asked for feedback about the service through informal chats and questionnaires. This helped the childminder to reflect on the needs of the children and make changes to support them. One parent told us, 'Regular newsletters and child regularly asked for opinions about their care and about activities. We are involved via more formal questionnaires and informal chats'.

Regular reviews of policies and procedures ensured record keeping was maintained to a very good standard. These had been shared with parents. This contributed to families feeling valued as they had a clear expectation of the service.

Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes had supported the childminder to reflect on their progress and identify strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the childminder had identified improvement priorities. The childminder's reflective approach supported continuous improvement. The childminder should continue to develop quality assurance processes to support sustained improvement.

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.

4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children's rights were promoted through the childminders practice and interactions. The childminder demonstrated having a very good knowledge of the children's needs, wishes and choices. They were caring, compassionate and loving towards the children in their care. As a result, children's needs were being effectively supported and interests followed.

The childminder had a good understanding of each child's personality and interests. Respectful relationships were a strength, and children benefited from the childminder's warmth and encouragement. We found that children responded positively to the support provided by the childminder, and they were given an appropriate amount of time to listen and respond to instructions. This contributed to children's individual needs being met and their interests being supported.

Children and families benefitted from a culture where they were supported to thrive and flourish because of the childminder's commitment to continuous professional learning. The childminder had kept her skills and knowledge up to date through attending a wealth of training and kept a record of professional development completed which demonstrated her commitment and motivation to learning. As a result, children experienced very good quality care and learning experiences.

The childminder had a wealth of experience and enjoyed her role. She was enthusiastic about the care she provided and the impact this had on the children and wanted the best outcomes for them. The childminder had a very good understanding of her professional responsibilities. She worked within her conditions of registration and ensured children's safety by gaining insurance, keeping registers, and maintaining the premises to a high standard.

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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