

Harkness, Lisette

Child Minding

Cumnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 July 2025

Service provided by:
Lisette Harkness

Service provider number:
SP2003901873

Service no:
CS2007165275

About the service

Harkness, Lisette provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Cumnock, East Ayrshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own children. At our inspection, three children were in attendance at the service.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks, and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room, and they use the upstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday, 9 July 2025, between 10:00 and 12:45 hours. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed practice and daily life
- spoke with three children using the service
- reviewed documents
- spoke with the childminder
- looked at Microsoft forms from four parents/carers to gather their views and feedback.

Key messages

- Children experienced warm and nurturing care.
- The daily experiences were planned to meet children's needs, wishes and choices.
- Children's wellbeing was supported through regular access to outdoor play.
- Children benefitted from connections to their local community.
- Strong relationships between the childminder, children and families supported positive outcomes for children.

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.

Children experienced warm and nurturing care. For example, kind and caring interactions were observed when children approached the childminder for comfort and cuddles. As a result, children were happy and settled in the childminder's home. The childminder knew children well and had formed positive relationships with families. One parent told us, "I can always rely on her and she goes above and beyond for me and my child." This supported consistent care and support for children.

Children enjoyed eating together at lunchtime in an unhurried and relaxed atmosphere, ensuring a caring and positive social experience. The childminder joined in with the children's conversations while eating at the table. Fresh water was available throughout the day, which helped keep children hydrated. This supported children's health and wellbeing.

Children's care and wellbeing needs were being met. This was supported through up-to-date personal plans. These were completed with families and detailed children's needs, preferences, and progress. The childminder observed children's progress and recorded how they would support them in making further progress. This was shared with families so that learning could be continued at home. The childminder also shared children's experiences throughout the day via WhatsApp. Parents told us, "Lisette communicates very well, she's flexible and I have a positive relationship with her." This ensured positive partnerships between the childminder and families to support children's progress.

Children could rest or relax when needed. The comfortable sofa and cushions helped provide a cosy space for children to rest and relax. This supported children in self-regulating their emotions.

Children needing medication were attending the service during our inspection. The childminder understood their responsibility in managing and storing medication. This ensured children's safety.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning.

Children were having fun as they played at the childminder's home. We saw them laughing and chatting with each other as they played with a puppy and drew pictures at the table. The childminder supported children by playing alongside them and asking questions. This helped extend their learning.

Children could choose from a variety of toys and resources that were suitable for their age and developmental stage. For example, arts and crafts materials, books, dolls, animals, board games, construction toys, trucks, and cars. This supported children to learn through play.

During our visit, children were happy and engaged as they took turns choosing books for the childminder to read with them. This supported their development of language and literacy. Numeracy skills were also supported through play. For example, children were encouraged to take turns and count when playing the giant connect four. 'Loose parts' and open-ended resources supported children's imagination and problem solving skills. These are everyday objects and materials that help children to develop their ideas, creativity

and curiosity.

Children had regular opportunities to play and learn within the community. They often went for walks and visited local parks that hosted different activities each day. The children looked forward to meeting the owls and going to Dumfries House, which helped them build connections within their 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 clean, bright and homely. The living area was comfortable, well-ventilated and had plenty of light. There was ample space for children to play. This made children feel welcome and helped them feel that they were valued and mattered.

Suitable infection control measures, including handwashing and cleaning procedures, were in place to minimise the spread of infection. This helped keep children safe.

The living room was laid out with a wide range of toys that interested the children, including sensory toys, trucks, building blocks, a selection of board games, and other age-appropriate items. This supported them to learn through play as they chose toys based on their interests. As a result, children were having fun.

Children had daily access to a secure garden that was well planned to consider their interests and stages of development. There were various outdoor toys to play with, which included a giant Connect Four, basketball hoop, and ride-on toys. This meant that children's health and wellbeing was supported through energetic play.

Outdoor play was supported through trips and outings such as visits to the local park and community garden. On outings, children accessed a variety of play equipment such as swings and climbing frames. This supported children's emotional and physical wellbeing.

The childminder securely stored the personal information of children and families, and had registered with the Information Commissioner's Office to protect personal data. The childminder had also completed training in data protection. This helped protect people's privacy.

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 improvement are led well.

The childminder was enthusiastic and committed to delivering high-quality experiences for children and families. The childminder spoke positively about developing their skills, and they worked well to promote positive outcomes for children and families. The childminder had participated in a wide range of courses,

developing skills and knowledge on how to support children and families. This supported positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had developed an improvement plan that enabled them to identify areas that were working well and those that needed improvement. To achieve this, they had referred to the best practice guidance 'A Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' (2022). This supported the childminder in being reflective and prioritising areas for development with a focus on delivering the best outcomes for children and families. The childminder had established positive relationships with parents and carers, gathering their views to assist in the improvement process. This included regular communication, such as daily conversations, and questionnaires about children's experiences.

Children and families new to the service were issued with a handbook about the childminder's service. This was detailed and informative, meaning parents knew what to expect.

The childminder regularly reviewed their practice to ensure that children received high-quality care, play, and learning. They reflected on what they did well and identified areas for improvement. This resulted in enhancements, such as updated personal plans that enabled the childminder to meet children's needs more effectively. This, in turn, allowed them to provide high-quality experiences for the children.

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 evaluation.

The childminder supported the children with warmth, kindness, and compassion. This enabled children to feel valued, loved, and secure. Samples of children's personal plans demonstrated how the childminder had meaningful and individualised support in place for children. The childminder effectively engaged with children, taking account of their views and experiences and families' wishes. This made children feel included.

The childminder had undertaken purposeful and comprehensive reading and training. For example, they completed realising the ambition and internet safety. As a result, the childminder had reflected on their practice and made improvements. Parents/carers who provided feedback strongly agreed the childminder had the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to care for their child and support their health and wellbeing. This told us that the childminder was well placed to meet children's needs.

The childminder continued to develop their childcare skills and knowledge to ensure children experienced a wide range of care, play, and learning opportunities. Children were happy, content, and stimulated within the childminding environment. One parent told us, "Lisette has been my child's childminder since he was four and a half months old. She's like my co-parent, she knows my child's needs and wants specific to my child."

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 review children's personal plans in consultation with parents at least once in every six month period, or earlier, if required.

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

'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me' (HSCS 2.17).

This area for improvement was made on 27 February 2019.

Action taken since then

Children had a personal plan in place that clearly detailed children's health, welfare and safety needs. Next steps were identified and linked to planning, evaluation and observation cycles. Plans were created, reviewed, and updated with parents in line with current legislation.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should develop her management and leadership skills. She should use the knowledge gained to update her service policies and procedures, including registering her service with ICO and using information from GDPR to update how she processed personal data.

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

'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).

This area for improvement was made on 27 February 2019.

Action taken since then

The childminder had updated her service policies and procedures, registered with the ICO, and discussed her role and responsibilities with confidence.

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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