

# Ingram, Linda Child Minding

Aberdeen

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
7 July 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Linda Ingram

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003900520

**Service no:**  
CS2003001898

## About the service

Linda Ingram provides a childminding service from their property in a residential area in Portlethen, Aberdeenshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age. Overnight care is not provided.

The service is close to parks, local primary schools, and other amenities. Children have access to the living room, kitchen, and downstairs bathroom. There is also a fully enclosed garden at the rear of the property.

At the time of our inspection, four children were registered with the service.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 July 2025 between 08:30 and 11:15. 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, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received two responses to our request for feedback from parents
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were cared for by a childminder who knew them well.
- Children experienced warm and kind interactions.
- Snacks and mealtimes should be developed to promote a sociable experience.
- Parents valued being welcomed into the childminder's home and received regular communication about their child's progress.
- Children benefitted from good links with their local community.
- Resources should be further developed and made accessible to children to support their curiosity and creativity.

## 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?	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?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated different parts of this key question as **good** and **adequate**, with an overall grade of **adequate**. Whilst we identified some strengths, these only just outweighed weaknesses.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children and their families experienced a welcoming and friendly service. They were warmly invited into the childminder's home and interactions were kind and caring, which supported children to feel comfortable in the childminder's care. Children were comforted through cuddles and closeness, when needed. Families advised positive relationships had been formed with the childminder. One parent commented, "[The childminder] has been an important part of our family" and another shared, "We speak frequently throughout the day and detailed handovers".

Children's wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge of their individual needs. Personal plans were in place for each child which were individual to their needs and preferences. The childminder had gathered information about children's health and routines when they started through collaboration with families. This information had been regularly reviewed to ensure information was up-to-date and relevant to each child. The childminder was knowledgeable of children's interests and needs and used identified strategies to support them consistently.

Overall, mealtimes were relaxed and nutritious which supported children's health. The childminder offered snacks which were consistent with children's preferences. However, children sat in the living room either on the sofa or in a high chair in front of the television when eating which did not promote a safe and sociable experience. We identified that there were missed opportunities to promote children's independence and social skills through this experience and highlighted the benefits of children eating at a table (see area for improvement 1).

Children were well supported in their personal care. Nappy changing was carried out sensitively as children were asked first and given reassurance throughout the process. The childminder was respectful in their interactions and children's dignity and privacy were promoted. This helped children feel supported and cared for.

Children were able to sleep and rest when they were tired, mostly in line with their families' wishes. However, arrangements for sleep did not always follow guidance to keep children safe and comfortable. One child was soothed to sleep in a pushchair and we were advised, at other times, children occasionally slept on the sofa. We signposted the childminder to Sleep Safe Scotland guidance and they agreed to action this to support children's health and safety.

Effective procedures were in place for the safe administration of medication. The childminder was knowledgeable about children's medical needs, such as signs and symptoms to look out for. Medication was stored securely, in line with guidance, and consent forms were in place which were reviewed regularly. These systems contributed towards keeping children safe and well.

### Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were able to access some resources which were relevant to their current interests. A toy box in the living room contained a few resources, including interactive and sorting toys, which children enjoyed playing with. The childminder advised resources, such as a sensory box, puzzles, and role play toys, were currently

stored in a cupboard. We discussed the benefits of having these resources more readily available to children to support their independence and choice, as well as provide a wider variety of experiences across their day. An area for improvement was made at the previous inspection and has been carried forward (see section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection' of this report).

The childminder supported children's play through age-appropriate interactions. Children welcomed the childminder playing together with them at their level. They were engaging in their interactions through a game of peek-a-boo and listening to songs together. However, the television was on throughout the inspection which meant there were missed opportunities for the childminder to meaningfully interact with children and further their learning. For example, we discussed using this time to sing and read stories together. This would support children's progress and development.

There were some opportunities to support children's language, literacy, and numeracy development through play. Resources, such as shape sorters and toys with number buttons on them, were played with from the toy box. The childminder modelled age-appropriate language and engaged in conversations with the children. To help promote further opportunities for learning, we suggested introducing more writing materials, such as paper and pencils, to support children's emerging literacy skills. The childminder agreed to action this.

Children's individual learning and achievements were recognised and supported. The childminder shared updates of children's learning experiences through photo messages to parents throughout the day. Parents advised they valued the communication about their child's learning and progress, with one commenting, "[The childminder] offers regular feedback and updates". Some observations of children's play and learning had been recorded and a new format for recording these had recently been developed. The childminder advised they were looking to start using these to support planning for children's learning. This would support children in reaching their full potential.

Children's experiences were enhanced through connections to their wider community. Regular outings to parks and community spaces provided opportunities which promoted children's social skills. The childminder advised that the enclosed back garden was not currently being used due to some maintenance work needing to be carried out. We encouraged the childminder to consider this as a priority to support children having regular access to the outdoors, to positively contribute to their overall wellbeing.

### Areas for improvement

1. To support calm and social snack and mealtime experiences, the childminder should review and improve their mealtime experience to promote children's wellbeing.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) Promoting opportunities for developing children's social skills.
- b) Children having access to and being encouraged to sit at a table when eating.
- c) The childminder being knowledgeable about positive mealtime experiences and encouraging these within their practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

## 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**

Children were cared for in a welcoming and homely environment. The playroom provided space for children to play and extend their learning. A coat rack provided a space for children's belongings to be safely stored. Children were able to access comfortable sofas and cushions to rest and relax, when they wished. This supported them to be comfortable in the childminder's home.

Children were able to access some play resources to support and develop their learning. These resources, including musical and fidget toys, were linked to children's current interests. Resources were suited to the children's individual ages and stages of development. Children were able to choose freely from the items in the toy box. We discussed the benefits of adding more natural resources to provide more stimulation for children within their play. This would support children's creativity and imagination. The childminder advised they have more open-ended resources which were stored outwith the living room and that children could go with the childminder to select the resources they wanted to play with. We refer to this further under Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning in the section 'How good is our care, play and learning?'.

Risk assessments and safety checks for the home had been carried out. These included potential risks and measures in place to promote a safe environment. The front door was locked to ensure children could not leave the house unsupervised and doors to other rooms remained closed. Areas accessed by the children had been visually assessed and there were written risk assessments to help identify potential hazards and help prevent accidents.

Children benefitted from being cared for in a clean and tidy environment. The childminder had well established routines, such as wearing an apron and gloves when carrying out nappy changing, which contributed towards minimising the risk of spread of infection. We encouraged the childminder to ensure regular handwashing, with support where needed, was regularly carried out at key points of the day, such as before and after eating. This would further prevent the spread of infection and support children in keeping safe and well.

## How good is our leadership?

### 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

#### **Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well**

The childminder had a clear vision for the service. The aims included: "providing a friendly, welcoming service where children are safe, valued, and cared for". This was reflected in their practice and shared with families, helping them understand what to expect from the service.

Children and their families' views were valued and used to influence decision making. The childminder advised they regularly discussed with older children what they wanted to do, to involve them in making choices about their play. They had provided parents with questionnaires and reviewed the feedback to

ensure the service met the needs of the different families. Parents commented positively on the open communication with the childminder and welcomed regular discussions. One parent shared, "I am able to go in at anytime confidently". This promoted working together to improve outcomes for children.

The childminder had started to self evaluate their service, identifying areas of strength and areas that could be further improved using 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare'. They advised that current improvements included making the garden accessible for children and considering the resources they had were in line with children's interests. We suggested that recording and prioritising a plan with timescales would support the childminder in continuing improvements within their service.

Policies and procedures were in place and reviewed regularly. This supported parents to keep up-to-date with relevant information, specific to the service.

### How good is our staff team?

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 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge, and values

The childminder was kind and responsive in their approach with children. They joined in with some of the children's play and recognised the importance of making it fun and enjoyable. Parents told us they valued the childminder's support. One parent described the childminder as "patient and calm" and another shared, "I am provided with information about my child every step of the way".

The childminder had kept their skills and knowledge up-to-date through completing professional learning. They had accessed core training in child protection, first aid, infection control, and food hygiene and confidently spoke about the impact this had on their practice. For example, supporting children who had allergies. The childminder had identified that they were keen to undertake further learning around supporting children of different ages. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate's 'Growing My Potential' practice note to support them with learning opportunities specific to one and two year olds. They were friendly with other childminders and professionals, which supported them in sharing ideas and discussing current guidance.

Children benefitted from the childminder being knowledgeable about their individual interests and stages of development. Through their experience of providing a childminding service, the childminder was able to use their skills and knowledge to enhance outcomes for children. For example, they confidently spoke about measures they had in place to keep children safe, such as keeping the front door securely shut and taking action to keep the room at a comfortable temperature. This contributed to children being well cared for in a safe environment.

The childminder was aware of the Care Inspectorate Hub and received provider updates from the organisation. Regularly accessing resources and best practice documents would help further promote positive outcomes for children.

## 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

To ensure children's safety and wellbeing, mealtimes should be better managed to offer more positive experiences for children.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) Offering more nutritious food choices.
- b) Sitting at the table to ensure children are well supervised and enjoying a relaxed and social mealtime.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can enjoy unhurried snack and mealtimes in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible' (HSCS 1.35).

**This area for improvement was made on 15 May 2024.**

#### Action taken since then

All food was provided by the childminder and children were offered a healthy snack choice. The childminder had gathered information, through children's individual personal plans, such as food and drink preferences. These were accommodated through the variety of snacks given.

However, children ate in the living room in front of the television which did not promote a calm and sociable meal time.

**This area for improvement has not been met and has been rewritten to address outstanding issues under Key Question 1 in the section 'How good is our care, play and learning?'.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To support children to achieve their full potential, the indoor and outdoor environment should be developed to create:

- a) Resources readily accessible to children to enable choice.
- b) More engaging and stimulating learning experiences, including natural and open-ended resources.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self esteem, and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open-ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31); and 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning, and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

**This area for improvement was made on 13 January 2020.**



**Action taken since then**

On the day of inspection, there was one box of toys which children used with the childminder's support. There were limited resources to support the children's emerging literacy and numeracy skills and open-ended resources to support children in using their natural curiosity and creativity.

The childminder advised the enclosed garden was not currently being used due to some maintenance work needing carried out. They identified this as an area for improvement and we encouraged them to consider how children could have more immediate access to a wider range of play experiences throughout their day.

**This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.**

**Previous area for improvement 3**

The childminder should continue to improve the service by:

- a) Developing her knowledge and skills through ongoing training and by reading and implementing relevant best practice guidance.
- b) Identify how new learning has been put into practice and review the impact on children's care and experiences.

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); and 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, and are able to reflect on their practice, and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 13 January 2020.**

**Action taken since then**

The childminder was accessing best practice guidance and training opportunities through the Care Inspectorate Hub as well as the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). Having recently completed some core training, as well as further training linked to their role, the childminder demonstrated their knowledge and how this supported children. For example, supporting children who had medical needs and allergies.

The childminder should now take time to record the impact training has had on outcomes for children.

**This area for improvement has been met.**

**Previous area for improvement 4**

To ensure children access a high quality provision, the childminder should develop systems to quality assurance their service and make meaningful change.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) Involving children and families in a meaningful way to help develop the setting.
- b) Ensuring quality assurance systems, including the use of quality audit tools such as 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare', are embedded into practice. Reflections from these should be used to plan relevant improvements.

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

**This area for improvement was made on 15 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder had issued questionnaires to families and encouraged feedback from children through conversations. Feedback was being used to plan care and support for children.

The childminder had recently completed some professional learning and was beginning to self evaluate the service using 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare'. The childminder shared their current improvement priorities and should now take time to record these with timescales to support the pace of developments and evaluate the impact on children's experiences.

**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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
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?	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

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.