

Cuthbertson, Jenna Child Minding

Ayr

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 July 2025

Service provided by:
Jenna Cuthbertson

Service provider number:
SP2009976650

Service no:
CS2009235867

About the service

Jenna Cuthbertson provides a childminding service from her property in Ayr, South Ayrshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children under the age of 12. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family. The service is close to local amenities, school and parks. The children are cared for in the childminder's living room, dining room, kitchen and have access to the upstairs family bathroom. There is an enclosed back garden which the children have access to.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 July 2025 between 10:30 and 16:00. We gave feedback to the service virtually on 28 July 2025. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Observed and spoke with children using the service.
- Sent out a family questionnaire and received four responses.
- Spoke with the childminder.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were happy, settled and nurtured through warm, caring relationships with the childminder.
- Play and learning were fun and supported children's interests, with regular outings and community experiences.
- The home was safe, clean and welcoming, helping children feel secure and confident.
- The childminder was caring, reflective and committed to improving her service through training and self-evaluation.
- Parents felt involved, well-informed and highly valued the care their children received.

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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several important strengths had a positive impact on children's wellbeing and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions. The childminder demonstrated a strong understanding of nurture principles and responded sensitively to children's needs. She recognised that behaviour is a form of communication and used distraction techniques and gentle language to support children effectively. Children were comforted with cuddles, kind words and reassurance, which helped them feel safe and valued. One parent commented, "My child would have Jenna come on holiday with us if she could."

Personal care was carried out with dignity and privacy. Hygiene routines were followed well, including hand and face washing after meals. Children's sleep needs were met and monitored, with lie-flat buggies used appropriately. Written consent for sleep arrangements should now be obtained in line with safer sleep guidance.

Parents provided meals and snacks, which the childminder supplemented when needed. She sat on the floor with children during mealtimes, creating a sociable and supportive atmosphere. Encouraging children to sit at a table and access fresh water more regularly would further enhance this experience.

Personal plans were in place and reflected children's achievements. These would benefit from clearer identification of health, safety and welfare needs. Medication records required updating to include consent and allergy-specific information.

The childminder worked well with families and local nurseries to support shared outcomes. She was aware of her responsibilities in safeguarding children and should continue to refresh her knowledge through training. Parents felt fully involved and praised the childminder's communication and nurturing approach. One parent shared, "She fosters a nurturing atmosphere where children thrive emotionally, socially and intellectually."

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several important strengths positively impacted children's learning and development and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children experienced a balance of spontaneous and planned play opportunities that supported their enjoyment and engagement. They explored a variety of resources, including small world toys, dolls, and imaginative materials. Activities such as counting coins and using noise-making tubes encouraged early numeracy and creativity. The childminder created a homely and relaxed environment where children felt safe and confident to explore.

The childminder interacted at the children's level, engaging them in meaningful conversations and supporting their language development. She had recently introduced age-appropriate tracking of learning

and achievements, which was beginning to inform her planning. This should now be embedded further to support progression.

Children's interests were recognised and responded to. For example, a dolls house was brought out for a nursery-aged child, and outdoor play was adapted to suit the routines of younger children. The childminder was seen as a key contributor to children's development, complementing their nursery experiences.

Children benefited from regular outings and use of the local community. Walks to nursery, visits to toddler groups, and daily outdoor play supported their physical development and social learning. The childminder promoted safety and positive relationships within the community.

Interactions were kind and nurturing. The childminder was attentive to children's body language and emotional cues. To further enhance learning, she should consider how questioning can be used more effectively to extend children's thinking. Additionally, developing the range of open-ended and loose parts resources would support curiosity, creativity, and inquiry (**see area for improvement 1**).

The childminder had begun to reflect on how observations link to planning and evaluation. This area was at an early stage of development and will be supported through upcoming training.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's creativity, curiosity, and inquiry, the provider should enhance the range and quality of open-ended resources available within the setting. This should include, but is not limited to, materials that encourage imaginative play, problem-solving, and exploration across different areas of learning.

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 fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling' (HSCS 1.30); 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).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several important strengths positively impacted children's experiences and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The setting provided a warm, calm and welcoming environment. Children were observed to be happy, relaxed and confident in their surroundings. They shared laughter and affection with the childminder, demonstrating secure attachments and a strong sense of belonging. Parents described the setting as homely and nurturing, with one commenting, "Children love spending time with Jenna and enjoy a wide range of fun, engaging activities."

The indoor environment was clean, well maintained and developmentally appropriate. Children had access to a variety of toys and resources, and the childminder responded to their interests. While the back garden was used less frequently due to regular outings, it remained accessible and safe. The childminder had a clear

plan for improving the environment, including replacing furniture and enhancing facilities for children. Safety work was required on the garden fence before regular outdoor play could resume.

Resources were stored safely, though some were kept in the utility room. Making these more visible and accessible would support children's independence and choice. Further development of loose parts and open-ended materials would enhance creativity and inquiry.

Risk assessments were in place and used dynamically during outings. Accident and incident recording should be updated to meet GDPR requirements, and a risk matrix for risk assessments could support clearer identification of hazards.

Infection prevention and control measures were generally good. Children were encouraged to wash their hands properly, though this should be prioritised over the use of wipes or gels.

Children's personal information was stored securely in individual folders. Electronic devices were password protected. The childminder should now develop a policy for the use of the Ring doorbell, including parental consent and clarity on how images are used.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several important strengths positively impacted outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder demonstrated a clear commitment to continuous improvement. While formal quality assurance systems were at an early stage, she had identified this as a priority and had enrolled in relevant training, including the SCMA 'Time on the Floor' programme. Informal self-evaluation was evident through a training plan and a list of areas for development, showing a reflective approach to practice.

A shared vision and values were in place, focusing on fun, safety, health and parental involvement. These were reflected in the childminder's daily interactions and the positive relationships she fostered with families. Revisiting these values with children and families would help ensure they remain meaningful and representative of the service.

Children and families were informally involved in shaping the service. Parents described the childminder as approachable, caring and responsive, with one stating, "We couldn't ask for a better childminder. Jenna is truly the best - our children love her, and so do we." Daily updates and open communication supported strong partnerships and trust.

Quality assurance processes were developing. The childminder had begun to reflect on her practice and identify realistic targets for improvement. Formalising these processes through written self-evaluation and improvement planning will support sustained progress and ensure high-quality outcomes for children (**see area for improvement 1**).

The childminder was aware of her responsibilities regarding notifications and had not required to submit any. No complaints or incidents had been received.

Overall, the childminder's positive relationships with families, commitment to improvement, and developing reflective practice contributed to a nurturing and responsive service. Continued focus on embedding quality assurance systems will further strengthen outcomes for children.

Areas for improvement

1. To support continuous improvement and ensure high-quality outcomes for children, the provider should continue to develop and embed effective systems for monitoring and supervision of the service. This should include regular self-evaluation and reflective practice to identify strengths and areas for development.

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); and

'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (HSCS 4.27).

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

Quality Indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where several important strengths positively impacted outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder demonstrated strong values and a clear vision for her service, which focused on providing a fun, safe and healthy environment where children could thrive. This was evident in her daily practice and the trusting relationships she had built with families. One parent described her as "an exceptional and deeply valued childminder," with children often asking for her during holidays.

Warmth, kindness and compassion were consistently observed. The childminder responded sensitively to children's needs, offering cuddles and reassurance when needed. Her nurturing approach helped children feel safe, loved and confident in her care.

The childminder had begun to reflect on her practice and had identified areas for development. She had proactively enrolled in the SCMA 'Time on the Floor' training to support her professional learning and improve outcomes for children. Although recent personal circumstances had limited access to training, she had created a training plan and was committed to ongoing development.

She held an HNC in Childcare and had made efforts to stay up to date with current practice. Continued focus on professional learning will help ensure her knowledge and skills remain current and responsive to children's needs.

While quality assurance and improvement planning were at an early stage, the childminder had made some progress in identifying areas for development. Embedding reflective practice and using self-evaluation tools will support her in planning improvements and maintaining high standards of care.

Overall, the childminder's values, caring approach and commitment to improvement contributed to a nurturing and responsive service where children felt secure and supported.

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 the childminder should develop a written premises risk assessment and fire evacuation plan.

This area for improvement was made on 18 May 2017.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should ensure that minded children have access to the dining room and garden as agreed at the point of registration with the Care Inspectorate.

This area for improvement was made on 18 May 2017.

Action taken since then

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?	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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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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