

Cheryl's Childminding Child Minding

Airdrie

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 July 2025

Service provided by:
Cheryl Clarke

Service provider number:
SP2018989619

Service no:
CS2018363753

About the service

Cheryl's Childminding service is provided from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area within Airdrie, North Lanarkshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. At the time of inspection three children were registered to the service.

Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the property. Children have access to a spacious living room, upstairs bathroom and an enclosed rear garden. The service is close to parks, schools, transport links and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 July 2025 between 09:15 and 11:45. 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:

- spoke with children using the service
- observed children play experiences
- spoke with the childminder
- looked around the home and garden
- reviewed service documents and records
- reviewed electronic feedback from one parent
- spoke to two parents using the service.

Key messages

- The childminder was caring and nurturing and had developed positive relationships with children and their families.
- Children and families benefitted from a childminder who was knowledgeable and demonstrated a desire to continually improve.
- Personal plan records were in place, which supported the childminder to deliver tailored care that met children's individual needs.
- Children were at the heart of the service, with a child led approach.
- The childminder provided a home-from-home setting that was well maintained and safe.
- Trusting relationships with families and regular communication with parents meant they were actively involved in their children's care.
- The childminder should further embed their approaches to self-evaluation involving children and their families.

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

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|--|---------------|
| 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 were happy in the care of the childminder and sought reassurance when they needed it. The childminder was very attentive to children's needs and interactions were warm, nurturing and respectful. It was clear the childminder knew minded children very well and they shared with us how their care and development needs were being supported. The childminder knew children's personalities and routines and listened to children to ensure they felt valued and secure in their care.

Interactions between the childminder and children were kind, gentle and supportive. To help children feel heard and valued, the childminder was responsive to their cues and requests. For example, children were provided with cuddles when requested and the childminder recognised when they needed support with self care skills.

Personal plans supported children's wellbeing and development and helped the childminder to meet children's needs. Children's experiences were recorded within learning journals and were shared with parents. These recognised children's achievements and recorded their developmental progress. There was photographic evidence which was shared with parents, of the wide range of activities that children accessed. These showed the depth and sustained nature of play which children took part in. Parents told us "[childminder] always keeps us up to date and is happy to have discussions on anything we are concerned about" and "we love seeing all the different activities our child does and how this is supporting their development."

Children experienced a relaxed and sociable snack time where the childminder joined them at the table. This was a valuable time to have natural discussions as they talked about their day. The childminder knew their individual preferences and provided foods that met their choices and wishes. Children could access water at all times, helping ensure they were kept hydrated.

Children's emotional wellbeing and security was supported through safe and sensitive sleep routines. The childminder recognised when children appeared to be tired and offered them space to sleep and rest when needed, which also reflected families wishes and children's routines.

Positive relationships with parents had been developed and they commented positively on their child's care service. Parents told us the childminder had "great communication. Always gives us an update and we feel comfortable relaying information to [them] when needed" and "I feel like I can tell [them] anything about [my child] and it is in a non-judgemental space." Parents were warmly welcomed into the service, helping to establish strong connections. The childminder recognised the importance of parents being in the setting to maintain positive relationships, using best practice guidance to support this.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were actively involved in leading their play, ensuring a true child centred approach was embedded within the service. Children told us "I like pirates" and "I like playing in the garden."

They benefitted from a range of planned and spontaneous experiences that promoted their interest and developed their choice and independence. One parent told us the childminder was "amazing with the kids [they] keep them busy with educational games and activities, music, dancing and art, and always takes them out to parks/soft plays."

The childminder demonstrated a good understanding of child development and used this in practice to tailor their interactions. The skilful use of questions and interactions supported children to develop their ideas and share their thoughts and feelings. The childminder was attuned to children's communication cues, which helped ensure they could respond appropriately.

We observed sensitive and supportive interactions, which were appropriate to the age and stage of development and supported children's play and learning. Children were supported to engage in a variety of play experiences that developed their skills in language, literacy and numeracy. For example, using descriptive language when exploring sensory materials.

Outdoor play was a strong feature of the setting, with children participating in a range of experiential learning within their outdoor environment. Children's play and learning was enhanced through connections to their local community. For example, visits to the local woodland areas, these opportunities supported children to learn about the natural world around them.

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

A warm, welcoming and homely environment was provided for children, to take part in a wide range of play experiences. The childminder's home was relaxed and safe for the children to explore and play, helping them feel secure and comfortable. One parent told us the childminders house was "always clean and ready for the children" and shared "their child felt safe and at home and is excited on days [they are] going."

The childminder had thought carefully about where furniture was placed so children could have spaces to relax, play with friends and for messy play. The space enabled children to make independent choices and supported their play. Children could select toys and resources from boxes and open shelves at their height. The environment gave children the message that they mattered and their needs and interests were respected.

The childminder had made the transition to more natural open ended play resources, which promoted children's curiosity, imagination and creativity. The childminder should continue to embed this approach.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures. These included, secure gates in garden, good supervision, and safety gates within the setting.

Children's safety and wellbeing was promoted through effective infection control practices, which minimised the potential spread of infection, supporting a safe environment for children. Children were encouraged and supported to engage in hand hygiene practices at key times, for example before snack and after visiting the toilet.

Appropriate nappy changing procedures were in place and protective personal equipment (PPE) was worn. Clear policies and procedures supported the childminder to minimise the risk of spread of infection in their service

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 welcoming and engaging during the inspection. They were keen to get it right for children and were receptive to feedback that was given. Children experienced a service that reflected the service's vision, values and aims. This included ensuring children's voices were heard, and that they experienced a stimulating environment, as well as working closely with parents. Parents told us they felt listened to in the service and their children were regularly asked what they would like to do or play with. This helped to ensure that everyone felt valued and included within the service.

The childminder was committed to ensuring they regularly reflected on their practice and the service they provided. Through their own self-evaluation, they had identified the strengths and where improvements were needed, recording when actions were taken. The childminder used the Care Inspectorate's 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' focusing on reflective questions to support their thinking and developments. This meant children experienced high quality care influenced by current best practice. We discussed where consultations with parents could be further devolved to ensure they were involved in developing the service in a meaningful way.

A number of policies were in place to support the delivery of service. These were regularly updated, to ensure they were reflective of current best practice. The childminder ensured records were stored in a way that was organised, easily accessible and were meaningful to their service. We discussed adding additional information into some policies. The childminder agreed to address this.

The childminder was registered with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), regularly accessed the Care Inspectorate Hub and engaged with other childminders. This helped the childminder keep up-to-date with guidance, training opportunities and share practice with others.

Communication between the childminder and families took place through a variety of ways. This included face-to-face discussions at drop off and collection times as well as through digital means. For example, text messaging. One parent told us they can "go in and have a look at what they've been up to when I go to collect my child."

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

Children received care in a high-quality service where relationships mattered and children were supported to feel valued and loved. The childminder was responsive to the needs of children.

This helped promote strong relationships with children and families, which helped support children's wellbeing. Parents strongly agreed they had a strong connection with the childminder. They told us, "[childminder] feels like part of our family now" and "10 out of 10 can not fault her, does everything for children and families."

Children were supported in their play and development of social skills and showed enthusiasm when the childminder joined in with their play. The childminder recognised and valued the importance of play and this was evident through their active play opportunities. Recognising the importance of fun in children's play enables their learning to be taken forward in a way that is meaningful to them. One parent told us "[they] always make everything exciting and plan according to their likes and interest."

The childminder was conscientious and committed to providing high quality outcomes for children and families. They had a professional qualification and a very good understanding of child care and development. They kept their knowledge up-to-date with developments in the early years by reading publications from the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA).

The childminder ensured their skills in first aid and child protection were refreshed regularly. Self-directed reading and research in areas of practice that interested the childminder meant they could confidently speak about recent learning. This demonstrated a dedication to their continuous professional development and supported the childminder to meet children's needs. To further enhance their reflective practice, we encouraged the childminder to record the impact of their learning on the service and outcomes for children. This would help them identify any future training needs.

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

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| 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 |

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|---|---------------|
| How good is our setting? | 5 - Very Good |
| 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities | 5 - Very Good |

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| How good is our leadership? | 5 - Very Good |
| 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 5 - Very Good |

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| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
| 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values | 5 - Very Good |

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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