

Douglas, Angela Child Minding

Dumfries

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 July 2025

Service provided by:
Angela Douglas

Service provider number:
SP2003907364

Service no:
CS2003013761

About the service

Angela Douglas provides a childminding service from their property in a residential area of Dumfries. The service is within close proximity to public transport links and a variety of local amenities. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of four children under the age of 16. Of these children, a maximum of four are under 12 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

Anne Kerr and Rachel Visca are employed as assistants. When an assistant is working with the childminder, the care service may be provided to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of eight will be under 12 and of whom no more than two are under 12 months. Children are cared for on the ground floor of the property.

There were 18 children registered with the service at the time of inspection. During our inspection, there were seven children using the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 and 24 July 2025 between 11:45 and 16:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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:

- observed and spoke with seven children using the service
- spoke with five parents
- spoke with the childminder and their assistants
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

Our inspection raised significant concerns in relation to how children's health, welfare and safety needs were met. As a result, we issued the service with an Improvement Notice on 4 August 2025. For further details of this enforcement see the service's page on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

Key messages

- Our inspection raised significant concerns in relation to how children's health, welfare and safety needs were met. As a result, the childminder was issued with an Improvement Notice on 4 August 2025.
- The childminder regularly operated outwith the conditions of their registration. They did not ensure that an assistant was present in the service when required to meet children's needs.
- Children were at risk of significant harm due to unsafe sleeping arrangements.
- Children's personal plans did not support safe delivery of children's care.
- The childminder failed to implement and sustain meaningful improvements.

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?	1 - Unsatisfactory
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	1 - Unsatisfactory
How good is our staff team?	2 - Weak

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

1 - Unsatisfactory

We evaluated different parts of this key question as unsatisfactory and adequate. We were very concerned about aspects of the care being provided.

1.1 Nurturing care and support.

We were very concerned about aspects of the care being provided and we evaluated the service as delivering an unsatisfactory level of care for this quality indicator. Immediate remedial action was required to ensure children receive care and support that promotes positive outcomes for them.

Children were placed at risk of significant harm due to unsafe sleeping practices. The childminder disclosed that they routinely allowed children to sleep in highchairs. This posed serious risks including choking and positional asphyxiation. Despite having access to a travel cot, the childminder chose not to use it, indicating a disregard for safe sleep guidance and best practice. This failure to implement appropriate sleeping arrangements compromised children's health and wellbeing. As a result of these serious concerns and the potential for harm, an improvement notice was issued on 4 August 2025 (see improvement notice, required improvement 4).

Children's health and wellbeing were placed at risk due to gaps in essential information required to support their medical needs. Although children had personal plans in place, these lacked critical details necessary to ensure safe and responsive care. Without comprehensive and accurate information, the childminder was unable to demonstrate how they would respond appropriately to children's individual health requirements. This compromised the quality of care and increased the potential for harm. In response to these concerns, an improvement notice was issued to the childminder (see improvement notice, required improvement 1).

Children ate lunch and snacks either brought from home or provided by the childminder. While some children appeared to enjoy mealtimes, observations showed they were not consistently well managed. Children were not always appropriately supervised, and there were few meaningful interactions to support children's social and emotional development. This compromised their safety and wellbeing. Immediate action was required to ensure children were closely supervised during all meals and that interactions were purposeful and supportive. These measures were essential to promote positive outcomes and meet children's care and support needs. An improvement notice was issued on 4 August 2025 to address these concerns (see improvement notice - required improvement 3).

Whilst children experienced some kind and caring interactions, the quality of engagement was not consistent. Following snack time, we observed a young child left in the highchair with a toy for an extended period of time whilst the childminder carried out other tasks. This restricted the child's movements and limited opportunities for exploration and engagement. The child received minimal supervision and interaction during this time, which did not support their wellbeing or emotional development. Equipment must be used appropriately and must not restrict children's movement unnecessarily. Children must be actively supervised and supported through purposeful engagement. An improvement notice was issued to reflect these concerns (see improvement notice - required improvement 5).

1.3 Play and learning

We evaluated this quality indicator as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Overall, children were happy and having fun during our visit. They had some opportunities to access resources independently and lead their own play. This supported their confidence, independence and enjoyment. Assistants responded well to children's cues and joined in their play. For example, they participated in a music show initiated by children, and they introduced musical instruments to enrich the experience. This helped develop children's confidence and supported their emotional wellbeing. However, not all children consistently accessed quality, child-led play experiences. At times, particularly during collection times or when tasks were being completed, some children had limited access to quality play experiences. We asked the childminder to ensure all children are consistently supported to lead their own play. This would promote children's independence, engagement, and overall wellbeing.

Assistants supported children's interests by providing resources from their homes, such as a dolls house with a swimming pool. This reflected a commitment to child-led play and helped promote enjoyment and engagement. However, older children would have benefited from more creative and challenging play experiences to support the development of problem-solving, imagination, and higher-level thinking skills. Whilst staff interactions were warm and encouraging, there were missed opportunities to extend children's learning through open-ended questions and deeper engagement. Staff would benefit from further training in child development and play-based interactions. This would help enrich children's play experiences and promote their learning.

Children's progress was not consistently monitored or reflected in their planned next steps. Some developmental targets had already been achieved but were not updated or reviewed. This limited opportunities to plan experiences that would support continued learning and development. As a result, children were not always supported to reach their full potential. We advised the childminder to regularly review and update children's progress and learning goals. Children should also be involved in these processes to promote ownership of their play and learning.

Children made connections with their local community through daily walks and visits to nearby parks. This supported their physical health, emotional wellbeing, and sense of belonging. Assistants used these experiences to build children's knowledge, such as discussing bike wheels and road safety. This helped develop children's cognitive skills and awareness of the world around them. During the inspection, the childminder's garden was not in use due to safety concerns. We discussed the benefits of developing this space to support free-flow outdoor play. Improving access to outdoor play would further enhance children's physical development and overall wellbeing.

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a large, designated playroom that was warm, bright, and well-ventilated. The space provided ample room for play, helping children feel settled and comfortable. Most resources were easily accessible, supporting children to make choices and lead their own play. We suggested introducing more natural and open-ended materials to enrich the learning environment. This would offer greater opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and imaginative play.

Older children played with the resources available to them, such as Duplo and a small dolls house. Whilst they appeared happy and engaged, the range of materials did not offer age-appropriate challenge or

stimulation. Some children expressed interest in activities that were not supported by the resources available at the time. For example, there was a lack of materials to support drawing. We encouraged the childminder to consult with children when developing and selecting resources. This could help ensure the environment reflects children's interests and supports ownership of their play and learning. Providing more varied and challenging materials would better support creativity, engagement, and skill development for older children.

Children would benefit from more comfortable and cosy spaces to rest, relax, or regulate their emotions. Since the last inspection, the childminder had added small cushions to the playroom, which was a positive step. However, a broken armchair and the absence of comfortable furniture meant children still did not have access to a suitable area for rest or sleep. This area for improvement was previously identified but has not yet been addressed. It will now be reworded and included within the required improvement relating to safe sleep under Quality Indicator 1.1, to ensure children's wellbeing is fully supported.

Children had daily opportunities to access outdoor environments through walks and visits to local parks. However, the childminder did not consistently assess or plan for potential risks associated with these outings. This raised concerns about the safety and suitability of the experiences provided. Effective planning should include consideration of environmental hazards, supervision levels, and children's individual needs. These concerns are reflected under Quality Indicator 3.1, where improvements are required to ensure children's safety outdoors.

Whilst insurance cover was in place, the childminder had not taken all necessary steps to ensure the home environment was safely maintained. For example, essential safety checks, such as annual servicing of heating systems, had not been completed. We advised the childminder to ensure regular maintenance is carried out to support a safe environment for children (see area for improvement 1). This would help keep children safe.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure a safe environment for children, the childminder should ensure that regular safety checks are carried out. This should include, but not be limited to, annual boiler safety checks.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

How good is our leadership?

1 - Unsatisfactory

We were very concerned about aspects of the care being provided and we evaluated the service as delivering an unsatisfactory level of care for this key question.

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Since the last inspection, only minimal progress had been made. Initial positive steps, such as the introduction of a travel cot and updated procedures for recording staff and children's attendance, had not been maintained over time. Diary entries revealed repeated instances where the service operated without appropriate staffing levels. Despite being registered to care for a maximum of four children under 16 (with specific age-related limits), the childminder routinely cared for six children alone during late afternoons. This ongoing breach of registration conditions posed a significant risk to the safety, health, and wellbeing of

the children. Due to these concerns and the failure to implement and sustain meaningful improvements, an improvement notice was issued on 4 August 2025 (see improvement notice, required improvement 2).

Following our last inspection, the childminder was asked to review and update risk assessments to ensure they reflected the current environment, and they were consistently applied. However, no meaningful review took place, and the childminder failed to identify or act on potential risks that could impact children's safety and wellbeing. For instance, children with complex medical needs did not have individual risk assessments in place, putting them at risk. Additionally, a planned outing to the park lacked effective planning and consideration of key safety factors. This lack of forward planning and risk awareness significantly increased the likelihood of unsafe situations. As a result, children's outcomes were compromised, and their safety was not assured. The childminder must review and implement comprehensive risk assessments that identify all potential hazards and outline clear actions to minimise harm (see requirement 1).

The childminder and assistants had not engaged in any self-evaluation or developed plans for improvement. This meant there were no quality assurance processes in place to identify required changes to improve outcomes for children. Children had not been consulted on their views. Whilst some families had been asked for feedback in a recent newsletter, no feedback had been received that could lead to change. This meant that children and families were not meaningfully included in service development.

The childminder had demonstrated some initial progress in response to previous inspection findings; however, these improvements were not sustained. Despite having access to support and guidance, there remained a reluctance to update practice in line with current best practice. The childminder and assistants required further training to ensure they were equipped to respond appropriately to children's needs, including managing medical situations confidently and effectively. The childminder was unable to clearly demonstrate how identified areas for improvement would be addressed, which raised concerns about the capacity to lead change and maintain standards over time. The lack of sustained improvement had the potential to negatively impact children's safety, wellbeing, and overall experiences. To support consistent, positive outcomes for children and families, an improvement notice was issued on 4 August 2025 (see improvement notice, required improvement 6).

Requirements

1. By 29 September 2025, to ensure children's safety and wellbeing, the childminder must review and implement comprehensive risk assessments that identify all potential hazards with clear actions to minimise harm. This should include, but not be limited to

- a) Individual risk assessments for children if required, taking into account their individual needs
- b) Assessing and responding to risks associated with outings, including travel arrangements, destination safety, and supervision levels.

This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4(1)(a) – Welfare of users: A provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

How good is our staff team?

2 - Weak

We made an evaluation of weak for this key question. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses.

4.3 Staff deployment

Staff were not consistently deployed in ways that met children's needs or ensured their safety. We were concerned that, during a park visit, one assistant was left to care for a group of young children alone. Due to the children's ages and the absence of essential equipment, such as a buggy, the situation was unmanageable and put children at risk from harm. This created a potentially unsafe situation, which did not support children's wellbeing.

The childminder did not always plan assistant's working patterns to ensure children were cared for by the appropriate number of staff. There were not always enough staff to provide appropriate supervision, respond to individual needs, or support meaningful play and learning. This compromised children's safety and wellbeing. Immediate action was required to ensure staffing levels consistently meet children's needs and provide them with safe, nurturing care (see improvement notice, required improvement 2).

Staff were not supported with ongoing training or professional development opportunities. This limited their ability to improve practice and impacted their confidence and competence. As a result, children did not consistently benefit from skilled, knowledgeable staff. Whilst staff had completed child protection training, not all staff had up-to-date first aid training, and some lacked confidence in their ability to respond in an emergency. This posed a risk to children's safety. To ensure children's safety and wellbeing, the childminder should ensure that they, and their assistants, have a comprehensive knowledge of current best practice guidance and seek training when required. An improvement notice was issued, requiring that staff development needs be identified and addressed to ensure sustained improvement (see improvement notice, required improvement 6).

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 support children's health and wellbeing, the childminder should develop comfortable and cosy spaces in the playroom for children to rest, relax and regulate their emotions. The childminder should also develop a safe, comfortable and clutter free space for children to sleep when required.

This is to ensure the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states 'If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use a comfortable area with soft furnishing to relax.' (HSCS 5.6) and 'my environment is safe and secure.' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

At this inspection we found that improvements were still needed to support an environment where children's wellbeing needs could be met and they could sleep safely. An area for children to sleep had been identified, a travel cot had been set up and some cushions had been added to the playroom floor. However, the travel cot was not in use and more furnishings and materials were needed to make sure an area of the

playroom was cosy and welcoming for children.

This area for improvement was not met. We issued an improvement notice on 4 August 2025 to reflect our concerns around unsafe sleep practices (see improvement notice, required improvement 4).

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to ensure that children's needs are met, safely and effectively:

The childminder should develop a systematic and consistent process for evaluating the quality of her service which involves staff, children and parents/carers and leads to an action plan for improvement.

This ensures management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11); and 'I can be meaningfully involved in how the organisations that support and care for me work and develop.' (HSCS 4.6)

This area for improvement was made on 8 August 2022.

Action taken since then

The childminder did not have processes in place to evaluate the quality of their service. Staff and children had not been consulted for feedback or provided with opportunities to reflect or plan for improvements. The childminder told us that families had been asked in a recent newsletter for any suggestion. This had not led to any feedback. There was no plans for improvement in place and the childminder was not able to discuss how they planned to meet areas for improvement.

This area for improvement has not been met. We had significant concerns and issued an improvement notice on 4 August 2025 (see improvement notice, required improvement 6).

Previous area for improvement 3

In order to ensure that children's needs are met, safely and effectively:

(1) The childminder should ensure that she keeps up to date with current best practice guidance, and attends relevant training regularly.

(2) The childminder should continue to develop an effective system for identifying and monitoring staff development needs, which should include regular opportunities to discuss and attend relevant training.

This ensures management and leadership is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, 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, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 8 August 2025.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not undertaken any professional reading or training to keep up to date with best practice. The childminder did not have a clear understanding of current best practice guidance.

The childminder did not have any processes in place to identify and monitor staff development needs. They had not engaged in professional reading or had any opportunities reflected on their professional development against best practice guidance or attend training.

This area for improvement has not been met. We had significant concerns and issued an improvement notice on 4 August 2025 (see improvement notice, required improvement 6).

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?	1 - Unsatisfactory
1.1 Nurturing care and support	1 - Unsatisfactory
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	1 - Unsatisfactory
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	1 - Unsatisfactory
How good is our staff team?	2 - Weak
4.3 Staff deployment	2 - Weak

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