

Wilson, Kathleen Child Minding

Irvine

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 August 2025

Service provided by:
Kathleen Wilson

Service provider number:
SP2004920318

Service no:
CS2004066103

About the service

Kathleen Wilson 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. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is located in Irvine, North Ayrshire. The children have access to a living room, downstairs toilet, kitchen and an enclosed garden. The service is close to local parks, schools and early years centres.

At the time of inspection, seven children were registered with the service. During the inspection visit three children under 12, two children under 2 and one pre-5 child attended.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 5 August 2025 between 12:15 and 15:00. 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 six children using the service
- spoke with one parent using the service
- received four completed Microsoft Forms questionnaires
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were nurtured through warm, responsive relationships that supported their emotional wellbeing.
- Personal planning and strong family partnerships ensured children's needs were consistently met.
- Effective communication and trust between the childminder and families enhanced the quality of care.
- Children engaged in rich, purposeful play that supported a wide range of developmental skills.
- Positive interactions and praise fostered emotional wellbeing and social confidence.
- Children's voices were heard and valued, contributing to a sense of belonging and self-worth.
- Regular outdoor experiences enhanced children's physical development and connection with the natural world.
- Resources promoted creativity, independence, and skill development.
- Children expressed enjoyment and engagement in activities.
- Self-evaluation processes supported continuous improvement and professional growth.
- Training and reflection enabled the childminder to enhance practice and measure 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 kind and caring interactions that supported their overall wellbeing. The childminder demonstrated a strong understanding of each child's needs, interests, and preferences, which contributed to a supportive environment that was both emotionally and socially secure. As a result, children developed strong attachments with the childminder and their peers, and were observed to be relaxed, cheerful, and confident in their care, benefiting from a setting that promoted emotional resilience and positive social development.

Personal plans were in place for all children and contained the necessary information to meet their wellbeing needs. These plans were developed with children's families, regularly reviewed, and included children's comments where appropriate. This inclusive approach ensured that children's voices were heard and their interests supported. Parents agreed they were fully involved in their child's care, including developing and reviewing their personal plan, with one commenting, "We are regularly asked to update our children's plans and the few times I've made suggestions they've been incorporated." As a result, children received personalised care that reflected their evolving needs and family input.

Parents and carers were welcomed into the setting daily during drop-off and pick-up times. Regular communication was maintained through text and WhatsApp messaging, which kept families informed about their child's care and support. A parent said, "The childminder keeps us updated on all aspects of our child's care and development and regularly tailors activities to specifically suit them. I trust them as much as I trust family." Another commented, "The childminder keeps me informed about everything." As a result, families felt valued and well-informed, which fostered mutual trust and strengthened the childminder's ability to provide consistent, responsive care tailored to each child's needs.

Healthy eating was promoted in line with best practice guidance, Setting the Table. The childminder was registered as a food business, which demonstrated a commitment to food safety and regulatory compliance. All meals and snacks were provided, which ensured consistency and high standards in the nutritional quality of food offered. During the inspection, some children had brought drinks from home, which mostly met nutritional requirements. The childminder engaged with families to support a shared approach and encourage healthy choices.

Mealtimes were calm and well-organised. Children were seated comfortably at a low table and were appropriately supervised to ensure their safety. They were actively encouraged to feed themselves, which promoted independence and helped develop a sense of responsibility. The childminder responded sensitively to individual care needs by offering lunch at a later time to a younger child who had been sleeping during the mealtime. This respectful and flexible approach supported the child's routine and contributed positively to their wellbeing.

During the inspection, one child required medication, which the childminder administered in a calm and reassuring manner. Appropriate records were maintained and signed by the parent upon collection, demonstrating safe and effective practice. As a result, children's health needs were managed safely and confidently, ensuring their wellbeing.

The childminder's home was welcoming and well-equipped, with comfortable furnishings such as sofas where children could relax. Nap time routines were personalised to reflect individual needs and family preferences. One parent shared, "The childminder has always made sure the kids' needs are met, including rest." Continued engagement with best practice guidance, such as planned training and obtaining informed parental consent, would further enhance the quality of care. We signposted the childminder to safe sleep awareness for early years settings, available here: <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/resource/safer-sleep-awareness-for-early-years-settings/>

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children demonstrated confidence and independence in their play, engaging with a diverse range of toys and resources that promoted learning. Activities such as construction toys, puzzles, and imaginative play supported the development of problem-solving, fine motor skills, and creativity. Children successfully followed visual instructions when they created models and used loose parts in role-play, supporting early literacy, cognitive flexibility, and communication skills. These experiences enabled children to build essential skills across multiple developmental areas while enjoying purposeful and engaging play.

The childminder's positive and skilful interactions, particularly through board games, fostered children's early mathematical understanding and social development, including counting and turn-taking. Children responded positively to praise and encouragement, demonstrating emotional regulation, self-confidence, and positive peer relationships. As a result, children developed key social and emotional competencies that supported their ability to engage meaningfully with others.

Children were included in the inspection process, and their feedback highlighted the positive impact of the setting. One child shared, "It's an amazing place to come, we go on trips and we are never bored." Another said, "I like playing with the Lego and colouring in." These comments reflected the nurturing and engaging environment, which promoted children's confidence and self-esteem. Children's voices were valued, and their experiences affirmed the setting as a place where they felt happy, respected, and involved.

Children had frequent opportunities for outdoor play, which parents confirmed through positive feedback. One commented, "Through the summer the childminder arranges outings to various places like Arran and local activities, and through the rest of the year the kids go to the park, have picnics or outdoor play." Another said, "The childminder has a wide range of outside activities and goes to parks, beaches, walks etc." These experiences supported children's physical development, nurtured their curiosity, and strengthened their connection with nature. Outdoor play contributed to a balanced and stimulating routine that enhanced children's health, wellbeing, and opportunities for exploration.

Play experiences were shared with families through a closed Facebook page, promoting transparency and parental engagement. Each child had an individual learning plan, which documented observations, progress, and identified next steps in learning. Assessment was ongoing and responsive, involved children in the process where appropriate and encouraged ownership of learning. As a result, children benefited from a reflective and inclusive learning environment that promoted continuous growth and achievement.

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

Children attended a welcoming and homely setting. They had ample indoor and outdoor space to support their play, learning, and care needs. One parent shared, "It is very clean. The childminder is very clear with the kids where they're allowed. For example, not allowed in the kitchen unsupervised." Another said, "The childminder has plenty of safety measures in place and policies to ensure these are maintained." These practices ensured that children felt safe, settled, and secure in the setting. As a result, children were confident and comfortable in their environment. They engaged positively in play and learning experiences, and demonstrated a strong sense of security and emotional wellbeing.

The childminder was aware of their responsibility to keep children safe in their care. They assessed the spaces within the home and in the community that children accessed, and identified mitigation measures to reduce potential risks. This ensured children remained safe and secure when in the childminder's care. Children were confident and comfortable in their environment. They engaged positively in play and learning experiences, and demonstrated a strong sense of security and emotional wellbeing, supported by effective safety measures and a nurturing atmosphere.

The childminder understood their role in promoting robust infection prevention and control practices that supported children's health and wellbeing. The spaces children accessed were clean and well organised. Handwashing was encouraged before meals, and the childminder was registered with environmental health to prepare food. These measures contributed to a hygienic environment where children's health was actively protected through consistent and effective routines. As a result, children remained healthy and well, benefiting from safe hygiene practices that supported their overall wellbeing.

Children used open-ended materials like loose parts to lead their own play. Sensory items, such as musical instruments, helped them be creative and explore new things. Feedback from children included, "I have fun playing with other kids. It is fun," and "I like all the things we do like going out and learning new things." Activities were planned around what children were interested in, giving them real choices. As a result, children were deeply involved in their play, showed creativity and independence, and enjoyed learning in a way that supported their overall development.

Evidence showed that children had regular access to outdoor play in a secure garden, where they developed their gross motor skills and engaged in exploratory learning using wheeled toys and discovery resources. In addition to garden play, children benefited from community outings to places such as restaurants, parks, and ferry trips. One parent commented, "The childminder has done various activities with all of my kids and arranged various outings. They do themes to make them aware of other cultures, traditions, even sampling different foods." Another said, "The childminder goes above and beyond to provide fun activities and new experiences." These activities developed children's life skills, built social confidence, and increased their awareness of the wider world. As a result, children were curious and socially confident, and had experienced a wide range of enriching opportunities that supported their overall wellbeing .

Accident and incident forms were completed and shared with families, and appropriate first aid was administered when necessary. This was in accordance with best practice guidance and ensured the wellbeing and safety of children. As a result, children were well cared for in a safe and responsive environment, where their health needs were promptly and effectively managed.

The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which demonstrated they followed ICO guidelines on data protection when considering how they stored children's personal information confidentially and lawfully. This fostered a trusting environment that respected children's privacy. As a result, families had confidence in the childminder's approach to handling sensitive information, and children's rights to privacy had been upheld within a safe and respectful setting.

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 had created a handbook that included a clear vision statement for their service, which was shared with families before their children enrolled. This information had helped families choose a service that aligned with their needs and supported the service's aims, which focused on responding to children as individuals and recognising their achievements, interests, and hobbies. As a result, children experienced a personalised approach to care and learning that reflected their unique qualities and supported their development.

The childminder genuinely valued the views of children and their families, understanding their input as key to building positive relationships. They actively gathered feedback through daily chats, WhatsApp messaging, and parent suggestion forms. One parent shared, "The childminder always asks for feedback and listens. I also feel I could approach them to discuss anything." Another said, "The childminder constantly asks and takes on feedback on any ways we can suggest to improve the service." These communication methods had ensured that children were well cared for and that their families were at the heart of the improvements made. As a result, the service was responsive to the needs of children and families, fostering a culture of trust, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

The childminder had used the Care Inspectorate quality framework indicators to evaluate and improve aspects of their service. This had included the quality of children's engagement, interactions, and connections with families, as well as the development of their own skills. The self-evaluation process had incorporated training opportunities, clear actions, and timeframes. The childminder reflected on what they gained from the training accessed and how it had developed their practice. This approach supported them to measure positive outcomes and ensured that children were supported in reaching their full potential. As a result, the service demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement and delivered high-quality experiences that met the evolving needs of children and families.

The childminder had developed a range of policies and procedures, which were shared with parents to ensure they knew what to expect from the service provided. These were reviewed regularly and reflected current guidance and legislation, supporting best practice. Key policies included safeguarding and child protection, healthy eating, and medication management. As a result, children experienced high-quality and effective care within a well-managed, transparent, and safe environment.

The childminder had valid insurance for their service, which had contributed to a safe and secure environment for children. As a result, families had confidence that appropriate safeguards were in place to protect their children's wellbeing.

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

The childminder provided a flexible and accommodating service, fostering respectful and trusting relationships with families. Parents spoke warmly of the care provided, with one stating, "The childminder is amazing and I couldn't ask for a better childminder, excellent in every way and my child loves them." Another commented, "The childminder is hard working, trusting and loving." These comments highlighted the positive impact the childminder had on children's lives. As a result, children benefited from an emotionally secure environment that supported their wellbeing and development.

The childminder demonstrated a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They worked in partnership with relevant external agencies and families to support children's safety and wellbeing. Where appropriate, chronologies were in place and regularly reviewed, providing a structured approach to recording significant events in a child's life. This supported effective decision-making and contributed to improved protection and support for children.

During the inspection, older children shared that they had been learning first aid at the setting, which had helped build their confidence, life skills, and sense of responsibility. The childminder had acknowledged that their first aid and child protection training needed updating and had made arrangements to do so. This commitment had ensured alignment with current safeguarding procedures and helped keep children safe and protected.

The childminder had remained informed of developments in the early years sector through their partnership and training opportunities with the local authority, membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), and registration with the Care Inspectorate, where they had received regular provider updates. These connections had supported the delivery of up-to-date and effective practice. As a result, children benefited from a service that reflected current guidance, promoted best practice, and responded to evolving sector expectations.

Training in key areas, including speech and language development, observation and tracking, care planning, and outdoor play, had positively influenced the childminder's approach. Reflective practice was evident in training logs, which included evaluations and identified next steps. Continued professional development was encouraged to sustain high-quality care and positive outcomes for children. As a result, the childminder had demonstrated a commitment to ongoing learning, which enhanced the quality of experiences offered and supported children's individual needs and progress.

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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