

Byrne, Nicola Child Minding

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
31 July 2025

Service provided by:
Nicola Byrne

Service provider number:
SP2014985923

Service no:
CS2014325856

About the service

The childminder provides the service from their family home in the Springboig area of Glasgow.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than three are not yet of an age to attend primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. At the time of the inspection there was one child being cared for.

Children have access to the living room, hallway, kitchen, the upstairs toilet and a spacious, safe enclosed garden for physical and outdoor play.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 July 2025. 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:

- Spoke with the child attending the service
- Reviewed feedback from four parents whose children attend the service
- Observed practice and the childminders interactions with children
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with the childminder

Key messages

- The childminder interacted with the children in a kind, caring and warm manner.
- The childminder had developed and maintained strong relationships with children and families.
- Children had access to a wide selection of toys and games to support their play and learning.
- The childminder showed an interest to developing their skills and knowledge through professional development opportunities.
- Parental feedback highlighted that children received good care and support.
- Children's development was supported through regular access to the wider community.
- The childminder should continue to develop their self-evaluation and improvement planning.

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

1.1 Nurturing care and support

We identified a mix of evaluations within this key question, with some areas rated as very good and others as good, resulting in an overall grade of good. Several strengths had a clear and positive impact on outcomes for children and outweighed the areas identified for improvement.

The childminder was kind, caring and warm in their interactions with the child during our visit. The childminder responded warmly to their cues, interests and wishes, ensuring children felt loved and valued. We observed the childminder responding to cuddles and smiles which contributed to the child feeling safe and secure. One parent told us, "Nicola is the most kindest and compassionate childminder."

Through discussions with the childminder, it was evident they had built and maintained strong relationships with both children and families. They spoke confidently about each child's individual needs and how these were met within the service. This included supporting children to use the toilet and learn more about road safety when on outings. The childminder was familiar with the routines of each child, which helped ensure consistently good care that met their changing needs.

The childminder understood the importance of sleep to promote children's wellbeing and development. Children were able to rest or sleep whenever they needed to, based on their individual routines and comfort. The childminder worked with parents to establish routines and incorporate parental wishes. Parents shared positive feedback, including: "Nicola has worked with my son's routine and she understands when he is tired and when he will nap."

The childminder explained their settling-in process. This involved agreeing the initial length of settling sessions with parents in a flexible way that supported meeting children's needs. These visits gave families the chance to get to know the childminder and allowed children to become comfortable and familiar with their new environment.

Personal plans were in place for all children, containing essential information such as home address, GP details, emergency contacts, routines, and any allergies. The childminder had previously consulted with children about their likes and interests. Reintroducing this practice would help children feel valued and heard. Records demonstrated a clear understanding of each child's needs. Summaries of conversations with parents and observations used to set individual targets were recorded. The childminder explained that parents regularly shared updates about their child's care needs through daily conversations. This contributed to children receiving consistent and responsive care. Most changes had been signed by parents, showing their involvement and input. To further strengthen this process, ensuring all changes are dated would help track each child's progress over time.

1.3 Play and learning

The child was happy and had fun in the childminder's home. They were observed laughing, smiling and engaged in their play. The childminder was responsive to their interests and joined in with their play. This contributed to the child feeling valued and supported their right to play. One parent told us, "My child is really happy, always with a smile on their face. I can tell that they really like to go there."

The childminder showed a caring and supportive approach to helping the child learn and grow. The child was given time and freedom to choose what they wanted to play with from a variety of toys available. Developmentally appropriate resources, including books, stacking cups, toy cars, figures, a drawing board, pens, and paper were available. Offering play choices helped the child feel confident, independent, and respected. The child's language skills were also supported through play as the childminder repeated words and named objects and animals. This helped build the child's language in a fun and natural way.

Outdoor play provided opportunities for physical development through the use of outdoor equipment such as slides, ride-on cars, and a seesaw. The childminder showed a sensitive child-led approach when encouraging the child to climb. However, they respected the child's decision to play with a ball instead. This responsive and respectful interaction supported the child's physical development, built confidence, and encouraged active play in a way that suited their interests.

The childminder used Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) age and stages of development checklists within children's personal plans. These were completed for each child however, they were not dated. Dating these would show that these plans are active and responsive to each child's progress. This would support children's wellbeing and learning by recognising and responding to their individual developmental needs.

Planning approaches were responsive to children's choices and interests. The childminder shared that some children enjoyed playing with prams, playdough, and arts and crafts, while others preferred books, singing, and toy cars. These interests were reflected in the play experiences offered. This demonstrated that the childminder listened to and valued each child's preferences. While planned experiences were evident through daily routines and activities, there was limited formal recording. Consideration could have been given to documenting planned experiences and linking them to curriculum guidelines and good practice publications. This would promote the children's right to be heard and included in decisions about their learning.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

We made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, when taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported in a clean and well maintained home. The childminder had created a play space in the living room which was spacious, well ventilated and bright. This supported the children's play and learning. Children had access to a safe kitchen for messy play, including arts and crafts and play dough experiences. The childminder was aware of possible risks and kitchen cupboards had child locks fitted. This supported child's health and safety. Parents comments included, "Nicola has a safe environment for them to be in and her and her family have such a kind and caring nature." and "Nicolas's home is a safe haven for my child."

The childminder provided a variety of clean, well-maintained resources stored in clear boxes, allowing children to easily see what was available. This supported independence and encouraged choice in play. The range of toys reflected children's interests and contributed to meaningful and enjoyable play experiences. Toys included, cars, shape sorting resources, small figures and a variety of books. We discussed the potential to enhance children's learning further by introducing more natural materials.

This would help develop children's understanding of different textures, weights, and materials. This could also promote sensory exploration and curiosity about the world around them.

Children had free flow access to a safe and secure outdoor garden space. The area was surfaced with a mixture of, grass, stones and a large decked area. The decked area provided a seating area for children to rest and relax in. The children had access to toys that provided opportunity for large physical, risky play and other experiences. One parent who provided feedback shared with us, "Nicola has a lovely child friendly garden and my child loves the selection of toys available. Water play, dolls and prams and just the garden space like most kids they love to be outside."

Risk assessments were in place for the childminder's home and for regularly visited outdoor areas, including the toddler group and local park. These were reviewed when changes occurred, helping to ensure children remained safe, secure, and well cared for. A bathroom risk assessment was in place and had identified several potential hazards to children. We were satisfied that the childminder used this assessment effectively to promote children's safety and wellbeing. For example, razors were stored out of children's reach. We suggested that the risk assessment could be further enhanced to reflect current practice in other areas, such as ensuring close supervision of children around toiletries. These measures contribute to creating a safe and secure environment, supporting children's health and wellbeing.

Children benefited from regular visits to local parks, where they spent time being active outdoors and enjoying fresh air. These experiences supported physical development and overall wellbeing. The childminder also took children to toddler groups, which helped promote social interaction, language development, and cognitive skills. Photographs shared on the childminders platform provided evidence of these experiences and showed children engaged and enjoying their time in the community.

A variety of infection control measures were in place to keep children safe. These included, regular cleaning of the home and supporting children to wash their hands thoroughly. We advised that the inclusion of individual hand towels could further prevent cross contamination, enhancing hygiene practices for children.

The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and processed personal data in line with current guidance. This demonstrated a clear understanding of data protection responsibilities and supported the safe and appropriate handling of information. This approach showed a strong commitment to protecting children and families and ensured compliance with general data protection requirements.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvements are led well.

This key question was evaluated as good, with several strengths having a clear and positive impact on outcomes for children, outweighing the identified areas for improvement.

Children were cared for by a childminder who was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), an organisation that provides training, support, and guidance to childminders across Scotland. The childminder had implemented key documentation to support the delivery of their service, including enrolment forms, age and stage development checklists, and accident and incident records. This supported the childminder to provide quality care, play and learning for children in their care.

The childminder maintained regular and effective communication with parents and carers, to ensure they were informed about their child's daily experiences. This included daily conversations, regular updates on social media and personal messages through a secure messaging platform. We reviewed examples of the communications on social media and found these shared photographs and observations of children engaged in their play. We concluded that the childminder had developed good relationships with families. Once parent shared, "Nicola keeps me informed and we have an agreement regarding things my child is working on."

Accidents and incidents were appropriately recorded using the SCMA template, which included details of the event, any first aid administered, and parental signatures. These records were stored securely in each child's individual file. This contributed to parents being consistently informed of their child's experiences, health and wellbeing.

We reviewed the childminder's policies and procedures. This included their complaints policy, medication policy, and child protection policy. We discussed with the childminder the importance of regularly updating these documents to reflect changes in best practice guidance, in order to support children's health, safety, and wellbeing. For example, we recommended updating the medication policy to include guidance on administering non-prescription medication, where appropriate. Additionally, we suggested introducing a safe sleep policy. These changes would ensure that the quality of care for children remains consistently good.

The childminder was engaging in informal self-evaluation and improvement planning through conversations with families. We discussed looking at the Care Inspectorate website and SCMA self-evaluation opportunities to support them to record and implement changes. To strengthen the service, the childminder should enhance opportunities for children and parents to provide feedback and contribute to decision-making. This could include regular questionnaires, informal discussions, or shared planning activities. This would support continuous improvements, and promote a sense of inclusion.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

4.1: Knowledge, skills and values

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

The childminder had clear aims and objectives, which were evident during our visit. For example, children were cared for in a safe and welcoming environment and offered free play during their time at the service. We also observed how the childminder embedded working in partnership with parents to support children's play, learning and development needs. This included, supporting parents with medical concerns and supporting children's safety outdoors. These practices demonstrated a child-centred approach and contributed positively to children's health, confidence, and overall wellbeing.

The childminder had built strong, trusting relationships with the children, families and a local nursery, where some children in their care attended. This supported consistency of care and helped meet individual needs of the children attending the service. This demonstrated a commitment to partnership working and a child-centred approach that promoted children's wellbeing, confidence, and progress.

Comments included, "I am extremely happy with Nicola's childminding service. There is nothing she could do to make it better. I would 100% recommend Nicola. Especially to first time mums - like me." and "The one to one support network is great to give my child security and support wellbeing."

The childminder understood their role and responsibility to keep children safe and protected. They shared the procedures they would follow in the event of any safeguarding concerns and were satisfied that these were well considered to protect children from harm. Although the childminder had clear procedures, it had been a while since they had last attended child protection training. We suggested attending a refresher course to enhance knowledge and develop a deeper awareness of changes to legislation. This approach contributes to supporting children's emotional security and wellbeing

The childminder had taken part in a variety of professional development courses, such as first aid, food hygiene, child protection, child-led planning, and understanding autism. This helped to ensure that the childminder was developing continually in order to provide quality care and support to children. This ongoing commitment to learning supports a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment, where children feel secure and are supported to thrive.

The childminder valued the opportunity to engage in professional discussions with other childminders. These conversations provided a chance to share knowledge and experience, which helped to inform and improve their practice. This contributed to quality care and better outcomes for children.

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	5 - Very 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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