

Laura Marie Sinclair

Child Minding

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 August 2025

Service provided by:
Laura Sinclair

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2024000015

About the service

The childminder provides the service from their family home in the Gartcosh 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 were three children being cared for.

Children have access to the living room, kitchen, dining room, downstairs toilet and an enclosed, spacious garden for outdoor play.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14 August 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered about the service. In making our evaluations of the service we:

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

Key messages

- The childminder was warm, caring and nurturing in their interactions with the children.
- Children had access to a nurturing, safe and secure learning environment.
- The childminder was committed to developing their skills and knowledge through continued professional development.
- The childminder had fostered strong relationships with children and families.
- Positive parental feedback highlighted that the children were cared for and supported by the childminder.
- The childminder should continue to develop self-evaluation and improvement planning for their service.
- Children's development was supported by regular opportunities to explore and engage with the wider community

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?	5 - Very 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

Within this key question, a mixture of evaluations were identified, with some areas rated as very good and others as good, leading to an overall grade of good. Several strengths had a clear and positive impact on outcomes for children and outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1 Nurturing care and support

The childminder was warm and caring in how they interacted with the children. They created a calm and relaxed setting, which helped the children feel settled and at ease. The childminder responded kindly to the children's needs, interests, and choices. They had built strong relationships, and during the visit, the childminder offered cuddles, helping the children feel safe and loved. One parent told us, "The most positive thing for me as a parent is that I know that when my children are with Laura they feel safe, they are happy and they are cared for. I know that they feel at home and that is what matters to me. They are always happy to go to Laura's house."

Personal care was carried out in a calm and caring way. The childminder asked children's permission before changing them and respected their responses, helping them feel valued and secure. Children were encouraged in a fun and positive manner, and were happy to be changed. The childminder chatted and interacted throughout, supporting children's comfort and communication.

Through discussions, it was clear the childminder had built and maintained strong relationships with both children and their families. They spoke confidently about each child's individual needs and how these were met within the service. The childminder was familiar with the children's routines, which helped provide continuity of care, that met their changing needs.

The childminder provided meals and snacks for the children. These were planned using best practice guidance like 'Food Matters' and in partnership with families. This meant children received healthy, balanced food that supported their growth and development. The childminder took account of each child's dietary needs and preferences, offering two lunch choices to support individual likes and dislikes. Parents shared positive feedback, including, "I love that Laura really cares about what the children eat. She provides organic food and is careful about not using processed foods. This means a lot to us as we as parents are really mindful about what we feed our children." Snack time was calm and well-supervised, with food presented in a way that was safe for each child's age, helping to reduce the risk of choking. The relaxed atmosphere during snack encouraged social interaction, supporting children's communication and social skills.

The childminder had a flexible settling-in process that was tailored to each child's needs. For example, session times were adjusted and parents were welcome to stay as long as needed. This helped children feel safe, secure, and supported as they settled into the new environment.

Personal plans were in place for all children and included key details such as emergency contacts, GP information, routines, and allergies. 'All about me' forms were completed and gave useful insight into each child's likes and dislikes. The childminder explained that parents regularly shared updates about their child's care needs through daily conversations. This helped ensure children received consistent and responsive care.

To further support children's development, the childminder should record any changes in personal plans at least every six months. This would help track each child's progress and ensure their changing needs continue to be met.

1.3 Play and learning

Children were happy and engaged throughout the visit, with lots of laughter and fun during play. The childminder supported children to choose where they wanted to play and they could choose from some resources set out and others that were kept elsewhere. This included outdoor play, construction play in the dining area, and quiet play in the living room. Free play was encouraged, with the childminder stepping back to let the children lead while remaining nearby to offer help and ensure safety. This approach supported children's independence, decision-making, and confidence in a secure and nurturing environment.

Outdoor play gave children the chance to build their physical skills and take part in challenging activities. They used equipment like slides and bikes to explore risky play in a safe way. The childminder supported this confidently and calmly. For example, when one child chose to jump from the slide, the childminder stayed close, offered encouragement, and praised their efforts. This helped the child learn to assess risk, feel supported, and grow in confidence.

The childminder provided a variety of developmentally appropriate resources. Toys included, construction blocks, cars, small figures, books and soft and safe toys for the youngest child. These offered opportunity to develop, fine motor skills, imagination and language skills. One parent told us, "I can see that Laura offers different learning activities for both my kids based on their ages and abilities and always giving them opportunity to develop their learning." We discussed with the childminder the importance of involving children in the daily setup and in selecting the resources and activities they engage with. We also highlighted the value of offering children the freedom to make choices and to independently self-select and change resources throughout their time at the service. This would help build confidence and support children's right to play by giving them a voice in their environment.

Personal plans included observations, linked to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. GIRFEC is a national framework aimed at ensuring all children receive the right support at the right time. These observations focused on different aspects of development such as social, physical, language, and emotional. They showed progress in children's learning, and the childminder identified next steps to support continued development. This helped ensure that each child's needs were understood and met, promoting their wellbeing and learning.

The childminder maintained regular communication with parents and families through a secure messaging and social media platform. Updates were shared daily and included details about each child's sleep patterns, meals, personal care routines, and their play and learning experiences. This helped ensure parents were informed about their child's day when in the child minders care. Parents told us, "Laura has always been welcoming to us as parents and our kids. I find it easy to talk to her about anything and she is always keen to know about any updates/needs for the children." and "Laura keeps us updated throughout the day with pictures which is lovely. At the end of the day she has written down all about my child's day, which I really appreciate."

The childminder included the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) age and stage of development checklists within each child's personal plan. These checklists were completed for all children, helping to track their progress and identify areas of development. However, the documents were not dated.

Dating these would help ensure that they were responsive to each child's changing needs and support children's individual learning.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities.

We found significant strengths in the care provided, which contributed to positive outcomes for children. As a result, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported in a clean, bright, well maintained and well ventilated home. The children had access to a spacious living room with soft furnishings, a large kitchen dining areas and a downstairs toilet. Children could freely access these areas throughout the day to support free play and choice. One parent who provided feedback shared, "Laura's house, garden is secure and very well maintained. I have absolutely no issues regarding this."

The garden offered children free-flow access to a well-maintained, safe, and secure outdoor play area. The space included a variety of surfaces such as decking, astro turf, a sheltered area, and a seating space. These features supported different types of play and exploration, and allowed children to enjoy outdoor activities in all weathers. The garden was equipped with resources that encouraged physical activity, including bikes and a slide. Children also benefited from sensory experiences through water play and the mud kitchen. This supported curiosity as well as wellbeing, by giving children opportunities to be active, and enjoy fresh air in a safe and stimulating setting.

The childminder had a range of infection control measures in place to help keep children safe and healthy. These included regular cleaning of the home and encouraging children to wash their hands thoroughly, especially after outdoor play and before and after eating. The childminder also took steps to minimise risks around pets by storing their dogs food and water in a shed that children could not access. These measures supported a clean and safe environment, helping to protect children's wellbeing and reduce the spread of illness. We suggested that using individual hand towels could further reduce the risk of cross-contamination and strengthen hygiene routines.

Children regularly visited the local wetlands area, where they enjoyed fresh air and active outdoor play including, nature walks. These experiences supported their physical development, overall wellbeing and love of nature. The childminder also took children to toddler groups, which encouraged social interaction, language development, and thinking skills. Photographs shared through the childminder's platform showed children engaged and enjoying these activities, highlighting the positive impact of being part of their local community.

Risk assessments were in place for both the indoor and outdoor areas of the childminder's home. These were regularly carried out to help ensure a safe environment for children. We advised that the assessments should be updated to include garden equipment such as the hot tub, BBQ, and patio heater. Although safety measures were observed in practice, updating the written risk assessments would ensure they accurately reflect current safety measures. including, no water in the hot tub. This would further support children's safety by clearly identifying and managing potential hazards in the outdoor space.

The childminder carried out and recorded regular fire drills. These records included details of individual children's responses and the steps taken to reduce stress for those who found the experience challenging.

This demonstrated a thoughtful and child-centred approach to safety, showing a clear commitment to supporting each child's emotional wellbeing during emergency procedures.

The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and followed its guidelines for handling personal information. This helped ensure that data was stored and shared safely, showing a clear commitment to protecting the privacy of children and their families.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

This key area was evaluated as good, with several clear strengths that positively impacted children's outcomes and outweighed the areas identified for improvement.

Children were cared for by a childminder who was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). This organisation provides training, support, and guidance to childminders across Scotland. The childminder used key documents to support the children in their care and the delivery of their service. Documents included, accident and incident records, enrolment forms and age and stages of development checklists. This supported the childminder in delivering quality care, play, and learning for the children.

Parents and families were encouraged to share their views through daily conversations and questionnaires. Feedback included suggestions for improvements, concerns about their child's development, and preferred communication methods. One parent shared, "I know that Laura is always available if I need to discuss anything regarding the kids." This approach helped families feel listened to and valued. We discussed with the childminder that continuing to gather feedback in this way would support ongoing improvements to the service and strengthen relationships with families.

Accidents and incidents were recorded appropriately using the SCMA template, which included details of the event, any first aid given, and parental signatures. Records were stored securely in each child's file, helping to keep families informed about their child's health and wellbeing.

The childminder had a range of policies in place, which were shared with parents and signed to confirm understanding. These included a complaints policy and an infection prevention and control policy, both containing relevant information and links to good practice guidance. We advised updating the medication policy to include non-prescription medication, to ensure clarity around their use. The pet policy clearly outlined how the pet was managed, and this was evident in practice. We also suggested creating a safe sleep and settling in policy to reflect the childminders understanding and practice observed. These would contribute to the safe and nurturing environment delivered and further support children's health and wellbeing.

The childminder had made a positive start to self-evaluation and improvements to their service, using SCMA templates to support the process. They identified areas for improvement and were beginning to take action, including regularly updating personal plans and planning to support children's interests. This will help strengthen the service and further support positive outcomes for children.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

4.1 Staff skills knowledge and values

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

The childminder had clear aims and objectives, which were evident in daily practice. These included providing regular outdoor play and responding to children's individual needs. The importance of parental involvement was also reflected in the childminder's approach, with families actively engaged through daily conversations, completed questionnaires and online reviews. This helped build strong partnerships and supported positive outcomes for children, supporting their health, safety and wellbeing.

The childminder was confident and understood their role and responsibility in safeguarding and protecting children. They shared the steps they would follow in the event of any safeguarding concerns. Enhanced child protection training had recently been completed to ensure the childminder was aware of changes to guidance and procedures. This contributed to children being emotionally supported, safe and protected.

The childminder had completed key early learning and child care courses including courses such as, food handling, first aid and child protection. They had also completed training linked to key childcare themes like STEM, autism and good practice publications including GIRFEC. The childminder shared that they were due to embark on a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) childcare course to further develop their skills and knowledge. This ongoing commitment to professional development helped create a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where children felt secure and were supported to grow and learn. We discussed with the childminder how the new skills and knowledge gained through their planned early years course could enhance children's play and learning. These developments are expected to foster curiosity and exploration during play, ultimately supporting improved outcomes for children.

The childminder actively engaged in professional discussions with other childminders, valuing the opportunity to share ideas and experiences. This helped inform and improve their practice, contributing to a quality service for children and families.

Strong, trusting relationships with the children and their families had been built and maintained by the childminder. These strong relationships allowed the childminder to provide consistent care that supported each child's individual needs. Daily conversations and regular messages with families helped ensure that important information was shared, which promoted children's wellbeing and supported their learning journey. Comments included, "I have only great things to say about Laura and the care she provides, I would recommend her to everyone." and "We love the relationship Laura has with our family and there is complete trust in Laura and the service she provides."

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?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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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