

Linnette's Childminding service

Child Minding

New Cumnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
6 August 2025

Service provided by:
Linnette Park

Service provider number:
SP2023000058

Service no:
CS2023000079

About the service

Linnette's Childminding provides a childminding service from their home in the town of New Cumnock, in East Ayrshire.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. At the time of our inspection, seven children were registered with the service. There were four children in attendance during the inspection.

The service is within walking distance to the local school, park and other amenities. Children are cared for in the kitchen/diner, living room, and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 August 2025 between 12:00 and 14:30. 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:

- spent time with four children using the service
- received feedback from three parents/carers
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were settled, happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder.
- Children could lead their own play based on their interests.
- Children were encouraged and supported to be part of the local community.
- Children were cared for in a clean, well-maintained home.
- The childminder should continue to develop self-evaluation processes to help identify areas for development.

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

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

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and settled in the service. They experienced warm, nurturing care from the childminder. We saw kind, affectionate interactions throughout our visit. For example, children received cuddles and comfort when they needed it. One parent said, "(the childminder) is amazing! I wouldn't want my child going anywhere else." As a result, children's emotional wellbeing was supported which helped them feel safe and secure.

Children received personal care that respected their dignity and individual needs. Good hygiene practices were followed as children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times. This supported children's health and wellbeing.

Mealtimes were calm and unhurried. The childminder sat with the children to supervise, support and chat with the children. During mealtimes, the TV was playing in the background. We suggested that the childminder switch the TV off when not in use to enhance social interactions during mealtimes.

The childminder knew the children well and used personal plans effectively to identify children's likes, preferences, health, and care routines. These were created together with families. One parent telling us "I am always involved with development and personal plans." As a result, children had a positive relationship with the childminder and their needs were being met. The childminder was trialling a new online app to share personal planning with parents. This had received positive feedback from families with one parent commenting, "The new app is great and I can see what they have been doing." We asked the childminder to ensure that plans are electronically signed by parents to confirm they have been reviewed within the required timescales.

The childminder had an open approach with families to ensure they stayed well informed about their child's day. One parent told us "(the childminder) always makes me feel welcome at drop off and collection. I am always welcomed into their home and given a run down of what's happened each day. Another parent told us, "I am always invited in and can discuss my child's needs." As a result, families felt welcomed, informed, and were actively involved in their child's care.

Where children required medication, consent forms had been completed with parents and reviewed annually. We suggested the childminder carry out more regular reviews to ensure that information held is up to date and reflects children's current needs.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were having fun. Children of different ages played happily with each other. For example, they enjoyed playing with dolls together and they chose to sit at the table to draw. These positive interactions demonstrated children had developed social skills, made friends and were learning from each other.

There were a range of toys available based on children's interests. These were suitable for the age of the children and offered different experiences. For example, there was a variety of small world toys such as a castle and a playhouse which the children enjoyed playing with. This supported imaginative play. There were play packs with threading activities. This supported the development of fine motor and concentration skills.

Children were able to lead their own play. This was supported by the childminder who provided appropriate toys and resources to support this, for example dinosaurs. One child told us, "I like that (the childminder) does different activities but let's us chill too if we don't want to." The childminder played alongside children to support their play. As a result, children were learning and having fun.

The childminder promoted literacy through play by offering a good range of books that were easily accessible to children. The childminder had read a story that matched the children's interests, which then led to a nature walk to collect materials. These experiences were continued in creative artwork, helping children to develop early language skills and express themselves. This showed that the childminder responded well to children's ideas and supported their learning through play.

Children had the opportunity to participate in physical activity every day. They spoke enthusiastically about playing football, using outdoor equipment and going walks. This meant children were supported to be fit and healthy.

Children had built connections in their community. They painted rocks for a community project which were displayed in the town centre. This was further enhanced by daily walks and park visits, and by attending sensory play groups. These activities extended children's learning in a positive way.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities.

Children were cared for in a well-furnished, clean, and homely environment, which helped them feel relaxed and secure. There was space for children to rest and unwind when they needed to. They moved confidently between the living room and kitchen and they asked to go outside. This showed that they children felt comfortable and respected.

Children could freely access toys stored in the porch, which supported their independence and choice. When older children asked for different toys, these were made available. The childminder planned to reorganise the toy storage to make it even more accessible, which we supported. The garden had a range of toys suitable for different ages, including football goals and a tuff tray with activities. This encouraged active and imaginative play.

Risk assessments were in place to help the childminder identify potential risk and put safety measures in place. Some risk assessments had not been updated when needed. We advised that these should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure children's safety.

Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. The home was clean and tidy, and the childminder used PPE when needed, helping to keep children safe and healthy.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.

The childminder engaged positively with the inspection process. This demonstrated a reflective and open approach to improvement.

The childminder had built strong, trusting relationships with families, which supported open and effective communication. One parent said, "(the childminder) is very approachable, she is open and honest and I trust her." The childminder had asked for parents' views on the new online app which were positive. We made some suggestions about how the childminder could seek more detailed feedback to support improvements and ensure they meet the needs of children and families.

There were a range of generic policies in place but these had not been personalised to reflect the childminder's service. We asked that these be reviewed so they are up to date and reflect the childminder's setting. The childminder planned to review and upload these to the online app. This could support safer practices and be more accessible to families.

Self-evaluation processes were informal. We advised the childminder to become familiar with the new shared 'Quality Improvement Framework for Childminders' and use this document to support evaluation of the service. We recommended the development of a clear self-evaluation process to help identify strengths and areas for improvement. By the conclusion of the inspection, the childminder had begun to address this.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values.

The childminder demonstrated their ability to support children. They responded sensitively and appropriately to their individual needs, including recognising toileting and hunger cues. This approach supported children's comfort, wellbeing, and independence.

The childminder held a SVQ qualification in childcare and brought valuable experience from her previous role in a nursery setting. This contributed to their confidence in their role and supported positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had undertaken some training to support children's safety. For example, they had attended first aid training. They were actively seeking a refresher in child protection training. This reflected a strong commitment to maintaining their safeguarding knowledge. They were able to clearly describe the steps they would take should a concern arise. This helped safeguard children.

The childminder had completed some training in relation to their previous role. We encouraged them to continue developing their knowledge of best practice. For example, by accessing online training through platforms such as SCMA and SSSC. Ongoing professional development would further enhance the quality of children's experiences, for example, by strengthening their use of effective questioning techniques to extend learning.

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

The childminder should ensure that all personal plans are implemented within 28 days of a child's start date. Personal plans should be signed and dated by families and reviewed at least every six months with families, or earlier if required.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 6 August 2024.

Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place for all children and had been reviewed with families every six months or sooner if needed.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should ensure that medication consent forms are in place for every child who requires medication. Medication plans and consent forms must be reviewed and updated with families at least every three months.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

This area for improvement was made on 6 August 2024.

Action taken since then

Where children required medication, appropriate consent forms had been completed and signed by parents/carers. Forms contained relevant information to support the safe administration of medication.

This area for improvement has been met.

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	4 - 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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