

# Nicholson, Elizabeth

## Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 14 March 2019

**Service provided by:**  
Elizabeth Nicholson

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004937214

**Care service number:**  
CS2003039487

## Introduction

Elizabeth Nicholson provides a childminding service from her home, situated in a residential area of the town. She lives within walking distance of various local facilities, including nursery and school.

Mrs Nicholson is an experienced childminder who aims to provide a child-centred service where children are safe, secure and stimulated.

The service may operate under the following conditions:

- To provide a care service to a maximum of six children under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than five may be 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 of age.

Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family, including any grandchildren in her care.

- Overnight service will not be provided

- The part of the premises not to be used is the childminder's own bedroom

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (also known as GIRFEC), Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and wellbeing for children by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work with the services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included (often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators).

## What we did during our inspection

The service was registered by the Care Inspectorate in 2011. This inspection took place on Thursday 14th March 2019 and was carried out by one inspector. We visited at short notice. We provided feedback to the childminder on the same day. There were two preschool children present during the inspection.

We sent three Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) to the childminder to distribute to relatives and carers of people who used the service. We received three completed questionnaires and have taken account of the feedback provided by parents.

During this inspection we gathered evidence from a number of sources, including the following: We spoke with the childminder and minded children. We observed the childminder's practice and interactions with the children and inspected the areas of the home used for childminding purposes. We also looked at childminding records.

We took account of all of the above information when we evaluated this service.

## Views of people using the service

The children who were present appeared settled and happy in the service. They were fully engaged in their play activities and confident in expressing their needs and wishes. It was evident that they enjoyed a warm, trusting relationship with Mrs Nicholson who was attentive to their needs.

Comments from the children included the following:

"I'm going home soon. My daddy's coming."

"Do you like my badge?"

"I'm going to be cooking. I'm making yummy eggs."

"All done!" (puzzle)

"We saw cows, horses, dogs. We gave the horses carrots."

Parents who submitted questionnaires expressed a high level of confidence in the care their children received.

Comments included the following:

"I have been using Betty's service for years. She is very caring and always keeps the children amused. The variety of activities and food is really good - they are always trying new things."

"My children adore her and I'd be lost without her. She provides an exceptional service and I would highly recommend her to anyone."

"There is no childminder out there like Betty. She makes being a working mum that bit easier. My child loves her time there and I am safe in the knowledge that she is well looked after."

"Betty regularly asks for ideas and opinions and keeps you informed."

## Self assessment

The self assessment was submitted in March 2018, when requested. This was completed to a good standard and reflected the childminder's commitment to providing high quality care, in partnership with parents.

## What the service did well

Mrs Nicholson has formed very good working relationships with parents and children and provides a safe, caring and nurturing environment where children are valued and respected. Minded children benefit from a range of stimulating activities which support their learning and development.

## What the service could do better

We asked Mrs Nicholson to update her medication procedure in line with current guidance.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Mrs Nicholson recognised the importance of working closely with parents to ensure continuity between home and the service. Pre-admission visits enabled parents to learn about the service and helped children settle. Visits were flexible, depending on the needs of family. Mrs Nicholson used a range of communication methods on an ongoing basis which met parents' needs. They confirmed that the childminder communicated well and took account of their wishes. As a result, parents felt involved and children were well supported.

The service did not always operate to its registered capacity which meant that Mrs Nicholson was sometimes able to spend some time individually with the children and to provide one to one support. This helped her form close, nurturing relationships and allowed her to be responsive to the children's needs and interests. Mrs Nicholson told us that the group meeting at breakfast time enabled her to plan the day taking account of the children's wishes.

Daily routines ensured that children experienced consistency of care and the pace of the day took account of the individual needs of those being cared for, at any given time. We saw evidence of a range of experiences which promoted children's wellbeing. Activities were child led and Mrs Nicholson followed through on children's requests for particular activities, where possible. There were daily opportunities for children to experience fresh air and exercise.

Mrs Nicholson was a good role model and promoted positive behaviour. She encouraged the children to learn to share and be considerate and caring towards one another. We observed very good quality interaction and concluded that children were valued and respected.

Mrs Nicholson supplied nutritious meals and snacks. We saw that the children were able to choose from various healthy options at lunchtime. A parent told us "There is always variation and choice. All options are healthy with an occasional treat. The meals are all home made which is reassuring as a parent trying to control sugar/salt intake." Another parent told us "Betty always makes sure there is fruit and vegetables available."

Mrs Nicholson routinely talked to parents about their child's development. She was aware of the need to maintain a personal plan for each child and had collated relevant information including progress reports which were shared with parents. Photo books reflected the children's involvement in a range of experiences and provided a record of their time in the service which was treasured by parents.

Mrs Nicholson was aware of her role in protecting children and understood her obligation to act on any concerns. She had attended child protection training which had raised her awareness of this important aspect of her work.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The property is located in a residential area within walking distance of various local facilities. The accommodation was very well maintained and appropriately furnished and equipped for childminding purposes. The upstairs playroom provided a base for the children's activities and the storage of play materials; however, most areas of the home were available to the children and we saw that they could decide whether they wanted to use the playroom or take toys downstairs to the sitting room. The kitchen was used at mealtimes. The toilet was easily accessible and older children were able to manage independently.

Children were cared for in a stimulating environment. They had access to a good range of age-appropriate resources, many of which were easily accessible so that they could select what they wanted to play with. There was adequate space where children could set out their toys and activities. Daily routines involved time for free play at home as well as outings including visits to a toddlers group and play centre.

The enclosed garden provided space for outdoor activities. The area was terraced and Mrs Nicholson told us that the children had freedom to play creatively, using their imagination. The childminder did not use a car for childminding which meant that the children walked on a daily basis. They told us that they enjoyed visiting a local farm where they could see the animals and had also had fun searching for mini-beasts and tadpoles. In this way, they had opportunities to learn about the environment.

Mrs Nicholson had a very good awareness of safety issues and carried out visual inspections of the areas used by children, on an ongoing basis. The children learned about taking care of themselves and being responsible through their daily activities. There had been no significant accidents or incidents affecting minded children; however, the childminder was aware of the need to record details of any occurrences and to inform parents about what had happened and any action taken.

We discussed infection control practices. Mrs Nicholson encouraged routine hand washing. She was registered with the environmental health service as a food provider. Nappy changing was carried out hygienically. Parents generally kept their children at home if they were unwell. These measures minimised the risk of the spread of infection.

Mrs Nicholson confirmed that public liability insurance was in place. This may provide a degree of protection to herself and to families who use the service.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

Mrs Nicholson was an experienced childminder who impressed as conscientious. She shared written and verbal information about the service and actively sought feedback from parents and children. This helped her to evaluate her work and to identify any changes or improvements which may be needed.

Mrs Nicholson knew where to access relevant information about childcare and childminding issues. She was aware of various guidance documents which are in place to help ensure positive outcomes for children and had downloaded these for future reference. She had been proactive in undertaking further learning to support her understanding of her role. This, in turn, helped her to provide high quality care. She was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association and had some contact with other childminders.

Mrs Nicholson had a good understanding of regulatory issues. She had submitted information to the Care Inspectorate when asked to do so and was aware of the need to make formal notifications, in certain circumstances. A complaints procedure was in place and was shared with parents. Overall, record keeping was of a good standard. Medication forms should be amended to include the reason the medication is required and confirmation that the medication has previously been administered at home.

### Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

### Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

### Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

### Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

### Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
13 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
3 Sep 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
27 Mar 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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