

# Hatcher, Nicola

## Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 4 June 2019

**Service provided by:**  
Hatcher, Nicola

**Service provider number:**  
SP2010977101

**Care service number:**  
CS2010237524

## Introduction

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Nicola Hatcher, referred to as the childminder in this report, is the provider of Nicola Hatcher Childminding. She is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of eight children at any one time, under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one may be under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family and household.

The service is run from the childminder's home in Tillicoultry, close to all amenities, including local parks and schools. The house is well maintained and organised to meet the needs of children. The children have access to the living room, the kitchen, the toilet and garden. The childminder aims to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment to ensure children's health, safety and happiness.

We also 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 Getting it right for every child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

## What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following a short announced inspection, which took place Tuesday 4 June 2019 between 09:00 and 11:30. A Care Inspectorate Early Years Inspector carried out the inspection.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self- assessment forms that we asked the childminder to complete and return to us.

We sent three care standards questionnaires to the childminder to distribute to relatives and carers of people who used the service. We received three completed questionnaires. Parents were very happy with the service provided.

During this inspection, we gathered evidence from a number of sources, including the following:

We spoke with:

- the children present
- the childminder.

We observed and viewed:

- the environment
- the childminder's practice and interactions with children
- the children playing.

We looked at the following evidence:

- children's information
- accident records
- administration of medicine records
- photographs
- policies including child protection, medication and infection control
- certificate of registration
- insurance certificate.

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

Please note that all parents and carers will be referred to as 'parents' throughout this report.

## Views of people using the service

One child was present during our inspection. The child was confident and happy to have us join her in her play and gave us stickers. The childminder was loving and nurturing in her interactions and knew the child's needs and wishes well. The child told us:

"This is a mouse." (finger puppet).  
 "Apple, starfish." (when playing with stickers).

Parent's comments told us:

"As a first-time mum going back to full time employment when my daughter was only six months old, I was so worried. Having Nicola was such a blessing. She loves our daughter as her own and all the kids adore her. She is amazing at what she does."

"Nicola takes our children to the local parks, community walks and in holidays she goes further afield e.g. Muiravonside Park for the day."

"After school snacks can range from fruit, dips, crudities, crackers etc., to themed snacks for pancake day, Easter and Chinese New Year. Homemade soup is made throughout the winter too."

"My child enjoys going to the shops with Niki; her favourite place to go to is the fairy garden at the local church."

"My children have the best time at Niki's. She is bubbly, fun, energetic and fair. My two girls bonded with Niki instantly and she is very easy to talk to after a hard day at work. Niki is a fab childminder and I would recommend her service to friends and parents alike."

## Self assessment

The childminder submitted a fully completed self assessment for the service. This gave a clear account of the strengths of her service, things she had developed since her last inspection and further plans for improvement. For example, she had made improvements to the garden and had installed a secure door entry system to keep children safe. She planned to make further improvements to the garden to allow children more access to this area.

## What the service did well

The childminder promoted a positive culture, where children's successes and achievements were recognised and encouraged. The loving environment resulted in happy and confident children.

## What the service could do better

We advised that the childminder could improve her record keeping. This would evidence the positive impact that training and improvements she made to the service had on outcomes for children.

## 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	4 – Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

The fun loving and bubbly childminder recognised that relationships lie at the heart of children's development. This resulted in her providing a very good service, where children were loved and respected. Her positive minded outlook and nurturing approach supported wellbeing.

Children felt welcomed, safe and nurtured. Similarly, relationships with parents were of great importance, this supported them to feel included and valued. The childminder kept them informed of regular updates and information about what children had been learning. Children were respected as individuals and given opportunities to choose activities and experiences, which supported them to develop negotiation skills and make decisions.

There was a strong sense of creating a positive and respectful ethos with a focus on supporting children's sense of self-worth, resilience and confidence. They were supported to celebrate successes and well-done achievement stickers were used to encourage this. New children and parents were supported to settle into the service and a detailed welcome leaflet provided relevant information. Children were also supported to prepare for going to school. Sensitive transition planning helped their emotional and learning needs, for example discussions about going to school with children and parents to address any concerns. Similarly, regular visits to the school grounds helped children to be familiar with the environment.

All children had a tracking sheet to track their progression in learning and photographs showed us what they had been learning. We suggested to the childminder to consider recording the learning alongside the photographs, using the language of the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included). We discussed the benefits of linking the suggested recorded learning to the tracking sheets. This would show children making very good progress at an appropriate pace.

Children were encouraged to be active participants in their local community and were learning about kindness and giving to others who were less fortunate than themselves. For example, they had recently collected and donated Easter Eggs to give to the children who were patients in Forth Valley Royal Hospital.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

It was clear that the childminder was very committed to ensuring that the environment was safe, clean, secure and maintained to a very good standard. She had recently installed an alarmed door entry system to keep children safe. Similarly, she worked hard to minimise spread of infection with clear policies and procedures in place, which kept them protected from illness. The bathroom was maintained to a very good standard and children were provided with individual cloths to prevent risk of infection.

We were encouraged by the childminder's attention to detail. She had recently assessed the risk of the slippery decking in the back garden and was in the process of reducing this risk and considering how to improve access to the back garden. In the meantime, children benefitted from using the large, fully enclosed front garden when they were not out and about in the community. Regular fresh air and exercise encouraged them to appreciate the benefits of leading an active and healthy lifestyle.

The childminder's house provided a homely environment for children to relax and play. The living room provided space to play and create, where arts and crafts were encouraged. The friendly dog was clearly loved, having pets to care for and love helped children to be responsible and caring. We saw a range of toys and art materials to suit the needs and stages of development for all children using the service. Children were able to create and design, play games, read books and sing. Similarly, they were supported to develop language and communication skills. Moving forward, the childminder could consider adding more natural, open-ended materials into the indoor play environment, which children could collect on the regular visits to parks. Such resources would increase creativity and imagination and offer more engaging and challenging experiences for them as they grow and develop. To support this, the childminder could consider using the following good practice guidance to improve the environment and experiences for children: My World Outdoors and Our Creative Journey - available at [www.hub.careinspectorate.com](http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com) and Loose Parts Play - available at [www.inspiringscotland.org.uk](http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk).

There were regular opportunities for outdoor play and the use of the local community was fully maximised. Children benefitted from weekly visits to the Fairy Community Garden and parents were kept updated about what the fairies had been doing. The children also benefitted from regular visits to the play park, the school

playgrounds and the local toddler group. They were developing physical skills; which supported risk benefit play, team working opportunities and the appreciation of their local community.

## 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

The childminder was a member of Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), who kept her informed of new legislation and current best practice advice. She was also a member of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and received weekly updates, which informed her practice. Similarly, she had recently gone into partnership with the local authority to offer funded places for children aged three to five years. The local authority provided guidance and professional learning opportunities and in addition to this, the childminder also sourced a range of training opportunities. Such opportunities developed her knowledge and understanding, which positively impacted on the quality experiences that she provided. Moving forward, we suggested that she kept a training record to show the impact that her learning had on outcomes for children.

All children had a care plan, which provided information to ensure that their care, learning and welfare needs were being met. The childminder had reflected on the plans that she used and had decided to use plans provided by Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) for future children starting. This is because they included all the required information on one clear form. We reminded her to ask all parents to sign care plans when they reviewed and updated them. This would show that parents had reviewed them every six months or when there had been a change of information.

There was a focus on improving the service and the childminder skilfully reflected on and identified areas for improvement. For example, she installed a door alarm to keep children safe and made improvements to the garden. We suggested to her that she record changes she made as a result of her self-evaluation and how these changes resulted in improved quality learning experiences and outcomes for children. Similarly, we suggested that she could also record how the views of children and parents were included and effectively used to improve the work of the service. We signposted the childminder to 'Building the Ambition' framework document to support reflection and further improvements in children's experiences. We also reminded her to visit the Care Inspectorate Website and read best practice documents at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - 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	
11 May 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
7 May 2015	3	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
2 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
21 Nov 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
10 Dec 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed



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