

# Happy Kids Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 7 June 2019

**Service provided by:**

Elizabeth Irwin trading as Happy Kids  
Childminding

**Service provider number:**

SP2003905682

**Care service number:**

CS2003011381

## Introduction

This service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011.

Elizabeth Irwin, referred to as 'the childminder' in this report, is the provider of Happy Kids 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 six are under the age of 12, 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 own family. When two persons are working together a care service can be provided to a maximum of 12 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than six are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. The childminder has one full-time assistant, Louise Bradley, who is referred to as 'the assistant' in this report.

The service is run from the childminder's home in Bonnybridge, 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 a designated playroom and access to the downstairs section of the house. The children use the living room for quiet play and when they wish to relax, the kitchen is used for baking activities and children also have access to the toilet and the garden, which is accessed from the playroom. The childminder and her assistant aim to provide a safe, hygienic smoke free, secure and stimulating environment for a child to feel happy in.

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 on Friday 7 June 2019 between 9am and 12.50pm. 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 two 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 and the assistant.

We observed and viewed:

- the environment

- the childminder and assistant's practice and interactions with children
- the children playing and eating lunch.

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 certificates.

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

Four children were present during our inspection. All children were confident and happy to chat with us. One child was keen to show us her special book of photographs and told us about what she had been doing. "Look we are at soft play." The childminder and her assistant knew the children's likes and needs very well and were nurturing in their interactions. The children told us:

"I like coming here and my brother comes here too."

"I have a unicorn bed."

"This is Cinderella."

Parent's comments told us:

"I feel at great ease when my child is in the care of Liz and Lou at Happy kids. They have been involved in my child's life since he was five months old and I feel they have his best interests at heart."

"My child has a good relationship with everyone involved at Happy Kids. He regularly speaks of his love for Liz and Lou."

"Top quality service and always there when needed. At times our commute can mean early drop off and late collection and we never get complaints. They take time to know the families as well as the kids, which is warmly appreciated by the parents. Keep up the good work."

## Self assessment

We received a fully completed self-assessment from the childminder, which identified service strengths, improvements made and outcomes for children. This could be further developed to show any areas identified for service improvements, for example to improve partnership working with other professionals providing additional support to minded children.

## What the service did well

Strong positive relationships, where children's rights were respected and at the heart of the service. The highly dedicated childminder and her assistant provided a quality service, which resulted in very good outcomes for children. We could see that there were elements of outstanding standards of practice beginning to appear and, with good use of self-evaluation to plan further improvements, they were well placed to aim to raise performance to excellent.

## What the service could do better

We suggested that the childminder introduce more natural play resources to the indoor play environment and consider improving creative experiences to encourage children to develop understanding, thinking, investigation and problem-solving skills.

## 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	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

The childminder and her assistant had a shared understanding of wellbeing and children's rights. There was a strong focus on supporting children to develop self-worth and praise certificates and stickers were used to promote this. Similarly, children were learning to be respected and responsible. For example, a child's name was added to the 'today's special person mirror' and the chosen child became the happy helper for the day. Children responded well to this and were eager to participate because they felt important and valued. They were also learning basic health and safety and helped to clean toys and equipment. Children decided job roles from the daily cleaning rota and were encouraged to participate in daily tasks that they would do at home, for example, cooking and tidying up. They developed life skills and learned about the importance of keeping toys and play areas clean in order to keep healthy.

A risk benefit approach encouraged children to self-assess age appropriate risk. For example, the childminder and her assistant encouraged them by asking them to think for themselves whether they felt safe or not when climbing on the 'witches' hat' in the park. This allowed children to develop their awareness of how to keep safe whilst playing.

Snack and meals times were social experiences and a time for children to share their news. Healthy snacks were provided and 'Let's cook with Lou' days supported children to learn about the importance of eating well to keep healthy. Daily snacks and allergens were displayed in the entrance in the cloakroom to keep parents informed.

Very good planning was used well to encourage children to have their say about what they like to do and they enjoyed adding their ideas and thoughts. Planned experiences emerged from children's interests, for example life

cycles because they had an interest in insects. Planning was developmentally appropriate and tailored to meet children's learning needs, for example giving them one to one time with the childminder to develop focus and attention skills. The childminder and her assistant supported children with additional needs. For example, they supported a child to develop language skills, in consultation with parents, and followed the advice given from the speech and language therapist. We reminded the childminder and her assistant that they had a right and responsibility to be included, in the professional team who support children who required additional support. This would ensure that important information was shared to meet the current needs of the child.

The childminder and her assistant used the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators (Safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included) and curriculum for Excellence (CfE) as frameworks to provide a quality curriculum. Personal development plans were used to track children's progress and complimented ongoing observation sheets and books which displayed photographs of what they had been doing. Progress reports were shared with parents every six months. This resulted in children making very good progress at an appropriate pace.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 – very good

# Quality of environment

## Findings from the inspection

The childminder's home provided a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment that was of a very high standard of cleanliness. The childminder and her assistant effectively used the community and indoor and outdoor spaces to maximise quality learning.

In the childminder's home there were well appointed areas for children to engage in play and for them to safely rest and sleep. For example, children could rest or sleep in the comfortable living room and all had their own bed. One child was delighted to show us her unicorn bed and it was evident that children were highly respected and felt included and valued. Similarly, older children often chose to have quiet time in the living room to relax after school. Children had access to all downstairs rooms and could choose to play where they wanted to. Some children liked to sit in the hall to play with their friends. Older children sometimes chose to eat in the kitchen, which was mainly used to make snack and 'cooking with Lou' experiences. Children were included, nurtured and respected, which supported their confidence and wellbeing.

An extension to the home provided a purpose-built playroom that had direct access to the outdoor play area. In the playroom children had access to a wide range of toys, dressing up clothes and arts and craft materials. Children's artwork and photographs were respectfully displayed. We suggested to the childminder and her assistant that they could consider improving opportunities to enhance creative experiences and to reflect on the routines of the day to minimise interruptions to play. Similarly, she could develop more sensory and open-ended loose parts play to support learning. Loose parts are everyday materials (corks, scarves, tins, pipes, bottle tops,

pinecones, pebbles etc.) that children can move, manipulate and experiment with during play. This would support children's skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving as well as their creativity. To support this, the childminder could consider using the following good practice guidance to improve 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).

Children were active members of the local and wider community and there were regular opportunities for outdoor play and the use of the local community was fully maximised. They benefitted from regular visits to Duncan Stewart Park, which was situated beside the childminder's home and Bonnybridge nature trail. Similarly, there were opportunities to visit soft play and, during holiday periods, children benefitted from trips, such as Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre. They were developing physical skills; which supported risk benefit play, team working opportunities and the appreciation of their local communities.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

At the time of the inspection there were three part time assistants in addition to the full-time assistant. The part time assistants were contingency staff who worked on an 'as and when' required basis and assisted in outings and parties. The part time assistants all brought different skills which enhanced the service, for example, one assistant was teaching the children to say some words in Latvian. Children enjoyed this and developed an understanding about the world around them.

We were satisfied that the childminder had followed safe recruitment procedures, which kept children safe and protected. Similarly, she encouraged assistants to engage in training to meet children's needs and all assistants were trained in first aid and child protection.

The childminder worked alongside the assistants and supervised their practice. She encouraged them to carry out their role to the best of their ability and offered advice. The full-time assistant received an annual appraisal, whereas, part time assistants had the opportunity for ongoing discussion and feedback. We suggested to the childminder that she formalised monitoring of all assistants to reflect on their professional skills and identify areas for improvement. Similarly, we suggested that she recorded the positive impact on children as a result of monitoring.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 – very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The service was managed to a very good standard. The childminder and her assistant kept up to date with new legislation and guidance, such as adhering to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to keep confidential information safe and secure.

The childminder and her assistant were highly committed to continuing their professional development and were currently working towards a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in Childhood Practice. In addition to this they had recently updated child protection and first aid training. They kept continuing professional development folders to record and evaluate courses that they had attended. We suggested that they also record the impact that such training had on outcomes for children and improvements made to the service as a result of their training. The childminder and her assistant used knowledge gained from training to advise parents. For example, having attended a course delivered by the Scottish Cot Death Society, they were able to advise parents about the safe use of beanbags.

Children's views were effectively used to make improvements to the service. An example of this was when children asked for more space to play with the wheeled toys outside. This resulted in an area of the back garden being mono blocked to facilitate the request. Children were active participants in improving the service. Similarly, they were involved in designing the playroom to ensure that they could access everything at their level. This resulted in children being given the opportunity to design and develop problem solving skills.

Parents were kept very well informed, through daily chats and WhatsApp. Parents had regular opportunities to support improvement and feedback was sought using parental questionnaires. Parents felt included and respected.

The childminder and her assistant had implemented a new 'Improving the Service' folder and were recording monthly all new equipment bought, training completed, and any new ideas implemented. We suggested that they also recorded the impact that such improvements had on outcomes for children. Staff were delegated leadership roles, for example, the full-time assistant was the designated Health and Safety officer and led planning. Clear roles and remits enhanced provision and improved outcomes and experiences for children.

We advised the childminder to familiarise herself with the notifications guidance and make appropriate notifications to the care inspectorate and reminded her to notify us of changes within the home, for example if a family member moved out.

## 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	
19 Apr 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
5 Jun 2015	2	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
7 Jun 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
18 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
8 Jun 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
16 Feb 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
2 Mar 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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