

## Mitchell, Grace Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 5 August 2019

**Service provided by:**  
Grace Mitchell

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003904682

**Care service number:**  
CS2003007764

## Introduction

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information in relation to all services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

Grace Mitchell (referred to as the childminder throughout the report) is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is provided from the childminder's home within a residential area of Glenrothes close to local shops, schools and parks. The areas used to provide the service were the living room, dining room/kitchen, bathroom and garden to the rear of the property.

At the time of the inspection, there were nine children aged between one year and ten years registered to attend the service on a part-time basis, over various days and times. Two minded children were in the care of the childminder during the inspection.

## What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection that took place on 5 August 2019.

We gathered evidence from discussion with the childminder, examining relevant records, observing the care given to two minded children and observing the premises, toys and equipment. We also considered two care standards questionnaires returned to us by parents. We discussed our findings with the childminder.

As requested by us, the service sent us an annual return document before the inspection.

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 parents to work with 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.

## Views of people using the service

The minded children present during the inspection were happy and comfortable in the setting and with the childminder. They played happily with the resources and could easily ask the childminder for things they wanted.

Two parents returned care standards questionnaires to us before the inspection and all strongly agreed with the statement that, "Overall, I am happy with the quality of care my child receives at this service." These parents also strongly agreed that they and their children were involved in making improvements or changes to the service.

Further comments included the following:

"...she (the childminder) is fantastic in this role and always has (children's) best interests at heart."

"(childminder) is very approachable and understanding ..."

"...100% satisfied with the standard of care provided."

"(childminder's) home is a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment. Great range of toys and activities..."

"...Great communication"

"...discusses all aspects of the service with us for our opinion."

## Self assessment

The childminder did not submit a self assessment document to us before the inspection. We discussed how she evaluates the quality of her service and her plans for development.

## What the service did well

The childminder provided a very warm and nurturing environment where children were well supported. The childminder identified children's likes and preferences and provided a flexible and responsive service which took account of each child as an individual.

Regular communications with parents about their child's day helped parents to feel involved and confident that their children were kept safe and happy.

## What the service could do better

There were no requirements or recommendations made during this inspection. We made some suggestions about how the childminder could improve children's experiences. She should develop the children's care plans to show how she is supporting them to achieve milestones and aspirations and with any specific additional needs.

The childminder should keep up-to-date with current professional guidance and legislation. She should evaluate the quality of all aspects of the service and explore ways to measure the service to support continuous improvement.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a very good quality of care for the minded children. During the inspection, we observed the childminder to be nurturing, warm and affectionate towards the children. Her commitment and support to children and their families, in her role of childminder over a number of years for some children, had a positive impact on their wellbeing and development. Children were very comfortable in the childminder's home and trusted and cared for her.

Children were given regular opportunities to express their views and have their voice heard. This supported the children's continued enjoyment and achievement in the service. In addition, the childminder used her knowledge of the children's individual personalities and specific interests to provide activities, for example providing opportunities for football practice and playing at the local skateboard park.

The childminder consulted with the children and their parents to identify children's needs. Regular chats with parents meant that the childminder had current information about any issues or events that might impact on children's wellbeing and enabled her to offer additional support when this was needed. The childminder was flexible and accommodated parents' and children's requests for changes in the usual routines of the week. This very good practice supported children's wellbeing.

Positive behaviour was promoted through discussion, distraction and by the childminder modelling a patient, kind and caring approach.

Records were maintained for all children and the childminder had begun to develop care plans for them. We discussed the information that might be included in these.

The childminder encouraged the children to follow personal care and hygiene routines and this supported the development of self-care skills.

Required records were in place for recording any accidents or incidents and for the administration of medicines.

The childminder was confident about the action she would take in the event she had concerns about a child and demonstrated her knowledge of how to safeguard children in her care. She planned to attend refresher child protection training this year.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The house was comfortable, cosy and child friendly, providing a homely environment. A good variety of play resources was easily accessible for the children and space was well used. The living room, kitchen/dining room and the garden were used as the main play spaces. This provided children with a variety of play spaces and opportunity to play alone and with friends.

We saw that the children present during the inspection enjoyed art activities and imaginative play. The children told us they enjoyed being at the childminder's home and getting out to play in the local park.

With verbal agreement from their parents, some children could go independently to play in the nearby park. Children told us about the 'rules' for this activity and how they always adhered to these. We advised the childminder to seek written permission from parents for this activity. The childminder promoted an active lifestyle and children enjoyed playing games in the garden, in the adjacent woods and green space and visits to local parks and beach. Children were learning how to manage risk in their play and the childminder promoted an active lifestyle to support this learning. Children were aware of resources in their local community, for example book bugs at the local library.

The childminder undertook visual risk assessments for her home and similar checks were also undertaken for outings. She should record any hazards she identified when undertaking risk assessments and the action taken to minimise these. Taking these measures ensures she is aware of any changes in her premises and the places she visits with children.

The childminder could develop play opportunities in the garden and we suggested she could include more natural resources to develop further opportunity for imaginative and creative play for the children. We suggested she become familiar with the practice guidance document 'My World Outdoors' [www.hub.careinspectorate.com](http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com). This is a resource pack which promotes the extensive benefits of outdoor play for children's overall development and learning. It groups together examples of innovative and effective practice around the recognised wellbeing indicators. We also suggested the childminder look at 'loose parts play' alongside this resource.

Children's independence was promoted appropriately, for example, toilet and hand washing facilities were child friendly and children were given opportunities to look after the toys and equipment.

The childminder had a system in place to record any accidents and incidents. This system ensured parents were informed of any injuries, and therefore children would receive appropriate care and attention.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The childminder used informal methods to gain the views of parents and children and made changes where this was possible. The childminder described examples of action she had taken in response to feedback and to changing needs of the families, enabling her to provide on-going support. We saw that the children present could easily approach the childminder, give their views and ask for things they wanted. She listened to them and took action to accommodate their requests.

Comments from parents indicated that they were very happy with her practice and the quality of care she provided to the children.

The childminder had recently attended refresher first aid training and planned to attend child protection training this year. This demonstrated her commitment to maintaining her skills and ensuring children's wellbeing.

We advised that accessing the Care Inspectorate website - The Hub, on regular basis would support her to keep up to date with current practice and legislation. This additional information could further increase her knowledge and understanding and support her to make improvements in the service and lead to improved outcomes for the children in her care. In particular we suggested the childminder access the following documents:

- My World Outdoors [www.hub.careinspectorate.com](http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com)
- Getting Ready to Read [www.hub.careinspectorate.com](http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com)
- Your Childminding Journey [www.childmindingjourney.scot](http://www.childmindingjourney.scot)

We also advised that the childminder become familiar with the new Health and Social Care Standards which focus on supporting good outcomes for people who use care services in Scotland. [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

A range of appropriate policies and procedures were shared with parents. This meant that parents knew what to expect from the service. Included was a complaints procedure. This meant that parents had accurate information about who to contact in the event that they had concerns about the service provided.

The childminder had begun to develop children's care plans and we discussed how these could be developed further to include children's aspirations and goals as well as any particular care needs. We reminded the childminder that these records must be reviewed at least every six months and shared with parents. We identified this as an area for improvement.

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 – adequate

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

## Previous requirements

### Requirement 1

The childminder must review all care plans at least once in every six month period and when there is any significant change regarding a child's health, welfare or safety needs.

This is in order to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Service) Regulations SSI 2011/201, Regulation (5) (2) (b) Personal Plans and National Care Standards for Childcare and Early Education up to age 16: Standard 3 Health and well-being.

Timescale for meeting this requirement: within one month of receipt of this report.

**This requirement was made on 25 August 2015.**

### Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder had not fully addressed this requirement and a recommendation is made.

**Not met**

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

## Previous recommendations

### Recommendation 1

The provider should review and up date all policies to ensure they reflect current guidance and legislation.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 14 – A well-managed service.

**This recommendation was made on 22 September 2014.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

This was an area for further development identified at this inspection.

### Recommendation 2

The childminder should develop and keep care plans for each child and show how the child's needs are being identified and met, in consultation with parents and with children where appropriate. All information held on each child should be reviewed not less than every six months and updated as appropriate.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare: Standard 3 - Health and Wellbeing and Standard 7 - A Caring Environment.

**This recommendation was made on 19 September 2017.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had begun to keep appropriate records for one child and was advised at this inspection (August 2018) to keep these records for all minded children in her care.

### Recommendation 3

The childminder must consult with parents and children to put in place care plans for every child, setting out how their individual care needs, wishes and preferences will be met. These plans must be reviewed with parents at least every six months.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 1.15 which states, "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".

**This recommendation was made on 26 September 2018.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

Work had begun to update these records.

## 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
28 Aug 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
2 Aug 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
7 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
16 Jul 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
22 Sep 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 2 - Weak Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 2 - Weak
23 Feb 2012	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing 1 - Unsatisfactory Management and leadership Not assessed
21 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed
16 Feb 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good

Date		Type	Gradings	
			Management and leadership	Not assessed
14 Aug 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support		3 - Adequate
		Environment		3 - Adequate
		Staffing		4 - Good
		Management and leadership		3 - Adequate

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

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