

# Sharon McLauchlan Childminding Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 11 August 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Sharon McLauchlan

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019990376

**Care service number:**  
CS2019373107

## Introduction

Sharon McLauchlan Childminding was registered with the Care Inspectorate in May 2019. The service can care for a maximum of five children at any one time up to the age of 16 years, 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 in the childminder's family. Minded children can only be cared for by those named on the certificate. No overnight care can be provided.

The service is delivered from the childminders home in a residential area of Armadale, West Lothian. It is close to local amenities, parks and bus routes. Children have freedom around the ground floor of the house, including two sitting rooms, an open-plan kitchen diner and a toilet. A large secure garden is accessed from the kitchen.

The service aims "for excellence for all children in my care by providing the highest quality of childcare, working in partnership with parents".

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 Getting it Right for Every Child: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included.

## What we did during our inspection

We carried out a short notice inspection visit on Tuesday 10 August 2021 between 10:55 and 13:15. We also had a telephone discussion with the childminder to gather further information about the service. Feedback was given by telephone on Wednesday 11 August 2021.

During our site visit, we observed children at play indoors and in the garden. We also observed a child being collected from the setting, a child arriving and the lunchtime experience.

As part of this inspection, we took into consideration Key Question 5 - Operating an early learning and childcare setting (including out of school care and childminders) during Covid-19 with a specific focus on Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff. We will report on the overall performance of this indicator in Theme 1 Quality Care and Support.

## Views of people using the service

Three preschool children were present during the inspection. All looked happy in the setting, busy in their play and comfortable with the childminder.

We invited parents to offer feedback about the service. Three parents responded by email. All were very happy with the care their children received. Some comments were:

"Sharon is a lovely lady and I am very happy with the care she provides for my daughter. She is kind, professional and my daughter loves going to her."

"Sharon sends me photos regularly of my daughter and what activities they are doing. Sharon always tells me a summary of what my daughter has done that day when I pick her up."

"Sharon was exceptionally compassionate and considered my anxiety throughout the whole process of settling in. She kept in touch in the lead up to our start date, took the time to read and discuss my handover notes, and used these to assist her daily routine in the first few days so my child had familiarity and consistency."

"Sharon follows the government guidance closely but also goes above and beyond to ensure all of her children that are attending and in good health generally to avoid breakouts of virus's or infections."

"Sharon's service provides a quality range of differentiated activities and stimulus to keep my daughter engaged and entertained within a homely and safe environment."

"I have seen my child come on leaps and bounds with speech and interacting with others. My child adores Sharon and is very comfortable with her and it's very clear they have a great relationship."

## Self assessment

The childminder was not asked for a self assessment prior to the inspection.

## What the service did well

The childminder provided a happy, fun and positive space for children to play and develop.

## What the service could do better

The childminder was developing her understanding of:

- children's play and her role in it
- self-evaluation and how it supports improvement.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

A strength of the service was the relationships between the children and the childminder. Children looked happy and secure, seeking out the childminder for help or comfort. They were confident their needs would be met as the childminder was responsive to them.

All children had a personal plan which showed information needed to support and care for them. The childminder had up to date and relevant information about children as she worked in partnership with parents. We discussed the importance of reviewing personal plans at least every six months and updating them to reflect the current information. This would ensure that children's progress could be monitored and shared with parents. The childminder also kept observations of children's play and development. We encouraged the childminder to further consider having a clear plan for each child's care and learning. The observations could then be more focused to monitor progress.

Children's health needs were considered daily as the childminder was knowledgeable about them. We discussed the recording of all health needs. This would help the childminder be consistent with home and further keep children safe and well. Children's privacy and dignity were protected during nappy changing. The childminder intended to explore the routine of nappy changing further to ensure a positive experience for each child.

Children were fully engaged in their play. The variety of resources available allowed them to explore, experiment and be creative. The childminder understood the need to support and enable children rather than rescuing and directing. We encouraged the childminder to further develop her skills to support and enable. This would contribute to children becoming independent and assessing their own risks. We referred the childminder to *Realising the Ambition*, a national best practice document. This would offer some insight into quality play and the adult's role within it.

Families benefited from the childminder's flexible approach. Children had a combination of home packed lunches and food provided by the childminder over the week. Food was discussed with children who agreed on healthy meals and snacks for the day. Mealtimes were safe and sociable for children as the childminder sat with them. The childminder accommodated parent requests to have children sleeping in buggies. We referred her to the national safe sleeping guide. As a registered service, the childminder should work with parents to move towards children using the safe sleeping areas she has available. This would contribute to children having comfortable and safe sleeps in the setting.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and staff. Children were at reduced risk of Covid-19 transmission. The childminder had used national guidance to reduce the risk of infection through hand hygiene, physical distancing and enhanced cleaning.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

Children were cared for in a visibly clean and welcoming space. The main play area was a bright and ventilated open-plan kitchen diner. A door led out to a large interesting secure garden. Children had enough space to rest, run, be alone or be with friends. A downstairs toilet was accessible for children and resourced with handwashing items. Quiet space with a travel cot was available for younger children to sleep.

Play spaces were set up, inviting children to play and explore. A large variety of resources were accessible to children. They were displayed neatly so children could see what was available to them. Children could pretend, construct, puzzle and read books. The childminder was starting to introduce more loose part materials. This would offer children opportunities to add to their play and be more creative.

Outdoor play in the fresh air was a daily feature for children. The garden offered a variety of challenges for them to navigate, such as steps, grass, paving and stone chips. The childminder was aware of children's need to take risks and was beginning to enable them to do so safely. Play spaces were set up outdoors. Children used and moved the resources around as they wished, according to their play. We encouraged the childminder to learn about different types of play at various ages. This would enable her to extend the type of experiences she offered for each stage of development.

Children were supported to explore their local community with walks and visits to parks. Outings further afield offered new opportunities such as farms and woodlands. We asked the childminder to consider her ongoing risk assessments from the child's point of view. This would help her to identify the learning in children's choices and support problem solving, decision making and resilience.

### 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

As a new service, the childminder was still developing and refining processes. A range of policies were in place to support the childminder in specific circumstances. We discussed the policies which would be improved with more detail. For example, the child protection policy could be simplified to offer clarity to the childminder and parents.

We referred the childminder to the Care Inspectorate's website The Hub, where she would find best practice documents such as Management of Medication in Daycare of Children and Childminding Settings; Notification guidance; and Realising the Ambition. The childminder was familiar with these documents and was planning the further use of them to guide her developing service. The self-evaluation bite-size sessions on The Hub would also support continuous improvement.

The childminder felt supported in her role through her membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). She also linked in with other local childminders who shared ideas and information.

The childminder had a good understanding of the benefits of working in partnership with parents. She demonstrated this through a recent consultation activity regarding Covid-19 practices in the service. Parents confirmed that good relationships had been built due to the childminders friendly and approachable attitude.

The childminder demonstrated her ability to lead and manage her service. She had ideas to improve children's experiences and a motivated commitment to do so.

### 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

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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