

# Connell, Suzanne Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 11 August 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Suzanne Connell

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003902264

**Care service number:**  
CS2003004113

## Introduction

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

The service registered with Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2002.

Suzanne Connell is currently registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

From 3 January 2019 until 20 August 2019 from 8.15am to 12.30pm and 3.15pm to 5pm term time and 8.15am to 5pm school holidays Monday to Friday, a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 of whom no more than 4 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family. If any child under school age leaves the service before 20 August 2019, then numbers must refer back to the condition above.

Any other conditions unique to the service:

2. The parts of the premises not to be used for childminding purposes are the upstairs bedrooms and back garden.

3. Overnight service will not be provided.

The service is located in Gourrock, Inverclyde. The childminder provides her service from her home, which is close to local schools, shops, and parks. The children have access to designated playroom, kitchen/dining room and toilet facilities.

The aims and objectives of the service are:

- To provide a quality service promoting all aspects of learning.
- To create a secure and happy stimulating environment.
- To work in partnership with parents, children, and local community.
- To provide care between 7am and 6pm.
- I can drop off and collect at local schools and nurseries.
- To use GIRFEC and the well-being indicators in everything we do with the children.
- I encourage children to make the most of the outdoor environment in the outings we go on.

## What we did during our inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection which took place between 3.15pm and 5.45pm hrs on Tuesday 3 August 2021. The inspection was carried out by one early learning and childcare inspector.

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.

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (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 families to work with services that can help them. There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included.

During this inspection process, we looked around the areas of the childminders' home used by the minded children, and we gathered evidence from various sources;

We looked at:

- Children's information records
- Children's personal plans
- Service policy and procedures
- Risk assessments
- Parental permissions
- Registration certificate
- Insurance certificates
- Medication records
- Training certificates

Also during the inspection, we spoke to the childminder and three children that were present as well as observing the care given.

## Views of people using the service

We contacted four parents by email, comments made included.

"Suzanne is a wonderful childminder. I would highly recommend her to anyone looking for childcare. I can hand over my child to her without worrying about him, which allows me to get on with my day. I know that he's safe and happy when he's with her"

"My son thoroughly enjoys going to Suzanne's. He's always happy to go there and doesn't want to leave because he's having so much fun. Most days they go out somewhere, usually to a park/playground where he gets to run around and play with his friends. If they stay in, due to the weather, they draw/paint, sing and dance, read books, have little tea parties & play with all the different toys Suzanne has in her home"

"Both my children thoroughly enjoy attending Suzanne's I have no issues taking them there and they are always in good moods and full of chat about their day when they get home"

"Suzanne is a wonderful childminder I feel lucky that my boys have a space with her. She is fantastic with the kids, and they are so happy to spend the day with her which makes working life much easier"

"Suzanne is great she works hard to support the family, not just the child. She is extremely flexible in her approach to support changing working patterns and childcare needs for parents, extra days, or hours. She adores the kids as if they were part of her family, and they adore her"

"Suzanne has kept us extremely well informed at all stages throughout the pandemic. She has provided communications around her infection control procedures, her approach to the families she works with, any changes to opening hours or other circumstances, and the changes she has made to activities and outings to make sure the kids are safe and avoiding potential exposure. She keeps us informed with any updates to these procedures. She has welcomed any questions or concerns we have about her procedures and her approach has reassured us of the safety of our kids while they are in Suzanne's care"

"Suzanne is very approachable and has made it clear to me several times that if I have any concerns at all, that I should speak to her straight away. On the rare occasion that I have had a concern Suzanne has been receptive and happy to listen, taking action where appropriate.

## Self assessment

We had requested a self assessment be submitted in February 2020 but due to covid -19 pandemic the service was not fully operational at this time.

## What the service did well

During the onsite inspection we observed three minded children with the childminder. The children were relaxed and at ease and we saw some positive interactions. We observed the childminder and the children to have warm, nurturing relationships and the children were clearly very fond of her.

We found the childminder had developed a positive relationship with parents which helped to ensure children experienced a continuity of care between home and in the care of the childminder. The childminder made good use of the local community with a range of both varied and interesting experiences for children.

## What the service could do better

During inspection we sampled policies, procedures, risk assessments and children's personal plans and found these had not been fully reviewed for some time. After further discussions the childminder had started to update documents to reflect current guidance and update details on children's health, welfare and safety needs. Improvements required are reflected through the report.

The childminder should continue to engage in training and best practice guidance to ensure she continues to provide positive experiences for children. We sign posted the childminder to the Scottish social services council (SSSC) open badges and Care Inspectorate Hub to support learning further. This will benefit her when training is difficult to access.

## 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

The childminder had a varied daily plan in place that promoted healthy lifestyles with regular opportunities for outdoor play that included visiting local parks, trips to museums, garden centre, and book bug sessions. Use of local facilities supported the children to feel included in their community and opportunities for children's social interactions and building relationships with their peers. We found this contributed positively to children's health and well-being.

We sampled children's personal plans and found they had not been reviewed or updated within the required timescale. The childminder stated that she had not recently updated personal plans for all children attending her service. The plans did contain most of the required information for example, personal details, medical information, daily routine, and all about me information. We discussed the importance of regularly reviewing plans at least every 6 months also how these could be developed using the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators and how information collected would support her to meet children's emotional needs during the covid-19 pandemic. ( See requirement 1)

During inspection we discussed child protection policy and training. The childminder was confident in her role and responsibilities for protecting children and keeping them safe. She spoke confidently of her role and the action she would take if any concerns over a child's health or well-being should arise. We asked the childminder to update her child protection training and policy to reflect the potential impact of Covid-19.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example we observed children being supported to understand the need for good hygiene. Children were supported and encouraged to wash their hands frequently on entering the service, before eating and after using the toilet this supported good infection prevention and control practice and helped reduce the risk of cross infection. We saw that the bathroom was clean with children having designated hand towels to dry their hands. The childminder advised towels were washed daily.

The childminder told us parents dropped off and picked up their children outside the childminders' home. Parents were observed wearing face coverings and socially distanced on collection, we observed the childminder sharing information about the children's day verbally and also through WhatsApp. We found sharing of information supported the childminder to continue to meet children's needs. The childminder regularly communicates changes with parents via WhatsApp group and is confident parents are clear in regard to expectations that are set around children remaining at home when unwell. The childminder should now develop a covid-19 policy and risk assessment in line with current Scottish Government guidance and share with parents to ensure they are aware of the procedures she expects them to follow.

### Requirements

#### Number of requirements: 1

1. 1. In order to ensure children's needs are met, the childminder must by 4 October 2021, ensure that;
  - a) children's personal care plans are reviewed with parents, at least once every six months or sooner if there are any changes to a child's care or welfare.

b) children's personal care plans contain all the relevant information including information on their health, welfare and safety needs and regular review of children's progress and any planned next steps to support their continued development.

This ensures that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 1.15 which states that, as a child: "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".

It is also necessary to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 5 Personal Plans.

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

The childminder provided a homely environment for children which was welcoming and friendly. Her home was well maintained and organised for the children. Space within the childminder's home was used well and helped children play safely. The childminder has a dedicated playroom that was used for activities and storage of accessible resources. This supported children to have opportunities to shape their play and learning experiences helping to develop their understanding of the covid-19 situation and provide a safe outlet to express their emotions where needed.

During the inspection the children spent their time in the playroom where we saw an extensive range of toys, games, books, and craft resources available. We found these to be clean, in good condition, accessible and appropriate for children's individual age and stage of development. On the day of inspection, we saw the minded children selecting toys they wanted to play with from low-level storage units. This allowed them to make choices and promoted their independence. During the inspection children played well together with the playdough and they were encouraged to take turns and share promoting social and communication skills.

The childminder understood the need for natural ventilation and kept the windows open to ensure the children had access to fresh, clean air. This contributed to children remaining safe and healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic

Through observations we did not identify any obvious potential hazards within the areas children accessed at the childminders. However, we found that the childminder had basic risk assessments in place. We have advised her to formally assess and record the potential risks and hazards associated with her home, car, and for outings. We have made a recommendation about this under the leadership and management theme.

A procedure for recording accidents and incidents was in place and shared with parents.

The childminder provided details of her public liability insurance. She transported children by car and told us she used appropriate car seats and had car insurance, incorporating business use.

### 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

During the inspection we discussed with the childminder how she evaluated the service, made improvements, and kept informed of best practice and legislation. We gathered evidence through viewing relevant records and discussions on training and development opportunities.

The childminder advised that she kept her knowledge up to date through the Scottish Childminding Association and Care Inspectorate websites and accessing courses through the local authority. The childminder also reflected verbally on her learning from the training courses she attended. She was able to advise us of the impact this had on her practice. This was positive and highlighted the benefits of accessing meaningful training. She advised that she had not developed her service as much as she would have liked recently but that she was hoping to progress and make improvements to her existing knowledge and skills. We discussed with the childminder keeping a written log of courses attended and reflecting after training. This would provide opportunities for increased self-evaluation and promote positive outcomes for children. We discussed the best practice guidance for childminders which is available on the Care Inspectorate website and Scottish Social Services council (SSSC).

During the inspection we sampled policies and procedures, risk assessments and daily registers of children in attendance at the service. A range of policy statements had been developed by the childminder; however, we found some were out of date in relation to best practice guidance and had not been reviewed or updated for some time. The childminder told us she carried out daily checks and regular maintenance for her childminding environment. However, during our first visit we found risk assessments for her home and local outings had not been updated or developed to identify any hazards and take action as needed to allow children to be safe. Registers of children attending, including times at the service must also be held. We discussed with the childminder the importance of ensuring policies and procedures, risk assessments and daily registers are kept up to date. (See recommendation 1)

The childminder knew the children in her care and followed their likes and dislikes, she communicated daily with children about what they would like to do and what equipment and resources they would like to play with.

We would advise the childminder to look at other ways of gaining feedback from parents and children on her service through issuing questionnaires to gather their views and opinions. This would support the childminder in relation to improving the service and enabling her to set goals for improvements in the future.

Overall, we found the childminder genuinely cared for and wanted to provide the best outcomes for children. We would encourage the childminder to reflect on her practice and take forward areas of improvements identified during inspection, in order to further enhance children's experiences and the service going forward.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0



## Recommendations

### Number of recommendations: 1

1. The childminder should ensure the following documents are updated to reflect current and national guidance to support a safe service delivery and are available to parents to support the health, welfare and safety needs of children using the service.

(1). Written risk assessments for areas minded children access, including outings and car journeys, identifying any potential risks and hazards.

(2). Policies and procedures of the service in order to ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of children using the service.

(3). Daily register of children attending service which should include actual time of arrival and departure as these take place to ensure there is an accurate record of attendance.

These records should be retained and made available for inspection at all times.

This is in order to comply with Health and Social Care Standards;

"My environment is secure and safe" (5.17)

"I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice" (4.11)

"I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (4.19)

"I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (4.23)

**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
27 Oct 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
26 Aug 2011	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
20 Oct 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
29 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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