

# Heather's Blethers Child Minding

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 13 September 2021

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019990614

**Care service number:**  
CS2019375776

## Introduction

Heather Webb, trading as Heather's Blethers and referred to as the childminder in this report, provides a small childminding service. The service was registered on 14 August 2019. The conditions of registration are as follows:

- The care service may be provided to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 may be of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be less than 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family.
  - Minded children cannot be cared for by persons not named on the registration certificate.
  - Overnight care will not be provided.
  - Children must be supervised when using the outdoor area at the front of the premises.
- The childminder provides the service from her home in Killin. The service was mainly operating outdoors with access to an indoor playroom and downstairs toilet. The local community was used well to enable children to be active and have fun.

The aim of the service was:

"I aim to provide a high quality curriculum based framework promoting active learning through play based activities whilst promoting positive behaviour, equality and fairness. This will be done in a safe, secure and nurturing environment."

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 began the short announced inspection with a site visit on 6 September 2021. We concluded the inspection using digital technology and feedback was given on 13 September 2021. This inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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 sent an email via the childminder to families using the service asking them to provide us with feedback about their experience of using the service. Three families responded to our request.

During the onsite visit we gathered evidence from several sources including the following:

We spoke with:

- 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 personal plans
- policies and procedures
- documents relating to administration of medication, accidents and incidents and child protection
- registration certificate
- public liability and car insurance certificate.

We met with the childminder outdoors to discuss the service and safely examined some of the records maintained. We walked with the childminder to collect the children from school. Children showed us places in the local community they visited regularly on the way home from school and told us about some of the experiences they enjoyed in the service. For example, helping to grow flowers that helped the local bees make honey, buying some of the honey and having it for snack.

## Views of people using the service

We spoke with three children who told us that they had lots of fun when at the service. They showed us the tree in the park and demonstrated some of the games they played under the tree, they showed us the garden where there was sometimes a dog they could say hello to and told us about the sushi bar they had created in the garden linking to topic work had enjoyed at school.

When families asked children what the childminder did well they said, "Looking after us, letting us have fun." "She lets us vote for what we want to do. She talks to us all, asks us questions. She has clever ideas. She is kind" "Heather helps us have fun." "She's good at being nice helping me with homework helps me spell."

When families asked children about what they enjoyed best they said, "Going to the park. The climbing tree. Playing made up games with my friends, like the 'Sushi Bar' that we made and then (the childminder) told us about Japan. Making obstacle courses, we like making them ourselves." "Playing- building cafes, obstacle course, adventuring, walks." "stone painting, decorating the café, walks."

Families told us that children's voices were heard when making choices about their experiences. They said that children benefitted from a variety of outdoor experiences including mud cafes and building dens by the river. Families felt they had opportunities to discuss their children's progress and were aware of personal plans that were maintained for each child. Communication was described as effective using digital technology to share information including for example, the changes because of Covid-19.

Comments included:

"(The childminder) creates an atmosphere where the children feel valued, listened to and where they have an opportunity to steer the direction of play and learning. The children feel happy and safe. They enjoy

taking part in imaginative play, and love spending time outdoors, all of which (the childminder) encourages and facilitates. The use of risk-taking play is hugely important in child development, (the childminder) allows this in a safe environment."

## Self assessment

A self-evaluation wasn't requested.

## What the service did well

Children felt valued, loved and secure because of their nurturing and responsive childcare experience. They benefitted from a rich outdoor learning experience that was full of challenge, fun and exploration. The childminder had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities delivering very good outcomes for children. The service was well led and managed.

## What the service could do better

We suggested that the childminder included the voice of children in the personal plan including in the record of review. This will show their inclusion in discussions about their progress and learning. We suggested using 'floor books' to record information and show photographs of children's experiences. This will support children to be involved in their own learning as they reflect on their experiences.

## 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	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

Children felt valued, loved and secure because of their nurturing and responsive childcare experience. A chat on the way home from school gave children an opportunity to talk about how their day had been and how they were feeling. The childminder placed a strong emphasis on supporting children's emotional wellbeing.

Children were supported to achieve their potential through agreement with families on how best to meet their individual needs. A family member said, "(the childminder) took time to discuss the best ways to support and care for (child)." The childminder knew children well. They recorded information about children's needs in individual personal plans. The information was reviewed with families every six months or sooner if there were changes. We suggested that the childminder included the voice of children in the record of review showing their inclusion in discussions about their progress and learning.

Children were able to direct their own play experiences promoting the development of their natural curiosity, learning and creativity. Listening to and responding to children's suggestions and interests meant the childminder fully involved children in planning their own learning. For instance, an interest in Japan led to children creating a pretend outdoor sushi bar using loose parts. Children told us about the games they played under the 'red tree' and walks along the river building dens. We suggested using 'floor books' to record information and show photographs of children's experiences. This will support children to be involved in their own learning as they reflect on their experiences.

Snack time was relaxed, unhurried and sociable. The children sat with the childminder on an outdoor bench on the way home from school enjoying a cereal bar. The childminder aims to return to including children in snack preparation and extending the range of healthy snack options in a Covid-19 safe way.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection prevention and control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, children told us that they understood that playing outdoors and good handwashing stopped the spread of Covid-19.

The childminder was confident about their role and responsibilities for protecting children and keeping them safe. They spoke confidently of their role and the action that would be taken if there were any concerns about a child's health or welfare. This ensured children were kept safe and would allow the childminder to respond to any concerns in a timely and sensitive manner.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

# Quality of environment

## Findings from the inspection

Children benefitted from a rich outdoor learning experience that was full of challenge, fun and exploration. The local community was used to a very good level. Children were excited to show us their favourite places as we walked home from school. A spot under the 'red tree' was used for imaginative games. Local walks along the river meant they could build dens and climb trees. Children were able to take appropriate risks and lead their uninterrupted play. A family member said, "The use of risk-taking play is hugely important in child development, (childminder) allows this in a safe environment.

The focus on outdoor play supported children's health and wellbeing, promoted their natural curiosity and creativity and allowed children to benefit daily from fresh air and exercise. There were areas where children could relax and have a quiet time. They showed us their sushi bar created from loose parts and served many wonderful Japanese delicacies. They told us about helping to plant and grow fruit and vegetables and wild flowers that were good for the local bees. Children had outdoor waterproof clothing so they could enjoy outdoor experiences no matter what the weather was like.

Children were protected from harm through a variety of safety measures that included very good supervision, risk assessment and all areas being well maintained. Regular safety checks ensured damaged items were replaced.

## 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 had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities delivering very good outcomes for children. The service was well led and managed. Appropriate records, policies and procedures contributed to keeping children safe. Policies and procedures were regularly reviewed and shared with parents supporting them to understand what they should expect from the service. For instance, Covid-19 policy and procedure helped keep the childminder, their family, children and parents as safe as possible during the pandemic and supported parents to understand the changes in the setting. Families told us about the trusting relationship they had with the childminder and said they felt well supported.

The childminder regularly reflected on children's play experiences that had been developed and extended. This provided them with the opportunity to evaluate how these could be enhanced to support further learning and development and improve outcomes for children. For example, when children were interested in topics covered at school they were extended through children's play and learning experiences.

Children's rights were embedded in practice and were being promoted, for example by ensuring the best interests of children were a priority and by respecting children's views.

Children received high quality care and support because the childminder was trained, skilled and able to reflect on best practice. The delivery of the service was based on a foundation of current thinking, research, and good practice.

The childminder entered into wider discussions with other professionals. For example, teaching staff in the local primary school. This supported professional discussions to support consistency in supporting children's care and support needs.

Regular feedback was requested from the parents, and children were given ways to contribute to the development of the service, for example by planning play and learning experiences.

### 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

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



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