

# Gordon, Richard & Margaret Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 6 April 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Margaret and Richard Gordon, a  
partnership Margaret and Richard  
Gordon, a partnership

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003900451

**Care service number:**  
CS2003001744

## Introduction

Gordon, Richard & Margaret provide a childminding service located in a residential area of Northfield in Aberdeen. The service is easily accessible by local bus routes as well as on foot and by car. Amenities nearby include local parks, green spaces, schools. The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time aged under 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 of the childminder's family. Both Registered Persons are not required to be on the premises at the same time when providing the care service. The parts of the premises not to be used are the utility room and the three bedrooms on the upper floor.

The children are cared for within the childminders home. Children have access to the living and kitchen area of the home where they enjoy indoor play. A downstairs toilet provides children with access to handwashing and toilet facilities. Both the front and back garden are used for children's play.

## What we did during our inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 31 March 2022 and 06 April 2022. One inspector carried out the inspection. We carried out two site visits to complete the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke to children during their play
- Gained feedback from parents
- Spoke with the childminder
- Observed practice and experiences for children
- Reviewed documents.

## Views of people using the service

There were three children present at the time of the inspection aged from three to four years old. Children were very confident and comfortable in the childminder's care. They were happy to play and chat to us. They told us they like to go to the park, and paint pictures.

We received feedback from two parents who told us they were happy with the service. They describe the childminder as pleasant and relaxed with happy home and surroundings. Parents were happy that their children went to places such as parks and the art gallery and had lots of time outside for play in all weathers.

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance processes. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

## What the service did well

The childminder knew children in their care well, interactions were warm, kind and respectful. Important and meaningful information was gathered from parents to support the needs of the children. The childminder supported children to be independent in ways that were appropriate for their age.

## What the service could do better

The childminder should improve their skills and knowledge of up-to-date best practice guidance and use this to develop her service. This should include developing indoor and outdoor areas to provide a clutter free space for children to explore a suitable range of resources that inspire learning and curiosity.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The children present were confident and comfortable in the childminder's care and had a clear sense of belonging. The childminder was warm, responsive and nurturing. This supported the children's communication skills and sense of being valued.

The childminder worked well with parents and met the needs of individual children. They did this by gathering relevant information about the child during pre-placement and establishing positive communication and relationships with the parents. This helped to build positive experiences for families and children. Parents told us how valuable this was to them.

During discussions the childminder demonstrated a good knowledge of the needs of each child. Meaningful information was gathered about children's needs, preferences, routines, and health details through 'All About Me' sheets and enrolment forms. This helped the childminder get to know each child and provide care and support that met their individual needs. The childminder used observation of children at play to progress children's learning, however this was not always up-to-date. The childminder now needs to ensure information is consistently up-to-date and informs their care and learning (**see recommendation 1**).

The childminder was aware of how to keep children safe and protected and the steps to take following the correct guidance and procedures. This helped to create a safe and secure place for children to learn and develop.

The children present were of similar age. They played together well, enjoyed each other's company, and had formed friendships. They were happy to show us some of their toys and have us join in with their play. The childminder took the time to play and interact well with the children. There was a lot of conversation between them whatever the activity and the childminder respected and encouraged each child's ideas. Parents told us that their child enjoyed going to Margaret's and it was good to see the progress they had made in their time there.

Children were encouraged to wash hands at appropriate times. Children were helped when needed and opportunities to discuss the importance of washing hands were used. This meant that children were learning how to keep themselves safe and be independent.

Children enjoyed a variety of healthy foods and were encouraged to sit at a small, child sized table together during meal times. This helped keep children safe and encouraged their social skills. The childminder provided all meals and snacks for children. One child asked for kiwi fruit and all children were given the opportunity to try some. The childminder knew the children's eating habits well and supported them to eat a healthy range of foods.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. To support children's development the childminder should ensure information in children's personal plans reflect children's most relevant care and learning needs.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'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.' (HSCS 1.15).

**Grade:** 4 - good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas of performance need to improve

Good use was made by the childminder of the local community. The childminder took children on outings and walks to explore. Through parents' comments, discussions and photographs we could see that children visited places including local parks, art gallery, museums, walks and picnics. This provided opportunities for children to be involved in their local community and to develop their learning.

Children played outdoors in the garden in all weathers. When we visited it was a snowy day and children were in a good routine when dressing for the weather with coats, wellie boots and hats to keep them warm.

Children enjoyed many types of play indoors and were encouraged to freely choose how they would like to spend their time. The children enjoyed the play dough and painting which allowed them to develop hand co-ordination and creativity. Activities like catching bubbles supported their gross motor skills.

There was a range of toys and games available for the children to choose from both indoors and out, however they were not always stored in a way that encouraged good use. The childminder had made changes to how they stored toys and games to make them more easily accessible for children meeting a previous recommendation, however more work in this area would further support children in their play, learning and independence.

The childminder had been introducing loose parts play equipment, such as a mud kitchen and guttering outdoors. We discussed how the childminder should now continue to look at ways to incorporate more natural and loose parts play materials for the children. This type of play supports children's natural curiosity and develops their creativity.

The handwashing and toilet areas was not clean and sufficient for use by children. We raised some concern about spray aerosols that were within children's reach. These areas had been fixed by our second visit.

We had recommended previously that the childminder ensure the environment is free from unnecessary clutter so as it is safe and provides enough space for children to play freely, this had not yet been met. On our first visit the indoors was very cluttered which meant that children did not have enough free space to play. We also found the outdoor back garden to have limited space available for play. We raised this with the childminder who had taken action to reduce some of the clutter that was present indoors. The childminder should now continue to work on the indoor and outdoor environment to provide a clutter free space for children to play and develop (**see recommendation 1**).

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. To promote children's play opportunities the childminders should ensure the environment is free from unnecessary clutter.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22).

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

## Quality of staffing

This quality theme was not assessed.

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

We evaluated this theme as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas of performance need to improve.

The childminder had developed positive relationships with parents and carers and worked in close partnership. The childminder used daily conversation, communication apps, and daily journal books to build relationships and exchange information. Parents told us how they find this helpful and how they find communication important. This supported the childminder to meet children's care needs.

The childminder worked well with the local authority and Scottish Childminder Association (SCMA) to provide funded child care places for children from two years of age to attending primary school. This helped the childminder provide support to children and families.

Previous recommendations were made which the childminder had not yet met. The childminder had made progress in the areas we highlighted for development which included: personal plans, providing a clutter free environment, expanding play resources to explore natural play, developing their knowledge of updated guidance and using this to continue to improve the experiences for children. However, the progress made was not enough to fully meet the recommendations and therefore to ensure that children receive high quality experiences several of the recommendation have been carried forward.

Regular and meaningful evaluation of the service had not taken place. This meant that children and parents did not have the opportunity to formally feedback on how well the childminder was meeting their needs, choices and wishes. The childminder should use their learning of best practice documents to guide evaluation of the service involving children and parents throughout the year.

The childminder had completed a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in child care. They told us how some of the learning for the qualification had helped them understand personal plans for children and how this supported them in their development. The childminder and assistant were up-to-date in core training such as child protection and first aid, helping to ensure children are safe and well. The childminder had reflected on training and had begun to use this to improve practice. The childminder now needs to continue in their learning in topics that will help further support children such as loose parts and pre-school curriculum (**see recommendation 1**).

### Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 1

1. To support positive outcomes for children, effective use should be made of best practice guidance to support the childminders to develop their knowledge and skills and the service they provide.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

**Grade:** 3 - adequate

**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

### Recommendation 1

The childminders should ensure information in children's personal plans reflect children's most relevant care and support needs. Individual strategies of support should be developed and monitored within these plans and shared with parents.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'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.' (HSCS 1.15).

**This recommendation was made on 22 January 2021.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

Meaningful information was gathered about children's needs, preferences, routines and health details through 'All About Me' sheets and enrolment forms. This helped the childminder get to know each child and provide care and support that met their individual needs. The childminder used observation of children at play to progress children's learning however this was not always up-to-date. The childminder now needs to ensure information is consistently up-to-date and informs their care and learning.

This recommendation has been carried forward.

Not Met

## Recommendation 2

The childminders to ensure that they encourage and promote safe practice at meal and snack times.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'I am helped to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviour and decisions.' (HSCS 2.25).

**This recommendation was made on 22 January 2021.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

Children enjoyed a variety of healthy foods and were encouraged to sit at a small, child sized table together during meal times. This helped keep children safe and encouraged their social skills.

Met

## Recommendation 3

The childminders to ensure that they consistently implement and fully follow current guidance on infection prevention and control procedures.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

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

**This recommendation was made on 22 January 2021.**

## Action taken on previous recommendation

Children were encouraged to wash hands at appropriate times. Children were helped when needed and opportunities to discuss the importance of washing hands were used.

Met

## Recommendation 4

The childminders should ensure the environment is free from unnecessary clutter so as it is safe and provides enough space for children to play freely.



**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22).

**This recommendation was made on 21 January 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

On our first visit the indoors was very cluttered which meant that children did not have enough free space to play. We also found the outdoor back garden to have limited space available for play. We raised this with the childminder who had taken action to reduce some of the clutter that was present indoors.

This recommendation has been carried forward.

Not Met

### Recommendation 5

To support children to be active and achieve their potential through developing a wide range of skills including problem solving, investigating and creativity, the childminders should further develop the range of activities and experiences available both indoors and outdoors and the opportunities to play outdoors.

**This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:**

'As a child, I have fun as I develop my skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving, including through imaginative play and storytelling.' (HSCS 1.30); and

'As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.' (1.32).

To support the childminders in meeting this recommendation they may find the following guidance helpful:

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/201173/national-practice-guidance-on-early-learning-2014.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/279348/my-world-outdoors-sharing-good-practice-in-how-early-years-services-can-provide-play-and-learning-wholly-or-partially-outdoors.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/405223/loose-parts-play-toolkit.pdf>

<http://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/603624/our-creative-journey-aug-17-master-combined.pdf>

**This recommendation was made on 21 January 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had developed the range of activities on offer to children both indoors and outdoor. The childminder used observation to record children learning. We have advised that the childminder continue to extend her own knowledge and practice to support children in their pre school learning.

Met

### Recommendation 6

To support positive outcomes for children, effective use should be made of best practice guidance to support the childminders to develop their knowledge and skills and the service they provide.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This recommendation was made on 21 January 2019.

## Action taken on previous recommendation

The childminder had reflected on training and had begun to use this to improve practice. The childminder now needs to continue in their learning in topics and best practice that will help further support children.

This recommendation has been carried forward

Not Met

## 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 Feb 2020	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
20 Dec 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
25 Oct 2018	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	1 - Unsatisfactory 1 - Unsatisfactory Not assessed 1 - Unsatisfactory
15 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good
19 Mar 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed
8 Nov 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
20 Jan 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good Not assessed
20 Oct 2008	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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