

# MacGregor, Gail Child Minding

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 16 March 2022

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2009974667

**Care service number:**  
CS2009229614

## Introduction

Gail MacGregor's childminding service is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time under age 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under age 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 the childminder's family.

Gail MacGregor provides her childminding service from her home, which is a semi-detached property within a quiet estate in the Brunstane area of Edinburgh. The location allows good access to local amenities and transport links. The childminder's aims are to provide "a high standard and quality of affordable childcare in a warm, loving and safe environment, where children are treated with respect and valued as an individual".

## What we did during our inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 March 2022 between 14:15 and 16:00. One inspector carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- observed one child using the service and spoke with three parents via email and telephone calls
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice during the visit
- reviewed documents.

## Views of people using the service

One child was present during the inspection. They were relaxed and comfortable in the childminder's care.

We spoke received feedback from three parents via email communication and telephone calls. Parents said they were very satisfied with the service provided. They said they felt their children were well cared during their time at the service.

## Self assessment

We did not request a self-evaluation document from the childminder. We considered improvement planning and self-evaluation within the theme of management and leadership.

## What the service did well

Children were active and included as the childminder made good use of local outings and a variety of natural spaces such as parks and the harbour. This supported children's health and wellbeing. Children experienced a continuity of care because the childminder worked closely with parents to respect their wishes and preferences. This meant children had a sense of familiarity throughout the day as the childminder followed their routines from home.

## What the service could do better

The childminder should continue to develop the range resources so they further enhance children's play and learning experiences. This is to ensure children are supported to learn and play through experiences that promote their curiosity and creativity.

Policies relating to the delivery and management of the service need reviewed to ensure they follow good practice guidance and reflect the service offered. This will help the childminder to inform her own practice and enable parents to be clear on the service their child should experience.

## 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	3 - Adequate

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of good for this theme, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

During the inspection, the childminder engaged positively with the minded child through warm and attentive interactions. She offered praise and encouragement as they played. These interactions helped the child feel a positive sense of self. Parents commented positively on the childminder's practice. One parent said, "Gail is warm, affectionate, approachable, and flexible". This supported strong relationships between the childminder and families. The childminder used inclusive language and appropriately discussed how they would support children with comfort, reassurance and gentle reminders should they require it.

Children experienced a continuity of care as the childminder worked closely with parents to gather information and discuss any changes to children's care. One parent told us, "Gail is very good at following the routine that we have set for (our child) and keeping us informed on how they are progressing and socialising with the other children". Effective communication was a clear strength within the service, as it helped children to receive the care that was right for them.

Personal plans enabled the childminder to plan for children's care needs. Plans included key information to keep children safe and helped the childminder provide positive care. For example, sleep and comfort preferences were recorded and followed. Meaningful information about favourite resources and preferences supported children's emotional wellbeing during settling in periods. However, the childminder should take steps to strengthen the use of personal plans. There had been limited development of this since the last inspection. Improving personal plans could help enhance children's play and learning as the childminder would be more informed about children's development and skills. This could enable her to further support each child through well-planned experiences and the monitoring of their progress over time.

Children's health was promoted through balanced snacks and appropriate levels of hydration. Children's physical development and wellbeing was promoted through lots of time outdoors, both in the garden and on trips in the local community.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

We made an evaluation of good for this theme, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on children's experiences.

Children benefited from a comfortable and homely environment. There were appropriate infection prevention and control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children. For example, regular cleaning took place and resources for hand washing were accessible.

Children could access two play spaces within the home, which provided a choice of environments. Direct access to the garden supported children to experience fresh air and allowed them ample space to play. Loose parts and other resources meant children had an appropriate range of items that supported outdoor play.

Within the living room storage units helped to keep the environment safe, whilst allowing children the opportunity to choose their toys and games. Space to play on the floor supported children to be creative in their play and develop their ideas. We saw photos of a child using the space to play with an extensive range of dinosaurs.

Indoors, children would benefit from the childminder developing the space further so that they have a greater range of resources at any one time. During the inspection, the youngest child was provided with mainly one-purpose plastic items such as a shape sorter and balls. This meant their play experiences were more limited. Some progress had been made in relation to the introduction of more open-ended materials that promoted children's natural curiosity and inquiry skills. The childminder had developed an area with items such as locks, paintbrushes, shells, and cones. These enabled children to explore multiple possibilities and learn through experimenting. The childminder was taking steps to increase their knowledge in this area and had engaged in some online resources to support the development of resources. We signposted the childminder to good practice guidance such as *Realising the Ambition* (Education Scotland, 2020) to help them consider the play experiences of the youngest children.

Effective use of the local community meant children were active and included. A range of outings and experiences supported them to learn new skills through play and fun. For example, regular trips to local parks and woodland areas supported children to develop their gross motor skills. Parents told us they valued these experiences and felt their children enjoyed them.

### 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

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

Positive communication with parents supported them to feel included in their child's experience of the childminding setting. All parents we spoke with indicated that they felt the childminder provided good information about their child and was always able to discuss their child's care. A variety of communication methods were used and this supported individual family preferences.

The childminder understood their responsibility to protect children from harm. The child protection policy had been updated to include the steps to be taken and the contact details of lead agencies. This would enable the childminder to manage concerns should they arise. To maintain a consistent and effective approach to safeguarding, the childminder should access specific child protection training. The childminder had begun looking into learning and development opportunities relating to this aspect of practice.

Whilst the child protection policy had been updated, improvements were needed to some of the service policies as they were out dated and did not provide enough clarity or guidance. In relation to supporting children's behaviour the childminder's policy included strategies of support that were not informed by current theory on attachment and nurture. The childminder told us how she positively supported children's emotional wellbeing but this was not reflected in the policy. Children and families would benefit from the childminder reviewing the policies to update her knowledge and to ensure they reflect the current service and good practice guidance. (See recommendation one).

The childminder should take steps to improve their knowledge of current good practice guidance particularly in relation to children's development and learning. This is to ensure children are enabled to reach their full potential during their time at the childminding setting. For example, the childminder should use guidance and theory relating to child development to support their understanding of each child's individual development and use this knowledge to plan for their needs. Guidance such as *Realising the Ambition* (Education Scotland, 2020) was highlighted as part of this inspection. The childminder was aware of this guidance and was in the early stages of using it to inform her practice. (See recommendation two).

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 2

1. To support the effective delivery of the service and ensure the childminder and parents have clarity on key aspects of the service the childminder should review and update the service policies in line with current legislation and good practice guidance. This would include but is not limited to, the policy relating to supporting children's behaviour and the policy about children's play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23) and 'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (HSCS 4.27).

2. To support children's learning and development, the childminder should improve their knowledge and understanding of good practice guidance in relation to child development and early years. This should include developing knowledge and skills through professional learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

**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 provider must ensure that children experience care that is as positive as possible. By 17 September 2019, the provider must ensure that they continue to adhere to the conditions of registration to promote positive outcomes for children. In order to achieve this provider must adhere to the following:

- ensure the service cares for no more than the specified numbers of children as detailed within the conditions of registration.
- ensure appropriate procedures are in place to record children's attendance.
- ensure the service information correctly reflects the conditions of registration.

This is in order to comply with:

Health and Social Care Standard 1.8: 'If I experience care and support in a group, the overall size composition of that group is right for me' and '4.23: I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed'.

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, Regulation 74 Conditions as to numbers (d) (i) and Regulation 4 (1) (a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

**This requirement was made on 26 August 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Following the inspection, we gathered information from the childminder to assess if they were maintaining the conditions of registration. This evidenced that the childminder was following the conditions and that children were cared for in the correct size of group. Children's wellbeing was managed as the childminder introduced a register system which allowed the recording of daily attendances and supported planning for placements. Parents were appropriately informed about the conditions of registration meaning they could understand how many children the childminder could care for at any one time.

This requirement has been met.

**Met - within timescales**

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

### Previous recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

To effectively safeguard children the childminder's child protection policy should be reviewed so that it includes clear steps on the procedures the childminder would follow in relation to managing a child protection concern.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care standards which state, 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS, 3.20).

**This recommendation was made on 26 August 2019.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

The child protection policy had been updated to include the the steps to be taken and the contact details of lead agencies. This would enable the childminder to manage concerns should they arise. The childminder should carry out a further review of other policies as outlined in this report.

This recommendation has been 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
26 Jul 2019	Unannounced	Care and support
		Environment
		4 - Good
		4 - Good



Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed 3 - Adequate
29 Jun 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good
26 Aug 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
24 Jun 2010	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed

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