

# North Kessock Childminding Child Minding

INVERNESS

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
7 November 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Anna Jack

**Service provider number:**  
SP2014986399

**Service no:**  
CS2014332153

## About the service

North Kessock Childminding provides a childminding service from home in a quiet residential area of Inverness. The childminder is registered as a childminder to care for a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than six will be under 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 children of the childminder's family.

The service is located close to a local primary school and nursery, parks, and other amenities. Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the home, with children having access to the main lounge and dining area, kitchen area, toilet and an enclosed rear garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 07 November 2022 between 10:00 and 12:30. We provided feedback on the day of inspection. Two inspectors carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Reviewed three online questionnaires we received from families;
- Spoke to the childminder;
- Reviewed documents; and
- Observed practice and daily life.

## Key messages

- The childminder was kind and caring in her approach.
- Children experienced warm and caring interactions from the childminder who knew them and their families well.
- Children were happy and engaged in their play and freely choose how to spend their time. Personal plans should be reviewed regularly with parents.
- To ensure children benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, the childminder should develop quality assurance and self-evaluation processes. This will support the childminder to reflect on and evaluate the service delivery.
- The childminder would benefit from accessing further professional development opportunities including reading best practice guidance, and reflecting on their learning.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

### 1:1 Nurturing care and support

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good. Where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people, it clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

On the day of inspection there were three minded children present. The childminder was kind, caring and had created a relaxed atmosphere. We saw lots of warm and supportive interactions, chatting, cuddles and praise between the childminder and the children. The childminder supported and encouraged the children while they played. She knew the children in her care well, spoke about their interests, and how these were supported within the service. This approach contributed to an ethos of respect and made the children feel included and valued.

The childminder spoke knowledgeably about children's individual care needs and what she did to support them. She confidently described children's preferences, routines, and personalities and as a result, children's needs were met. Whilst she knew children well, some recorded information was missing. The personal plans in place were not regularly reviewed with parents and children. The childminder must also ensure that personal plans are reviewed every six months or sooner with parents and carers. (See area of improvement 1).

The childminder knew the children and families very well. It was clear that she had developed close bonds with the children and was very fond of them. The children were very happy and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminder's nurturing approach contributed to the child feeling loved, safe and secure. Parents who provided electronic feedback confirmed the childminder's nurturing approach to care. One parent commented that "the care given to my child by Anna is second to none. He has also come on leaps and bounds in his development since spending so much time with Anna." This supported children to have a safe and nurturing experience at the service.

We observed a lovely, unhurried and relaxed snack time experience. The childminder supported independence by encouraging some of the children to feed themselves. This effective support contributed to children's enjoyment of this experience. The childminder chatted with the children and it was a positive, social experience. Parents provided foods that met their child's cultural and dietary needs. Children had fresh water available to them throughout the day.

Arrangements were in place for children's rest and sleep. We suggested a small change to ensure all children were sleeping on a flat surface. We suggested a suitable mat would be more comfortable, secure and safe to lie on. The childminder agreed to address this. The childminder knew children's individual cues for sleeps and rest, and had established good habits and routines to support this.

The childminder was very aware of her responsibility to safeguard children. We were confident that the childminder was committed to her role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm.

Accidents and incidents were recorded appropriately and shared with parents supporting children's health, wellbeing and care.

### 1.3 Play and learning

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good. Where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people, it clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were supported to learn and develop through play. Indoors, the children had access to a range of resources including books, role play, building blocks and opportunities for mark making and to promote language and literacy skills. The children had fun with the childminder and other children, we heard lots of chattering and saw children smiling and giggling. The children responded happily when the childminder was involved in their play. Interactions were positive between the childminder and the children, offering encouragement, cuddles and praise. We suggested that more natural, open ended materials like treasure baskets would benefit the younger children through their play and learning. This would support children's choice and promote opportunities for creativity and problem solving skills.

The childminder had an understanding of child development and rotated toys and resources to ensure they were appropriate for the ages and stages of children in attendance. Older children enjoyed craft activities and board games before school and in the holidays, or spent time at local parks enjoying opportunities to be active and explore the world around them. The childminder informed us that the children play with loose parts such as stones, cones and wood with the other children. We suggested that children's play and learning would be further supported by having access to a wider variety of toys and resources which reflected their interests and stage of development. We suggested that she has a look at the loose parts toolkit on the Care Inspectorate Hub to develop this further, and enhance children's development and learning through loose parts play indoors and outside in the garden. This would support children to extend their imagination, learning and spark curiosity in their play experiences.

From photograph evidence, we could see that children benefited from play experiences which provided opportunities to be creative, imaginative and develop curiosity. There was lots of evidence of children participating in arts and crafts, messy play and water play. Children's language was also supported through opportunities to sing songs and read stories together throughout the day. This experience provided opportunities to promote language, literacy and numeracy.

### Areas for improvement

1. To effectively support children's care and development, processes for documenting personal plans should be improved. Plans should reflect children's ongoing development and the care they need to ensure the best outcomes. Plans should be reviewed regularly with parents. Minimum of every six months.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states 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).

## How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good. Where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people, it clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder's home was clean, cosy and welcoming and provided a homely environment for the children. The childminder's home was relaxed and safe for the children to explore and play, allowing them to feel safe and comfortable. The children made use of all the available space and confidently moved around the lounge area of the childminder's home. A range of toys were available for the children to choose from inside as well as the outdoor area.

The childminder also made good use of the local environment with regular trips to the park, soft play and woods. The childminder demonstrated a good understanding of the potential risks to children when out in the local community, contributing to keeping them safe. These rich experiences were shared with parents daily using WhatsApp photos, messages and videos. This helped enrich children's learning and contributed to them forming strong links with their community.

Risk assessments were undertaken, however, they were not updated regularly. We spoke about the importance of risk assessments, that they not only minimise harm but are also a tool to help children recognise and manage their own risk. We suggested that the older children should be involved in reviewing the risk assessments for the range of activities and outings they experienced. This would develop their own awareness of managing risks, be responsible, and learn about the safety of themselves and others. This would also help the children to feel responsible and respected.

On the day of the inspection, we observed nappy changing. We suggested the childminder uses an apron to ensure that the risk of spreading infection was minimised. This ensured the health and wellbeing of the children in her care.

We were satisfied that the service had appropriate infection control procedures in place to support a safe environment for children and families.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good. Where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people, it clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder had established strong and trusting relationships with the families. This allowed for open communication and sharing of information. The childminder stated that she shared information with the parents informally on a daily basis, at drop off and collection times. She provides a flexible and accommodating service for the families she works with. We found she made good use of text messaging and private social media to communicate with families. This helped to ensure parents were included in their child's care and offered the opportunity to comment and/or make suggestions for improvement.

The childminder told us that they sought the views of children and families using methods such as verbal communication and questionnaires. We encouraged the childminder to continue to consult with parents and children to ensure, where verbal or written feedback has led to the development of the service, this is shared with children and families, supporting a culture of ongoing improvement. We would encourage the childminder to begin to reflect on their practice using the 'Quality Framework' and 'Self evaluation for improvement - you guide' as a tool to support self-evaluation in a structured way. This will lead to a culture of continuous improvement.

The childminder had policies and procedures in place, and were shared with parents. We suggested that these policies need to be updated and reflect best current practice. This helps parents to understand the work and ethos of the childminding service.

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

### 4.1 Staffs skills, knowledge and values

From the evidence gathered, we evaluated this quality theme as good. Where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people, it clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder understood the importance of nurturing, warm and positive relationships. During the inspection it was clear the childminder enjoyed caring for children and had developed good relationships with parents that supported her to meet children's needs on a daily basis. One parent told us that "Anna is encouraging, caring and professional, she teaches my son lots, so caring and loving towards him, I am so relaxed with him being there." This supported children to be respected and cared for in the service.

The childminder had completed a variety of training and development courses such as First Aid and Child protection. The childminder was a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and CALA and uses these organisations to access training and update her knowledge and skills. The childminder is currently completing a language and literacy course to help. We have suggested she would benefit from keeping a record of training, reflecting on the impact of training on her practice to support children's experiences. This could help identify future training needs, support improvement, and to improve outcomes for children.

We also discussed how best practice guidance would support the childminders professional development and improvement in the service. We discussed ways in which she could use her Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) membership along with the Care Inspectorate Hub and online resources such as, 'Realising the Ambition, Being Me' and 'Your Childminding Journey' as a way of accessing guidance and practice documents to support the ongoing development of the service.

The childminder worked very closely with other local childminders, sharing information and good practice between them, and was an administrator for a local online support group for childminders in the area. She told us this provided her with a good network of support, which ensured high quality practice and experiences for children.

The childminder's focus was that children were happy and having fun within the service. She had already identified some areas for improvement in relation to paperwork which included personal plans. She was keen to make improvements needed.

## 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).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good



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