

# Wendy House Childcare Child Minding

Dundee

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
30 September 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Wendy Gallacher

**Service provider number:**  
SP2015987321

**Service no:**  
CS2015340821

## About the service

Wendy Gallacher is registered to care for 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 children of the childminder's family. No overnight care can be provided. Her service is known as Wendy House Childcare. There was one pre school aged minded child being cared for at the time of the second visit of this inspection.

The service is provided from a traditional detached villa in a residential area of Monifieth. The rooms used for childminding are all at ground floor level and include a playroom, lounge, kitchen/dining room and downstairs bathroom. There is a spacious, safe and secure back garden which is well-maintained and regularly used by the children for outdoor and energetic play.

The childminder has a very positive, enthusiastic and professional approach to childminding, and aims to provide "a fun, friendly and relaxed place for children to come. I want to be able to provide a reliable service to parents whilst aiming to be as flexible as I can. I will treat all children in my care with respect, care and kindness whilst seeing them as unique individuals."

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 28 and Friday 30 September 2022. Feedback was given to the childminder at the end of the visit on 30 September 2022. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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:

- observed the interaction and attachment between the child and childminder;
- took account of two communications received from parents via email;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children benefited from warm and caring interactions with the childminder and from the strong and trusting relationships they had established.
- Children's individual needs were very well known and their wishes and views respected and acted on.
- Children enjoyed a variety of outdoor experiences, in the local and wider communities and broad indoor activities to support learning and development.
- Children are cared for in a nurturing, responsive and supportive atmosphere that is organised and led by children's needs and interests.
- The childminder should review and extend recording of children's progress and use to inform next steps and planning.
- The childminder should develop self evaluation methods, involving children and families and identify areas for improvement within the service.
- The childminder should continue to identify and access a range of training and professional development opportunities to support her knowledge, skills and practice.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

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

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

### Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The childminder was kind, caring and highly conscientious in her role. She spoke with warmth, respect and genuine fondness for all children in her care and their families. The baby present was happy, settled and secure with the childminder and very comfortable in the childminding setting. The childminder sat at floor level with the child as she played and moved around the playroom. She encouraged and supported play and was responsive to the child's interests, using age appropriate language and introducing new ideas to extend play and support development. A warm and trusting bond was evident between the baby and childminder. The baby enjoyed cuddles and laughed and smiled with the childminder as they played.

The childminder knew all children in her care very well and discussed their personalities, routines, interests and needs confidently. She described sensitive settling in procedures for new children that were planned closely with parents and took very good account of individual needs and wishes.

Personal plans were in place for each child which were detailed and included all required information to support children's care. 'All about me' forms highlighted routines from home and included more detail about children's preferences, comforts, fears and favourite activities. These plans were reviewed every six months to ensure the childminder held current information to support the children's care. Routine conversations with parents also informed children's changing care needs.

Some records were kept of children's developmental progress but this did not fully reflect the very good knowledge that the childminder had of the children in her care. We suggested that she review and extend her procedures for recording and tracking children's developmental progress. This should include noting some next steps in learning, which the childminder was doing naturally in her daily practice but not recording or fully using the information to inform planning and play. The childminder made very good use of her closed Facebook page to share photographs and updates with parents about their child's day; this gave parents reassurance that their children were happy and active at play.

Two parents shared their views of the service; both spoke very highly of the childminder and the care provided.

The childminder discussed how she planned routines that took account of all children's needs, ensuring that all children's views, wishes and preferences were considered. A nurturing and supportive atmosphere was evident that ensured children's emotional well being was well supported and that children felt safe and secure in the setting.

There was a very good approach to mealtimes, with healthy eating encouraged. Children were involved in some food preparation and enjoyed baking activities. The baby enjoyed a relaxed snack time, she was not rushed and had time to enjoy and explore her food in a relaxed manner. Independence and self help was encouraged, with help provided as needed. The childminder valued shared mealtime experiences, describing how all children sat at the kitchen table to eat and talk together or enjoyed eating outside and having picnics.

Although no medication was currently being given, there were appropriate recording templates and parental consent forms in place.

### **Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning**

Children were leading their own play in this setting. The child present explored the play environment freely and was able to choose from a wide range of age appropriate resources. The childminder used her observation skills effectively, recognising when the child needed help and skilfully extended play. The child was very well supported in her play, with the childminder engaging enthusiastically and using age appropriate language to support and extend learning and development .

Children benefited from varied activities, including attendance at some groups where they could spend time with other children which supported their social skills. Children's language, vocabulary and literacy was supported through stories, singing, attending rhyme time and the routine communication and conversations with the childminder. She used age appropriate language with the baby present, always giving time for the child to understand and respond. She was also mindful of expression and body language to communicate and support, for example, smiling and celebrating the child's achievements with warm enthusiasm.

A wide range of age/stage appropriate resources were available for the children inside and outdoors. The childminder explained how she had reviewed the environment and resources to ensure that it was safe and suitable for younger children who had recently started using the service. Additional resources were stored and rotated to support children's interests and stage of development.

Children had direct access to the back garden, where they had ample space to play and chose from a wide range of outdoor resources, including loose parts and other open-ended materials. There were opportunities for children to plant and grow and to engage with nature.

Vey good use was made of the local and wider communities to provide opportunities for the children to access fresh air, to be physically active and to socialise. Children visited parks, woods, beach, rhyme time and toddler groups. They collected leaves, cones and sticks that were used in play and craft activities. The childminder and children walked to and from school each day. They stopped on the way home and spent time playing with chosen resources like balls, bubbles and frisbees, they played hide and seek, football and other games. The childminder explained that this was a well established part of the daily routine that was enjoyed by all children, providing a valuable opportunity for children to be active outside and wind down after a busy day at school.

Children were benefiting from broad play experiences in a relaxed and homely setting. The childminder planned with children, ensuring that they felt involved and were motivated and challenged by the resources and activities on offer.

## How good is our setting?

## 5 - Very Good

### Quality Indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children were cared for in a welcoming and comfortable environment that was clean, well maintained, smoke free and well ventilated. It was child centred in its organisation, with children's art work displayed and the playroom layout enabling children of all ages to select freely from a range of suitable resources. The childminder regularly reviewed resources to ensure that they continued to offer interest and challenge and to ensure that they were clean and safe for children. During the Covid-19 pandemic she had re-introduced more plastic resources that were easily cleaned but ensured this was balanced with access to other materials. She encouraged children to be creative and to use their imaginations, with open-ended resources, loose parts, dressing up and role play props and broad art and craft materials. The baby present at this inspection enjoyed playing in the tuff tray with farm animals and small world resources. The childminder described regular use of the tuff tray, where themed or specific activities were organised with children.

There was ample space for children to play and relax indoors and outside. Mealtimes, baking and art activities took place in the large kitchen/diner adjacent to the playroom, providing a comfortable and sociable space for children to mix around the large kitchen table.

Children's files were stored safely and securely to ensure confidentiality was maintained.

The childminder had appropriate fire safety and evacuation measures in place and was most conscientious in maintaining a safe environment for children. She had a clear policy and procedure in place for the care and safe management of the family dog, with minded children never being left alone with the dog or other animals encountered on outings. Stairgates were used to keep the dog out of the playroom.

There was a travel cot used in a downstairs bedroom for sleeping children, which was well monitored and close to the playroom.

Children had daily access to the safe, enclosed rear garden. There was a decked area where children could eat and play and a large lawn area with a range of outdoor resources, including an outdoor kitchen.

The childminder visually risk assessed the childminding areas on a daily basis to ensure that her home was safe for children and that any risks were identified and addressed. Written risk assessments for all areas of the home and for outings were in place and regularly reviewed, supporting the childminder to keep children safe and to address any repair issues within the home.

Very good infection control measures were in place, with a robust approach to hand washing and a hygienic approach to nappy changing that reflected good practice.

This was a comfortable, safe, child centred and homely environment for children.

## How good is our leadership?

## 4 - Good

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

### 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder used informal ways to evaluate the service. For example, having regular discussions and seeking feedback from parents and taking account of feedback from children in their daily discussions and observations of their play experiences. She informally reflected on all aspects of her service and made adjustments to meet the changing needs of the children. She also introduced changes to implement her learning from training and reading early years guidance. For example, introducing loose parts materials. She did not have a written improvement plan but was able to give examples of changes and improvements she had made in response to her informal reflections and evaluations of her service. We signposted the childminder to 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare' to help support with self evaluation and to establish more formalised improvement planning (see area for improvement 1).

Children's play experiences and activities were captured on camera and shared with parents throughout the day. This helped parents to feel involved in their child's care and also provided reassurance that children were happy, settled and having fun.

The childminder was warm, open and approachable. She had established very good relationships with families, which included regular communication and information sharing to ensure children's needs were known.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure the service continues to develop to meet the needs of children, the childminder should ensure they highlight areas for improvement in the service.

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

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

### How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The childminder had a warm and kind personality and had created a relaxed and welcoming environment which led to positive outcomes for children. She had a natural rapport with children and was highly responsive to their needs. She was an experienced childminder with a very good understanding of children's development. Parents confirmed that they had very good relationships with the childminder and routinely shared information about the children's needs. We viewed recent service satisfaction questionnaires issued by the childminder, for parents and older children. All evidenced that parents and children were very happy with the service. Some families had used the service for many years and clearly had great trust and confidence in the childminder. We received two emails from parents using the service, both spoke very highly of the childminder and the high quality care provided. Their comments included:

'For more than five years now Wendy has been looking after our kids and it's no exaggeration to say they both absolutely love going there and spending time with Wendy, her own children, and the other children she cares for.'

'We view it more as almost an extension of home. We're often warned by the kids not to pick them up early for example so they can stay as long as possible and not miss out on any of the fun activities she plans with them.'

'Her level of communication is excellent, ranging from fun photo and text updates on what the kids have been up to, to making sure we are aware of any issues. During the time periods where Covid restrictions were in place, again we were kept fully up to date at all times of any changes and she also engaged with us on our own thoughts and concerns to make sure we were as reassured as possible.'

'In summary we cannot speak highly enough of Wendy and the service she provides. She's a very warm and caring person and this is reflected in the relationship she builds with all the children in her care. We would (and do) highly recommend her to anyone in need of the highest level of childcare.'

'I am very happy with my child's care with Wendy, she has a very nurturing personality and provides a home from home environment.'

The childminder had taken part in several training opportunities which included first aid training to refresh her skills and knowledge to keep children safe. She also planned to refresh training in Child protection in the coming weeks. She was able to demonstrate a very good understanding of her responsibilities to protect children and how she would address any issues relating to children's welfare and protection. She had completed SVQ III training in childcare since her last inspection. This learning had supported the development of her service, as she embedded best practice, had become more reflective and more confident in her role.

She kept updated with developments and best practice through communications and publications by the SCMA (Scottish Childminding Association) and Care Inspectorate. She should continue to deepen her knowledge of key early frameworks to support the on going development and evaluation of her service. We suggested that the childminder starts to record details of any training undertaken, including self directed reading, reflecting on what she has learnt and the impact on improving her service. We also encouraged the childminder to continue to identify and access various training and professional development opportunities to support her practice, skills and knowledge.



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

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

'All about me' forms should be extended to provide a more comprehensive personal plan to support individual care needs.

National Care standards: Early education and childcare up to the age of 16

Standard 3: Health and wellbeing

Standard 4: Engaging with children

Standard 5: Quality of experience

Standard 14: Well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 17 January 2017.**

#### Action taken since then

More detailed information was sought to inform children's care needs. This area for improvement has been met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should access Child protection training to reinforce her knowledge in this key area to protect children.

National Care standards: Early education and childcare up to the age of 16

Standard 3: Health and wellbeing

Standard 12: Confidence in staff

Standard 14: Well-managed service.

**This area for improvement was made on 17 January 2017.**

#### Action taken since then

The childminder has undertaken relevant reading and has Child protection training planned in the coming weeks. She demonstrated a very good understanding of her responsibilities to keep children safe and protected from harm. This area for improvement 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).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very 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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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