

# Ross, Pamela Child Minding

Inverness

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
23 November 2022

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004917277

**Service no:**  
CS2007143069

## About the service

Pamela Ross is registered to provide a childminding service to care for a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, 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.

The service operates from the childminder's home in a quiet rural location on the outskirts of Drumnadrochit. She made use of the kitchen/dining/family room, large hallway, lounge and bathroom. There is also a large fully enclosed outdoor area which is very well used. The childminder also made use of various local facilities including parks, walks and toddler groups to offer the children the opportunity to be healthy, active and have access to fresh air and exercise.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 23rd November 2022 between 11:45 and 13:30. 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:

- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed feedback from parents of children attending the service
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children were very happy, relaxed and enjoyed spending time in the care of the childminder.
- Children experienced very warm, kind and nurturing interactions which supported them to feel comfortable, safe and secure.
- The childminder took time to get to know children and their families.
- The childminder was aware of and responsive to the individual care needs of the children.
- There was a good range of resources, including loose parts and open ended resources, which the children could independently access.
- The children had daily access to outdoor play which supported them to be healthy and active and explore their local community.

## 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?	5 - Very 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 evaluated this key question as very good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### 1.1 - Nurturing care & support

We found that the childminder provided very good care and support for the children which ensured positive outcomes for them. Children had strong attachments with the childminder who was very responsive to their individual needs.

There were three young children present on the day of the inspection who were all very happy, confident and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder was warm and caring in her approach which supported the children to feel nurtured and secure.

During the visit the childminder was very attentive and responsive to the needs of each of the children. We saw lots of warm and nurturing interactions, chatting, smiles, praise and encouragement. Listening to children, reading their cues and taking account of their choices was a priority for the childminder and made the children feel included and valued.

From our observations and discussions with the childminder, it was clear that she knew each of the children in her care very well which ensured that she was able to respond to their individual care needs. The childminder had put in place personal plans for each child, which contained relevant background information and details of the child's routine. The plans were completed with parents and carers and routinely reviewed to ensure that they continued to meet the changing needs of the children.

Establishing close working relationships with the parents which allowed for open communication and information sharing was a priority for the childminder. As well as offering informal feedback at drop off and pick up times each day, she made use of photographs and messaging services to keep in very regular contact with families.

The childminder was very aware of her responsibility to safeguard children. She had completed relevant training and had a good understanding of child protection. We were confident that the childminder was committed to her role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm.

### 1.3 - Play and learning

The childminder was very committed to ensuring that the care she provided was responsive and met the developmental needs, interests and curiosities of the children. She offered children opportunities for both planned experiences and spontaneous play activities. These enriched children's play and learning and stimulated their natural curiosity. The childminder was responsive to children, encouraging and extending their imagination and learning. Her positive interactions and good use of opened questions supported their play and learning.

Children were free to lead their own play and learning. They were able to independently choose from a range of resources and toys which were age and stage appropriate. The children were able to access open ended resources. We discussed the benefits of introducing more natural, loose parts indoors.

The children were able to take part in regular outdoor play which allowed them to be active and explore the world around them. The outdoor play area contained a very good range of resources which offered children opportunities for challenge, creativity, developing independence and imagination. The childminder also made good use of the local community for walks and visits to the local woodland which provided children to have access to fresh air and physical exercise.

## How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

We found the environment to be very good. Both the indoor and outdoor environments offered a wide range of learning experiences. The children enjoyed the freedom to play and explore their surroundings. The environment offered the children who attended a fun and enjoyable experience and supported positive outcomes. Children were able to direct their own play and activities, choosing and freely accessing appropriate materials and resources to support their learning.

The premises were homely, well maintained and welcoming which allowed children to feel safe and secure. There was a range of age appropriate resources which captured the children's interests and supported their play and learning experiences. The childminder recognised the benefits of having open ended and natural resources to extend the children's learning through play.

Given the rural location of the childminder's home, the opportunities for outdoor play and learning were plentiful and full advantage were made of these. The childminder had completed outdoor training and recognised all the benefits of children playing and learning outdoors.

Being outdoors was popular with all the children who attended. Children had direct access to the large garden where they could engage with a wide range of resources. The childminder also made good use of the surrounding area for walks and visits to the woods to allow the children to explore and investigate their local environment and community. The childminder recognised the benefits of supporting children to safely engage in play to push their own boundaries and build self confidence. Parents appreciated their children getting outdoors each day to play, take part in active play and have access to fresh air.

Children attending the service were kept safe through the various systems the childminder had in place. The childminder explained that she completed daily visual checks before the children arrived as well as at the end of the day. We sampled the risk assessments the childminder had in place and found that she was vigilant in her care of the minded children.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### 3.1 - Quality assurance and improvement are well led.

The childminder was committed to the development of her service to ensure that she provided improved outcomes for the children in her care. Evaluating her service was an ongoing process. She recognised the

importance of involving the children and their families in this. She welcomed any feedback from the children and their families. She routinely circulated questionnaires as well as encouraging families to give feedback informally. By taking account of their views and suggestions contributed to families feeling valued, included and respected.

The children were very much involved in the day to day running of the service and deciding what they would like to do while they were there. The childminder listened to any feedback the children made about the activities they took part in and took this into account when reviewing her service.

The childminder reflected on her daily practice to assist her to improve the experiences for children and families. She reflected on what was working well in the service and what needed to be improved. This supported positive outcomes for children. We suggested that the childminder becomes familiar with and make use of best practice, including 'A Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare,' to support self evaluation and reflection on practice leading to continuous improvement.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### 4.1 - Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children had established very strong attachments with the childminder. There were three young children present on the day of the inspection who were all very happy, settled and relaxed in the care of the childminder. The childminder was warm and caring in her approach which supported the children to feel nurtured, loved and secure.

The childminder was aware of and responsive to the individual needs of the children who attended her service. We saw lots of warm and nurturing interactions, chatting, smiles, praise and encouragement. Children were encouraged to be independent and supported where needed.

The childminder was aware of the importance of ensuring that she had the appropriate knowledge and skills to offer high quality care and experiences for the children. The childminder was reflective and was able to identify areas for development to support individual children in her care. She had attended a range of training to support and improve her practice. The childminder was able to tell us how she had used what she had learnt to develop the service to ensure that she met the individual needs of the children. She explained that she was hoping to complete further training as it became available.

The childminder was proactive in relation to keeping up to date with best practice and accessed useful websites such as the Care Inspectorate hub, the Scottish Childminding Association hub and other childminding forums. She read various publications and best practice guidance to support her in developing her service. The childminder also regularly met up with other local childminders. This provided an opportunity to discuss current good practice, share ideas and suggestions as to how they could develop their services. This contributed to supporting very good experiences and outcomes for children.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good



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