

# MacIntyre, Margaret Child Minding

Glasgow

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 February 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Margaret MacIntyre

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003902628

**Service no:**  
CS2003004650

## About the service

Margaret MacIntyre's childminding service is provided from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area of Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire. The service is registered to care for six children up to 16 years of age, of whom a maximum of 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.

The service is located close to local parks, schools and nurseries.

Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the property. Children have access to the lounge, kitchen/dining room and bathroom. Children don't have access to the garden but the childminder ensures the children access outdoor play everyday.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 16 February 2023 between 15:10 to 17:30. 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:

- observed children's play experiences
- observed interactions between children and the childminder
- spoke with the childminder
- reviewed documents and records
- looked around the home
- spoke to two parents using the service

## Key messages

- The childminder had responsive, nurturing and caring relationships with children.
- The childminder provided a homely, nurturing environment for children to play and learn.
- Children's interests and learning opportunities were extended with the use of local and wider community facilities.
- Effective communication with the parents meant that children's needs were supported and parents felt included in their child's care.
- Children's play experiences were widened by regular visits to local toddler groups, helping to promote social development and language skills.
- The childminder should develop their self-evaluation processes and strengthen their knowledge of good practice guidance and frameworks.
- Child protection refresher training needed to take place to ensure practice and knowledge was aligned with the most up to date guidance.

## 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?	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?

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.

### 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were happy and settled in the service. They were relaxed and confident around the childminder and within the childminding environment.

The childminder was very attentive to the children's needs and interactions were warm, nurturing and respectful. It was clear the childminder knew minded children very well and they shared with us how care and development needs were being supported. The childminder knew children's personalities and routines and listened to children to ensure they felt valued and secure in their care. One parent told us the childminder was "very attentive and caring to children."

Information was gathered for each child to help the childminder care for and support children. Communication with parents/carers was very effective and supported them to be fully involved in their child's care. This ensured good links between home and the childminding setting, which supported continuity of care. Parents confirmed the childminder worked effectively with them to ensure their child's learning, development and wellbeing needs were being met.

Personal plans were in place for all children and contained information that supported meeting children's needs. For example, details about their interest, health, likes and dislikes. One parent told us "Margaret always keeps us involved in our child's care. We regularly discuss our child's progress and next steps."

Children experienced a sociable lunchtime with peers that was unhurried and relaxed. The childminders sat with children to ensure their safety and enhance their social experience. Children were encouraged to be independent during mealtimes and were praised appropriately throughout. Children enjoyed eating together and often took their lunches with them on outings so that it became a part of their play experience. Children independently accessed drinks throughout the day, helping to ensure they were hydrated.

A system was in place to manage medication. Following discussion, we suggested the childminder should review the method of recording parental permission for administration of medication to reflect best practice guidance. The childminder agreed to develop this. This would support a well managed service and contribute to children's health and well being.

### 1.3 Play and learning

Children benefitted from a range of planned and spontaneous experiences that promoted their interest and developed their choice and independence. They could freely choose from a selection of toys and play equipment that had been selected to meet their current interest and stage of development. Toys were regularly changed to support learning.

Children were busy in their play and were having fun developing their own ideas. For example, a child was using Duplo and small characters to act out their own game and lead their own play. This supported the child to develop their early literacy skills and ideas through the use of stories, as they used their imagination and creativity to develop the detail of their own imaginary game.

Moving forward the service would benefit from introducing more open-ended natural resources and loose parts. To support this development we directed the service to the Care Inspectorate website to access good practice resources, such as, 'The loose parts toolkit'. This will support children to continue to have new opportunities to playfully investigate and explore their own ideas at their own pace.

A wide variety of experiences such as trips for nature walks, play in the park and community activities with a local childminding group were offered. For example, visits to the local library for Bookbug sessions. These play experiences helped develop children's skills in areas such as language and literacy, whilst also providing children with a regular opportunity to socialise with other children. One parent told us "my child is exposed to a range of activities which has helped them to progress socially."

## How good is our setting?

## 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.

### 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children were cared for in a homely, comfortable and well furnished setting, which helped them feel safe and secure. Play spaces were bright, clean and well maintained. One parent described the home as "safe, clean and secure."

Children's choice and independence was promoted as they could choose where to play and spend time. For example, the kitchen or living room space had been created for children to play on their own or socially with other children. This helped children make choices about their play and offered quieter spaces to support their emotional development and wellbeing.

Spaces accessed by children were well organised. Children could move around the space with ease. Children's choice and interests were promoted through safe and easy access to toys and materials such as, books, puzzles, games, construction toys and role play. This meant activities were varied and children were able to be supported to enjoy challenging, fun play.

Children's safety and wellbeing was promoted through effective infection control practices. For example, children were encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating.

A variety of measures were in place to help keep children safe. For example, regular risk assessments of the environment, a secure front door and good supervision. One parent told us "I am confident my child is in the best hands and is safe at all times."

The childminder recognised the importance of children having opportunities to be physically active throughout the day. While we recognised the service did not access the garden, the childminder ensured a wide range of opportunities for children to have quality outdoor experiences were provided.

For example, visiting local green spaces and parks to be active and enjoy the benefits of outdoor play. One parent told us "I appreciate how active children are. They always get to go and visit different places."

## 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

Positive relationships with families and regular discussion encouraged parents to make comments and suggestions about the service and care provided to their child. This promoted an inclusive and welcoming service.

Daily communication with parents helped keep them informed about their child's experiences and what was happening in the service. Parents and carers told us they receive regular updates from the childminder at drop off and pick up. This included updates on care routines, activities, and achievements. Parents shared that they were happy with the level of communication with the childminder.

Written policies had been developed to support the life of the service. These had been shared with parents, informing them of what to expect from the childminder. These policies should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect best practice and are relevant to the service.

The childminder had built a strong relationship with a small group of local childminders. This had supported ongoing reflective discussions and the sharing of good practice and new ideas. For example, the childminder gave examples of how this had supported them to reflect on the Covid-19 guidance and keep up-to-date with the fast pace changes and new guidance over this period. As a result, the childminder was able to continue to meet the wellbeing needs of each child in their care during this very challenging time.

Moving forward, the childminder should look at different ways to self-evaluate their service and keep up-to-date with current thinking and good practice guidance. We discussed the benefits of introducing a more formal approach to self-evaluation and signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate document, 'Quality Framework for day care of children, childminding and school aged childcare.' This would contribute to children and families experiencing a high quality service that continues to develop and meet their changing needs.

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

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

### 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children experienced a relaxed, happy and nurturing service which reflected the childminder's values. Children had developed a strong and trusting relationship with the childminder. They were listened to and experienced compassionate and responsive care.

The childminder was experienced and confident in their role. Over the years as a childminder they had developed a wide range of skills and knowledge that enabled them to respond and support the individual needs of children. This demonstrated a very good understanding of children's development and the importance of providing nurture and positive attachments.

Positive relationships and partnership working were important and valued. Parents appreciated the approachable manner and flexible attitude of the childminder, commenting "Margaret is very approachable and fosters an open and inclusive environment." For example, settling in arrangements had been adapted helping families to have a positive experience when they started using the service.

Children were supported in their play and development of social skills and showed enthusiasm when the childminder joined in with their play. The childminder recognised and valued the importance of play and this was evident through play opportunities offered to children.

Children were protected from harm by the childminder who had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The childminder needed to take part in child protection refresher training. This would ensure their information and knowledge are current and in line with best guidance. (See Area for Improvement 1).

### Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should access child protection training to ensure knowledge and skills are up-to-date with good practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "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." (HSCS3.14)

## 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?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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