

# Borthwick, Alison

## Child Minding

Falkirk

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
26 April 2023

**Service provided by:**

**Service provider number:**  
SP2006956739

**Service no:**  
CS2006115915

## About the service

Alison Borthwick provides a childminding service from the family home in Carronshore, Falkirk. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, 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. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local amenities including the local school, nursery, shops and parks. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home with children accessing the lounge, playroom, kitchen and toilet. Children have access to the enclosed rear garden.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection that took place on 26 April 2023 from 13:30 to 15:30 hours. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three children using the service;
- spoke with the childminder;
- observed practice;
- reviewed documents; and
- gathered feedback about the service from families.

## Key messages

- Children benefitted from warm, kind and respectful relationships with the childminder who knew them well.
- Children were supported to achieve, develop skills and have fun through a variety of play and learning experiences.
- Children and families felt included in the service because positive relationships had been developed and communication was effective.
- The childminder aims to continue to develop their self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures highlighting what they do well, how they know and what they have identified as areas for improvement.

## 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

Children were supported by a childminder who showed a warm, kind and nurturing approach towards them. The childminder was responsive to the needs of children providing loving care and cuddles. Children felt safe and secure as a result. A parent said, "She's great, and works amazing with each of the children."

The childminder used a consistent approach when supporting children to manage their emotions. They supported children by calmly reassuring them through the use of positive language and, where appropriate, distraction techniques. Children were encouraged to consider the needs and feelings of others. As a result, they felt valued, loved and secure and were building emotional resilience.

The childminder valued partnership working with families encouraging trusting and respectful relationships. Listening to families and acting on their wishes meant that the childminder got to know children well. They were able to deliver personalised care that was tailored to meet their needs and delivered in a respectful way.

Children's overall health and wellbeing was supported by the effective use of personal plans. Information about children's care routines, development and experiences was included and reviewed at least every six months. This meant that the information was up to date and took account of children's interests and preferences.

Children experienced relaxed, unhurried and safe mealtimes. The children present during our visit enjoyed a healthy snack sitting at the table with the childminder. The childminder created a positive social experience which provided a rich opportunity to promote close, secure attachments.

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were able to explore a range of toys that encouraged their curiosity and promoted their learning and development. There was a balance of spontaneous and planned activities which promoted children's choice and independence. The childminder understood the importance and benefits of play experiences that took account of children's interests and stages of development. Children were developing skills including 'pom pom' making as they created animals and other art and craft activities. Their work was displayed in the playroom celebrating their achievements. Play and learning experiences supported children to have fun. A parent said, "She's very reliable. Is always looking for something new, activity wise, to do with the kids. Very informative."

Families were included in children's daily experiences through effective communication. Photographs and information about their experiences was shared through daily chats at drop off and pick up and through the use of an online platform. The information gathered and recorded in personal plans about children showed their progress and learning. The childminder was able to agree possible next steps in children's development, supporting them to achieve their potential.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported through their outdoor learning experiences. They enjoyed walks, trips to local parks and playing in the garden. Children developed confidence and resilience through rich outdoor play experiences that supported them to enjoy the freedom to explore the natural outdoor environment.

## 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.

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

Children were cared for in a warm, nurturing and homely environment. The areas used for childminding were clean and well maintained. Children were confident as they moved around the areas of the home and showed us their favourite toys and games. This meant they were following their interests and leading their own play and learning. Children felt a sense of belonging in the family home and had opportunities to achieve and develop a variety of skills. A parent said, "It's a lovely, homely environment."

The garden provided a safe space for children to play outdoors. The childminder's assistant supported children to take part in risky play experiences including building with wood and using real tools. Children were included in planting and growing fruit and vegetables and developing physically as they climbed and played on the swings. Playing with loose parts and natural resources were supporting children's skills in understanding, thinking, investigation and problem solving.

Children were safe and secure in the setting. Risk assessments had indicated where measures had been put in place to reduce hazards, and infection prevention and control measures were evident, including effective hand washing. The childminder spoke with children about keeping themselves safe including when walking home from school. They managed the environment well to promote children's health and wellbeing.

Children's and families' personal information was securely stored. This showed the childminder understood their responsibilities regarding storing and processing children's personal information.

## 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.

### Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are well led

The childminder had created a happy and welcoming ethos in the service which promoted a positive atmosphere for children to play and learn. Families felt confident speaking with the childminder if they had concerns or required support. The childminder had built trusting relationships with children and families, ensuring that they felt included in the service.

The childminder had kept the required records, including accident and incident records, medication records and risk assessments. This supported them to meet the legislative and regulatory requirements of operating a registered childminding service and to keep children safe.

The childminder recognised the importance of involving children and families in the development of the

service. They used questionnaires and informal chats to gather their views. Changes to the service met children's individual needs and took account of their interests and preferences. This meant children and families felt valued and included.

The childminder was reflective in their practice bringing about some positive change to the service. They used discussions with other childminders and current practice guidance to support this process. The childminder should use Care Inspectorate's 'A quality framework for day care of children, childminding, and school aged children' (February 22) as a tool to formalise self-evaluation. This will support them to identify strengths and develop a clear plan to support continuous improvement in the service.

## How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

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

### Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment

The childminder shared information so families knew what the service offered. The statement of aims and objectives created a shared vision of respect and a nurturing approach to caring for children. This created a happy and welcoming ethos.

The role of the assistant in the service was managed well by the childminder. Roles and responsibilities included supporting children with play and learning experiences. These included planting and growing in the greenhouse. On arrival after school, children were interested in what the assistant was busy with in the shed. The assistant showed warmth, kindness and compassion towards the children when responding. Warm attachments meant children felt safe and secure.

The assistant supported continuity in how the service operated. They followed the advice of the childminder when caring for the children. The childminder shared learning and discussed the practice guidance that supported the delivery of the service. The assistant had developed positive relationships with families by being involved in meetings and being present at drop off and pick up times. This meant they knew children well resulting in a consistent approach in meeting children's individual needs.

## 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
4.3 Staff deployment	5 - Very Good

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