

# Aimee Helps Childminder Child Minding

Broxburn

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
3 May 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Aimee Helps

**Service provider number:**  
SP2019990946

**Service no:**  
CS2019378035

## About the service

Aimee Helps Childminding Service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years of age, of whom no more than 3 are not yet of an age to attend primary school, and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family.

The childminding service is located in a residential area of Winchburgh, West Lothian. Children have access to the kitchen/diner and living room and use the childminder's own children's bedrooms. Children can use toilet facilities downstairs and upstairs. Children also benefit from a spacious enclosed rear garden for regular outdoor play.

The service is close to local schools and nurseries. Other amenities such as shops and parks are nearby.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 3 May 2023 between 10:45 and 13:15. 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 one child using the service
- received written feedback from one parent
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

A range of experiences offered children fun and learning opportunities. These could be enhanced through use of best practice documents in early learning and childcare.

The childminder had demonstrated commitment to improving their service. A number of improvements had been made to the service to enhance outcomes for children.

All children had an informative personal plan, which meant that their current needs, wishes, and choices were understood and supported by the childminder.

Children enjoyed daily outdoor play experiences, which kept them active and allowed them to have regular fun, playing outdoors.

The childminder had created a home from home space with cosy areas indoors for children to relax and to support their emotional wellbeing.

## 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

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

### Quality Indicator: 1.1 Nurturing care and support

Children were loved, nurtured, and supported by the kind and caring childminder who clearly had children's best interests at the heart of the service provided. The childminder knew the children well and took a genuine interest in them as individuals. As a result, children were settled, confident and happy in the childminder's home.

Since the last inspection personal plans had been improved. All children had an informative personal plan, which was reviewed every six months or sooner with children and parents. Plans detailed the appropriate information to inform the childminder about children's current individual health needs and personal preferences. As a result, children's needs, wishes, and choices were understood and supported whilst in the care of the childminder.

Parents supplied children's meals and some snacks, which contained healthy food options. This contributed to a well-balanced diet. Children sat at the table to eat meals and snacks which supported them to learn good table manners. The childminder carefully managed food intolerances to keep children safe. The childminder provided fruit and healthy snacks for children after school which further supported good eating habits.

The childminder had not had to administer medication recently. We noted that administration of medication system was not fully in place. For example, there were no consent forms for medication to be given. We signposted the childminder to the good practice guidance: Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services (Care Inspectorate, 2014). To keep children safe and healthy, the childminder should introduce effective systems to reflect the guidance.

### Quality Indicator: 1.3 Play and learning

Children were empowered to be involved in their play and learning. They had choices about where they wanted to play and what they wanted to do. For example, children moved freely between indoors and the garden based on what they wanted to play with. Children were free to follow their individual interests and had access to a range of resources. These were stored at child's height in the kitchen, living room and outdoors. Children were busy in their play and were having fun developing their own ideas, such as transporting water in the garden. Moving forward the childminder could introduce open-ended resources which could be made available daily for play. This would add depth to children's play through opportunities to be creative and imaginative. The use of real items would also be beneficial for children to explore and experiment with. The 'Loose Parts Play - a tool kit 2019' (Inspiring Scotland, 2019) would offer ideas and inspiration for this.

Planning for play was informal but took account of children's needs and interests, meaning their individual preferences were catered for. The childminder had taken on board advice given at the last inspection and had worked hard at making improvements to the service.

This included recording children's progress and keeping a book of photographs for children to revisit and reflect on their learning. This helped the childminder to track children's progress. Moving forward, the childminder could encourage children to add their voices to the book to support them to discuss what they enjoyed and what they might like to plan to do next. This would further support children to be included in making decisions about what play experiences they would like to engage in and recognise their achievements.

Children enjoyed joining the childminder for singing and dancing. This created opportunities for them to be expressive, develop social skills and self-confidence. Children were supported to develop emerging literacy, language, and numeracy skills through engagement in fun play experiences. For example, conversations, singing and storytelling. One parent told us, "Aimee is accommodating and friendly and cannot do enough for the kids. She is so fun, and the kids love her!"

### How good is our setting?

**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: 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced a homely, welcoming, and comfortable environment with plenty of natural light and ventilation. The childminder had created a home from home space with cosy areas indoors for children to relax and to support their emotional wellbeing. Children were kept safe and protected because the service was well maintained and clean.

Regular community outings to places of interest, such as nearby parks and woodlands supported children to be active and have fun. This contributed to their good health and enabled them to engage in energetic play experiences.

Infection prevention and control measures were in place throughout the day. For example, handwashing and effect cleaning practices. The childminder could improve this by providing consistent support for children to wash hands at all key times, such as before and after eating. This will further reduce the risk of infection spread and encourage good personal hygiene habits for children.

The introduction of fire safety evacuation procedures, including termly evacuation practice would ensure that children know what to do in the event of an unforeseen evacuation. This would help them to keep themselves and others safe.

### 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

Children benefited from the vision and ethos of the service which positively informed practice. For example, the aims of the service were to provide a fun and cheerful home from home setting. As a result, children were comfortably settled and moved around the home with confidence.

The childminder had demonstrated commitment to improving their service. They had prepared an improvement plan based on advice and guidance offered at the last inspection. Several improvements had been made to the service to enhance outcomes for children. These included improvements made to children's personal plans. Similarly, the broader range of easily accessible toys and play materials influenced and encouraged children to make choices in their play. Moving forward, the childminder should record the impact that such improvements had made to outcomes for children on the plan and continue to work through future improvement priorities. This would support the childminder to further develop the skill of self-evaluation and could help embed continuous improvements to the quality service provided. To support ongoing self-evaluation, the childminder should familiarise themselves with good practice guidance: 'A quality framework for daycare, childminding and school aged children' (Care Inspectorate, 2022) and 'Your Childminding Journey' (Care Inspectorate, 2017).

Children and families were informally involved and were influencing some change in the service. Good relationships had been built with parents. This enabled shared communication about children which kept care consistent. There was scope for parent and children views to be sought more formally. Formalising service evaluation with parents would enhance their involvement in planning for improvements. For example, asking parents to feedback on specific aspects of the service which could then be used to plan for change. To support this, the childminder could use the improvement bitesize sessions available on the Care Inspectorate website 'The Hub'. When we asked parents what they felt could be improved in the service, the response was "Nothing at all." This showed that parents were satisfied with the service provided.

## 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.

### Quality Indicator: 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values

Children were relaxed and had strong bonds with the childminder. For example, children enjoying laughing with the childminder, as they had fun together. The childminder used humour, songs, and fun to engage children. Children responded well to this and as a result, they felt valued, loved and secure. A parent told us "Aimee is a gem, I think my kids would happily just live with her. Best childcare we have ever used."

Opportunities to reflect on practice and discuss training with other childminders took place within a local childminder group. This showed the childminder's commitment to developing skills and knowledge necessary for their role. As a result, there had been improvements in the childminder's practice and service delivery since the last inspection. For example, the development of children's personal plans.

The childminder kept up to date with core training such as child protection, safeguarding and first aid. As a result, the childminder was clear about signs of concern and how to record, report and monitor child protection concerns. This knowledge should keep children safe and protected from harm should a situation arise.

The childminder was familiar with some best practice documents on the Care Inspectorate website 'The Hub'. We discussed how reviewing guidance documents could also support practice and individual learning. We suggested the childminder kept a record of professional reading and training. This would support them to reflect on changes in practice because of knowledge gained and the impact on service delivery and outcomes for children.

## 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

To ensure that all children's health, welfare, and safety needs are met, sufficient information should be gathered and recorded about all children as part of their personal plan. This will ensure children's care is based on up to date and reliable information. This should include, but not limited to the childminder developing an understanding of the purpose of personal planning. Personal plans being reviewed at least once every six months or sooner with children and parents to make sure that information is up to date.

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

**This area for improvement was made on 22 April 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

Since the last inspection personal plans had improved. The childminder had sought advice from a childminding colleague and had introduced new personal plans.

As a result, all children had a personal plan, which was reviewed every six months or sooner with children and parents. Plans detailed the appropriate information to inform the childminder about children's current individual health needs and personal preferences.

**This area for improvement had been met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should consider how to support learning at an appropriate pace for each child, whilst challenging them to reach their full potential. The childminder should consider specifically but not exclusively, developing a sound knowledge of:

- child development and how children learn through play
- how to observe and record children's development and learning to plan further play experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem, and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1:31).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 April 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

The childminder had taken on board advice given at the last inspection and had worked hard at making improvements to the service. This included recording children's progress and keeping a book of photographs for children to revisit and reflect on their learning. Moving forward, the childminder could

encourage children to add their voices to the book to support them to discuss what they enjoyed and what they might like to plan to do next.

Opportunities to reflect on practice and discuss training with other childminders took place within a local childminder group. This showed the childminder's commitment to developing skills and knowledge necessary for their role. As a result, there have been improvements in the childminder's practice and service delivery since the last inspection. This enhanced play and learning opportunities for children.

**This area for improvement had been met.**

## Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should introduce a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for children's age and stage, to stimulate their natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 April 2022.**

### Action taken since then

Children now had access to a range of resources that were stored at child's height in the kitchen, living room and outdoors. There was also an additional space and more resources in one of the childminder's own children's bedrooms upstairs. Children enjoyed using this space and accessing these toys. Creative materials such as paint, glue and collage materials were displayed for children to freely choose. The childminder could build on this by introducing more open-ended resources and real items that children could explore and experiment with.

**This area for improvement had been met.**

## Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure that children are given the best opportunities the childminder should demonstrate a commitment to participate in professional learning opportunities. This would improve their practice and outcomes for children. This should include, but not limited to, the childminder familiarising themselves with the range of best practice documents. The childminder should record their learning to support them to reflect and plan how they will improve their practice as a result of their learning.

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' (HSCS 3.14).

This is to ensure the childminder's skills and knowledge is consistent with best practice guidance documents; Realising the Ambition, My Childminding Journey, The GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators, and the Health and Social Care Standards.

**This area for improvement was made on 22 April 2022.**



**Action taken since then**

The childminder had worked closely with another local childminder who had provided support for improvement. Similarly, the childminder embraced opportunities to reflect on practice and discuss training with other childminders. This showed their commitment to developing the skills and knowledge necessary for their role. As a result, there have been improvements in the childminder's practice and service delivery since the last inspection.

The childminder would benefit from continuing to review the range of best practice documents to further enhance their practice and individual learning. The childminder should keep a record of professional reading and training. This would support them to reflect on changes in practice as a result of knowledge gained and the impact on service delivery and outcomes for children.

**This area for improvement had 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?	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

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.