

Reynolds, Nikki Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 October 2025

Service provided by:
Nikki Reynolds

Service provider number:
SP2011983010

Service no:
CS2011303503

About the service

Nikki Reynolds is a childminder registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16. No more than three of the six children are not yet attending primary school, and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminders family.

The service is delivered from the childminder's home in a residential area in south west Edinburgh. It is close to transport links and local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which started on Thursday 9 October 2025 between the hours of 10:30 and 13:00. We returned to complete the inspection on Friday 10 October 2025 between the hours of 14:00 and 15:30. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out this inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- observed three children present;
- invited parents to offer feedback and received no responses;
- spoke with the childminder;
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment;
- observed practice and daily routines; and
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and the management of the service.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within the Leadership heading.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Warm, kind and fun interactions made children feel loved, nurtured and respected.
- Children had a range of resources to use in play. Further consideration should be given to the depth of experience planned for each stage of development.
- During inspection, the childminder was working outwith their conditions of registration. This was addressed quickly and steps were taken to vary the registration conditions to accommodate families.
- Children would benefit from the childminder keeping up to date with and using best practice guidance to inform decision making and improvements.

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

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

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

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children had a fun, respectful and home from home experience, which reflected the childminder's vision for the service. A strength of the service was the childminder's keen interest and commitment to building and maintaining positive connections with the families they support. The childminder recognised the importance of involving parents in the service to benefit children. For example, parents suggestions were sought and used to make changes, such as adding new food to the lunch menu. This demonstrated the core values of inclusion and respect.

There was some evidence of quality assurance across the service which helped the childminder to start identifying where improvements could be made. For example, more garden equipment had been purchased to offer children wider opportunities to develop their physical skills. However, some aspects of the service did not fully meet best practice guidance. For example, children ate at a table which could not be effectively cleaned due to breaks in the surface. Furthermore, the childminder was working outwith their conditions of registration during inspection, which had the potential to compromise children's outcomes. This was addressed quickly and steps were taken to vary the service conditions. We were satisfied that this had been very recent and not over a period of time. The childminder should ensure the service follows guidance on how to vary a registration certificate. This would ensure the service continues to be safe for children (see area for improvement 1).

While improvement planning was used to set out priorities for the year, further work was needed to ensure actions were guided by current best practice guidance. Moving forward, the childminder should use the range of guidance found on the Care Inspectorate's website The Hub to enhance their improvement planning. This would support benchmarking of quality and offer inspiration for enhancing children's outcomes. For example, adhering to infection prevention and control and safe sleeping guidance would contribute to children's health and safety (see area for improvement 1). This is to ensure the childminder develops a culture of continuous improvement in line with good practice and high aspirations for children's experiences.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's health, welfare and safety are consistently considered and planned for, the childminder should keep up to date with and use best practice guidance to inform decision making and improvements. This should include but not be limited to practice around:
 - children's health and wellbeing; and
 - conditions of registration for the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state, 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

During inspection children were confidently exploring resources and the environment. They had the freedom to move around the space and transport toys as they wished. The childminder was responsive to children, picking up on some cues for their desire to be outside or have stories. Children were encouraged to try new things and enabled as the childminder sat with them and modelled some play. For example, a threading activity and peeling fruit for snack. Moving forward, the childminder should be consistent with this slow, mindful approach to enabling children. This would offer opportunities for learning in everyday tasks and ensure children have time to process new information and skills. For example, children should be empowered to take off their own jacket, sit down and stand up by themselves and climb on and off garden toys.

Children's language development benefited from the childminder's ongoing conversations, where vocabulary was introduced and modelled. Props were being used to engage children in story-telling, such as puppets in rhyme bags. Some numeracy development was observed such as counting down with children. The childminder should continue to develop both literacy and numeracy opportunities. For example, continuous access to mark-making resources and developing the plan to introduce rhyme bags to families for joint partnerships in learning.

Improvements to the general environment would enhance children's engagement in learning. During inspection, the resources available were not set up to engage and invite children into play. For example, the chalk easel had no chalk and the tool bench was missing some pieces.

Open-ended materials which promote children's natural curiosity and inquiry skills were limited. As a result, there were missed opportunities to support children's creativity. This was identified by the childminder as an area for development but had yet to be progressed. To further enhance children's play experiences, the childminder should develop the variety and depth of resources rather than volume of similar toys.

Children had access to the outdoors each day for fresh air and physical activity. A large secure garden offered space to run around with equipment to practice large motor skills. For example, there was a chute, swing, see-saw and climbing frame. Regular visits into the local community offered variety and new experiences. For example, singing and story groups at the library. Local wooded areas were used for exploring more natural environments. To further enhance children's learning outdoors, the childminder should extend experiences and resources in the garden so children can discover, experiment and explore there.

Children's learning needs were mostly being monitored and planned for as the childminder observed and responded to them. This would be enhanced through the consideration of the differing stages of children's development. For example, babies need different experiences from toddlers. The childminder should continue to refine children's learning journals so to include records of specific learning, celebrate achievements and identify meaningful next steps for children's learning and development. This would contribute to all children meeting their full potential.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

The childminder understood the importance of secure relationships and nurturing care had on children's wellbeing. Children benefited from kind, warm and familiar interactions, where they could relax and have fun. Children were confident that they would be listened to and have their needs consistently met. For example, young children's non-verbal cues were effectively noticed and responded to. Time and effort went into building and maintaining relationships with families. This supported strong connections and ensured families felt included in their child's experiences at the service.

Children were secure and comfortable through consistent daily routines between home and the service. The childminder worked alongside parents to share information and plan for meeting children's needs. Personal planning was used to record information and monitor children's progress. To further develop this, the childminder should ensure all parts of the personal plan reflects the current needs and wishes of children. This would help to ensure information is current and able to be used to set achievable goals in children's development.

The flow of the day was child-led as the childminder responded to their needs and choices. Mealtimes were regular and familiar for children and so they knew what to expect. Food options reflected best practice guidance for young children's nutritional needs. The childminder should ensure fruit is prepared in line with the guidance that reflects children's age and stage of development. Sleep and rest times followed children's individual needs, however did not reflect current best practice for safe sleeping. For example, a child slept in an upstairs bedroom with no monitor for ongoing supervision. The childminder should refer to the Care Inspectorate's website The Hub for best practice guidance on preventing choking and safe sleeping (see area for improvement 1 in 'Leadership').

Children's privacy and dignity were protected through respectful and sensitive approaches by the childminder. For example, personal care was carried out in the downstairs toilet and permissions were sought for care tasks. This meant children had some opportunities to be independent and involved in their care.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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