

Porter, Linda Child Minding

Elgin

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 October 2025

Service provided by:
Linda Porter

Service provider number:
SP2004917072

Service no:
CS2007152564

About the service

Linda Porter is registered to provide a childminding service to six children at any one time, up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is situated in a residential area of a town, close to a school and some local amenities. Children are cared for in the lounge and kitchen/diner. A secure garden to the rear of the property can be accessed from the lounge and kitchen.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14 October 2025 between 11:00 and 14:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. There were two children present at the inspection.

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:

- received four questionnaires from families
- spoke with the childminder
- spoke with a child
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents.

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, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children were confident and happy, their independence and decision-making was very well supported by the fun, planned and responsive experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- The childminder had strong understanding of how children developed and progressed in their learning. They used effective approaches to support children's language and social skills.
- The childminder provided a stimulating and well-resourced environment that supported children's imagination and meaningful learning.
- Well considered and purposeful self-evaluation enabled the childminder to deliver high quality care.
- The childminder worked proactively with the children and families to identify support needs and identify strategies that ensured children's wellbeing was sustained.
- The childminder knew their children and families well. They strived to create a warm and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Leadership and management of staff and resources

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The service vision, values and aims were embedded in everyday life and helped to inform the childminder's practice and how the service would be delivered. The ethos of the service was founded on principles of high-quality childcare, learning and building strong and reliable relationships with children and their families that supported a quality culture.

To help ensure that children and families were well informed and shared responsibility for changes, we advised the childminder to actively involve them in the review and design of the vision, values and aims.

Well considered and purposeful self-evaluation enabled the childminder to deliver high quality care. The childminder sought and used the views of children and families to inform change and secure improvement. Changes were being made to the outdoor play space to enhance play and learning opportunities for the children. Quality assurance supported the childminder to improve and included reflection and sharing of practice with other childminders, local and national advice and best practice guidance.

Parents shared, 'We are often asked for feedback, ideas and plans that are included'. She'll also ask if there's anything specific we would like her to focus on'.

To help monitor continuous improvement and the difference made to children and families, we suggested that the childminder kept a concise record of any changes they had made and impact of any professional development/learning.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Playing, learning and developing

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The childminder had a strong understanding of how children developed and progressed in their learning and used effective approaches to support children's language and social skills. For example, when a child repeatedly misnamed a car's colour, the childminder gently prompted, 'If this one is green, what colour is this one?' helping the child reflect and self-correct.

The childminder provided a stimulating and well-resourced environment that enriched children's play and supported meaningful learning. Children engaged with varied resources such as cars of different shapes and sizes, ramps, and a play mat with numbers. They constructed and created objects from a variety of building toys and brick sets. This sustained interest and enabled them to develop problem-solving skills and supported learning across developmental areas, including numeracy. We asked the childminder to consider how children could deepen their experiences and learning through digital technology. Perhaps they could

take photos of their interests/achievement during play, for example.

Children were confident and happy, their independence and decision-making was very well supported by the planned and responsive experiences both indoors and outdoors. They expressed their preferences and needs, showing they felt secure and emotionally supported. They were able to play and learn at their own pace. Children were looking forward to a visit to a local natural play garden and taking part in a name the pumpkin trail. During play children were able to try things for themselves and test things out. When a child was struggling to connect a block, the childminder provided gentle encouragement and said push hard, they were clearly pleased when it worked. The childminder understood that interacting and exploring with the children was a valuable way to build vocabulary and foster understanding.

Careful observations and effective assessments recognised and promoted children's progress and achievements which was shared with families. This responsive approach ensured that children were developing a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills for life and learning. We suggested that the childminder streamlined their formats used for the purposes of assessment so children's progress was easily identified.

Parents shared: 'Linda provides regular updates regarding my child's progress and will advise what they are currently working on, and anything specific we would like her to focus on'. 'Any issues/progress regarding my child's care, play and learning always done in person and explained fully'. 'Linda offers variety with your child's likes/dislikes in mind'.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

Nurturing care and support

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The childminder understood that nurturing relationships were essential for children's growth and development. As a result, children experienced warm and consistent care that fostered their wellbeing. They were safe, sensitively cared for and skilfully helped to express their needs. During play outside, a young child sought reassuring hugs from the childminder, and received praise when they managed to kick the football across the garden. Children were supported to socialise and play together or alone if they wished. The childminder encouraged and modelled turn-taking and sharing when children wanted the same toys. It positively impacted on children's ability to regulate their emotions and build social skills.

Children's food choices aligned with dietary guidelines such as Setting the table and Food matters. They were culturally appropriate and safely prepared to take account for any specific dietary needs, allergies or intolerances, both the childminder and parents provided foods. Fresh water was available to children throughout the day and the childminder encouraged them to drink, especially after active play.

Children's privacy and dignity was respected. The childminder balanced promoting independence with providing support where it was needed such as toilet training. They reflected and adapted their practice to children's evolving needs and development. Consistency in routines provided children with a sense of safety and security. Children chose to use large cushions/bean bags to relax and recuperate after active play outdoors. Mealtimes enhanced children's independence and social experiences, they sat at the table together with the childminder.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning, the plan was tailored to each child's individual strengths, needs and interests. Children and families were meaningfully and sensitively involved in their child's plan, that was regularly reviewed. The childminder worked proactively with children and families to identify support needs and strategies that ensured children's wellbeing was sustained.

The childminder knew their children and families well. They strived to create a warm and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported. The connection the childminder had formed with families enabled them to feel engaged and share insights on their child's development. The collaborative approach helped to ensure that care remained responsive to children's unique needs.

Families had regular opportunities to informally and formally discuss their child's care, development and learning. The childminder had systems in place to support regular communication with families both verbally and in writing. They understood that each child's development was shaped by their family, friends, community and experiences and welcomed families to share in their child's experiences. This impacted positively on the quality of children's care and support, both at home and in the care of the childminder.

Parents shared: 'I can go to work knowing my child is in a safe environment, eating well and having fun. I look forward to collection time where my child will boast what they have been doing all day'. 'Linda goes above and beyond for each child in her care'. 'Linda really stood out with her professionalism and kind, calm manner'.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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