

Gallacher, Maxine Child Minding

Coatbridge

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
22 October 2025

Service provided by:
Maxine Gallacher

Service provider number:
SP2007965689

Service no:
CS2007155365

About the service

Maxine Gallacher is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, 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. At the time of the inspection six children were registered to attend the service, of which two were present during our visit.

The childminder operates the service from their family home, which is in the Coatbridge area of North Lanarkshire. There are schools, nurseries and shops nearby.

The children have access to the downstairs of the property which includes a lounge, dining room, toilet and kitchen. The enclosed back garden is accessed through the dining room.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 October 2025 between 09:15 and 11:45. 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 two children using the service and one of their family members
- spoke with the childminder
- gathered feedback from four families using a survey
- observed practice and children's experiences
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- 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, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within 'Children are supported to achieve.'

Key messages

- Children were happy, content and engaged in their play.
- The childminder had a good understanding of child development and provided well planned play and learning experiences to support each child's needs.
- Children's information records should include personal plans that outline their needs and agreed strategies on how the childminder will support these.
- To further support the services self-evaluation a review of all policies and corresponding paperwork should take place to ensure they are following good practice 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

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.

The childminder had a clear vision for the service that was underpinned by a clear set of values, which included children should be kept safe and nurtured. The childminder's home was welcoming and provided a place where children can feel loved and respected. The children told us they liked attending the service and they were happy and felt safe in the childminder's care.

The childminder shared the services vision and values with families when they were first introduced. This helped to enable families to make an informed decision if this was the right service for them. To further enhance the services vision and values, they should consider involving the children and families in designing a written vision and values statement. This could ensure they not only meet their expectations but those of the children and families.

Children were regularly consulted and involved in making decisions about their play and learning. Daily discussions allowed children to share their views and influence their daily experiences for example, choosing if they want to go for a woodlands walk or to stay in the house to play. Using this approach helped children to know their views mattered and to recognise others feelings.

Parents were welcomed into the childminders home each day. The childminder recognised the importance of understanding the needs and the expectations of families. Through daily communications they ensured parents views were listened to and respected. Together they planned how best to support children's needs for example, working in partnership with a family had helped a child to toilet train successfully, at their own pace, when they were ready.

The childminder's approach to self-evaluation and quality assurance was informal. They could consider making more use of good practice guidance, research or learning from professional reading to support future self-evaluations. We have included an area for improvement to support the childminder's future plans under the heading 'Children are supported to achieve.'

The service had policies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding of children. They attended training and some webinars to ensure they were kept well informed of current good practice and legislation, on keeping children safe. We discussed the services safety measures when they transported children by car. One child told us they keep safe in the car by sitting in their seat and having their seat belt on. We asked the childminder to ensure they had the appropriate car insurance in place for transporting children, as part of a childminding business, which they confirmed was in place.

The childminder should ensure they keep up to date with changes in good practice and legislation more often. To achieve this, they need to consider accessing more information online for example, the good practice guidance for childminders for infection, prevention and control. As this is now found on public health website, under the guidance titled 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education'. This is to ensure they follow good practice guidance around hand hygiene using single use towels.

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.

The childminder had a clear understanding of children's development. They shared they had been a childminder for many years. They used their experience and knowledge working with children to plan and provide quality experiences. Parents were very happy with the service their children received. One parent told us they liked that their child was part of a small group and able to learn from each other, in a calm and comfortable environment.

Children's daily experiences were well planned around their needs and interests. We were informed children enjoyed outdoor play, resulting in many woodland walks. Within the setting they had fun using their imaginations and reading stories. We observed the children to be engaged having fun, playing with the dolls and then reading books. They were comfortable, content and having time to lead their play, at their own pace.

The daily routine considered the needs of the other children for example, being dropped off or collected from school. The childminder was mindful to ensure children's play had minimal interruptions. As a result, the daily routine was flexible to give them ample time to play in the setting and local community, minimising time in transit.

Children knew where to find the materials within the setting, in the large treasure chest. One child told us they like the electronic books, the ones that made sounds. Children had access to materials to support their early literacy and numeracy development. The childminder embraced the children's love for fairies, whilst out in the local community, to extend and challenge their thinking. This helped children to learn whilst using their natural curiosity when listening to stories.

The childminder was skilled at observation and knowing when to interact with children. They always remained nearby but gave the children space to play on their own, with each other and with the childminder. They were skilled at responding to children's cues, for example when they needed more challenge or a change in direction of play.

Children were respected and their voices were listened to. They voiced when they wanted other materials or when they were ready for snack. The childminder supported them when learning skills such as good hand washing. We heard children being praised for good hand washing and they were proud of their achievements telling the inspector how they had washed their hands using soap and dried them.

Conversations between the childminder and the children were natural and relaxed. Children were confident and comfortable interacting with the childminder, they showed genuine care and respect to them. Parents agreed, one parent shared with us 'she is a wonderful childminder that teaches about care and responsibility while also engaging in fun and entertaining topics with the children'. The childminder showed respect and love, which helped to enable children to share their views and realise their opinions mattered.

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 recognised the importance of nurturing relationships being essential in children's growth and development. Recognising each child as an individual, showing them love and making them feel welcomed was embedded within the settings values. Having such values had helped the childminder to work in partnership with families. As a result, they had created a setting where children received warm, consistent and responsive care and support. This helped children to feel safe and secure within the setting and out and about in the local community.

Children were introduced and supported during key transitions in their lives. For example, strategies were in place to support children when they started attending the setting or when they moved on to primary school. The childminder worked closely with families to minimise disruption to children during these times by making transitions as smooth as possible.

Mealtimes were a sociable and relaxed time of day for the children, they sat together and talked about their experiences. Children had opportunities to choose from nutritious foods, which their parents provided. The childminder supervised children whilst eating and drinking to promote and encourage good eating habits. Mealtimes were planned around children's needs but were flexible to support personal preferences.

The childminder held the required information for each child in their care. This included information such as medical and dietary needs. However, they did not have a personal plan in place for children, legislation states each child must have a personal plan. We were reassured that the childminder was able to verbally discuss each child's needs and how these were being supported. Parents comments confirmed this, with one sharing 'she supports and encourages her to achieve to the best of her ability.' They were able to show us photos of children within the setting having fun. We have made an area for improvement that every child has a personal plan that reflects them as an individual, their needs and how the childminder plans to support them (see area for improvement one).

Families were welcomed into the service each day. They shared with us some comments about what they liked about the service, 'Maxine has always been extremely accommodating and helpful. She is always reachable and responds very quickly and always has my child's best interests in mind. This allowed me to form a very good relationship with her.' and another shared that 'I am very close to Maxine and trust her completely.' As a result, parents felt reassured that the childminder loved and cared for their children. Having these strong connections with families helped to enable the children to have a sense of belonging between their family and the setting, fostering a family-centred culture and the opportunity to build strong relationships.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's wellbeing, learning and development the provider should ensure each child has a personal plan. These should include, but not be limited to;

- children's health and wellbeing needs
- how the service plans to support these
- be created in consultation with parents, staff and other professionals

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "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) and "my care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19).

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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