

Chisholm, Linda Child Minding

Irvine

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 October 2025

Service provided by:
Linda Chisholm

Service provider number:
SP2008970769

Service no:
CS2008180986

About the service

Mrs Chisholm has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011 to provide a childminding service. The childminder provided her service from their home, a terraced two-storey house, which is situated in a residential area of Irvine in North Ayrshire. The home is within easy distance of local amenities. Minded children mainly have access to the sitting room, and supervised access to the kitchen and rear garden.

The childminder worked in partnership with North Ayrshire Council to provide funded Early Learning and Childcare.

The childminder is registered to care for 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 whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. At the time of this inspection, seven children were registered with the service. On the day of inspection, the childminder was providing a service for three children within the conditions of her registration.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 06 October 2025 between 09:30 and 12:30. 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 registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

Spoke with the childminder.

Observed practice and daily life.

Reviewed documents.

Received feedback from five parents/carers.

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

- The childminder demonstrated strong leadership through a welcoming and reflective approach.
- Effective communication, and professional development contributed to a well-managed service that supported positive outcomes for children and families.
- Children were confident, engaged, and able to lead their own play in a thoughtfully planned environment.
- Respectful relationships supported children to feel nurtured, secure and valued.
- Strong partnerships with families and other agencies ensured personalised care and effective transitions.

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

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this heading as very good.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder was welcoming and engaged well during the inspection process. They were open to discussions and welcomed any suggestions and feedback to support improvement. For example, we suggested some small amendments to children's tracking paperwork to ensure it continued to be meaningful. This meant children and families experienced a service that was well led and managed.

The childminder recognised the importance of nurturing, friendly, and responsive care. This was reflected in the warm, inclusive environment and the childminder's attentiveness to children's emotional wellbeing. Although values were not formally co-developed with children and families, what was currently in place was evident in daily practice and interactions. For example, regular and respectful communication with families was maintained through daily diaries, home-link books, newsletters, and informal conversations. This approach positively influenced the quality of care and experiences for children and families. We discussed with the childminder the benefits of including children and families in reviewing the values of the service. The childminder acknowledged the need to consult more meaningfully with them to ensure the vision and values reflect what matters most to those using the service.

To support their improvement journey, the childminder had previously used the Care Inspectorate 'Quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged- aged childcare' to engage in reflective practice and self evaluation. This supported the childminder in identifying what was working well and what could be further developed. For example, the childminder identified the importance of oral health and, through reflective discussions and feedback, prioritised toothbrushing and Childsmile activities. To support sustained improvement these were added to the service improvement plan where impact could be monitored. This demonstrated adaptability and a commitment to continuous improvement.

The childminder valued parent and children's views and communication was a strength of the service. A number of methods to gather feedback were used, including questionnaires for parents and children, suggestions invited through newsletters, and daily opportunities for discussion. The childminder told us that views gathered were used to inform meaningful change. One parent commented: "As previously mentioned we take part in formal and informal discussion in order to support [childminder] to develop their service. These have taken the form of questionnaires and discussion and through their own observation and feedback of the children, and by listening to the children." As a result parents felt informed and involved in their child's care and learning.

The childminder's was keen to continuously develop their knowledge and practice and spoke positively about professional learning and development opportunities they had recently taken part in. These including, observation and tracking and child protection training events.. Following training, the childminder kept a detailed record of reflections. This included, how the childminder could embed any idea and principles in to their practice and potential impact. This approach supported the childminder to develop their skills and knowledge, contributing to positive outcomes for children and families.

Children play and learn **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: Playing, learning and developing

Interactions between the childminder and children were warm, responsive, and respectful. Children were comfortable approaching the childminder and frequently invited them into their play, indicating strong, trusting relationships. One parent commented: "[Childminder] is amazing! They are kind, caring and supportive. The [childminder] treats the children with dignity and respect and works hard to ensure that they are safe, happy and engaged." The childminder was attuned to children's verbal and non-verbal cues and responded sensitively, supporting emotional wellbeing and promoting a sense of security.

Children were confident in leading their own play. They moved freely around the space, selecting resources that were accessible and thoughtfully arranged to spark interest. For example, a playdough tuff tray was available and filled with materials including googly eyes, rolling pins, pipe cleaners and cupcake cases. This prompted children to make their own Hallowe'en monsters and cupcakes. It was evident that the childminder had used information from personal plans to tailor the environment to individual needs and preferences. Sensory and loose parts play were available and took account of children's ages and stages of development. One parent commented: "The [childminder] has a variety of outings, groups, events planned for the children to take part in or celebrate. They look to ensure that they have different experiences and picks up on their interests." This approach encouraged exploration and creativity.

Planning was responsive and child-centred, with experiences linked to children's interests and personal plans. Children's voices were clearly reflected in the experiences offered. Visual prompts and choice boards enabled children to influence daily experiences. The childminder used 'big books' to record some observations of children learning. These books also included photographs of children taking part in a range of experiences and local visits, including the park. The childminder told us these books were well liked by children and parents. The childminder recognised that more frequent and detailed observations within children's big book would strengthen assessment and provide clearer evidence of progress over time.

Children could access a range of books, matching and sorting games and materials for writing and mark making. Whilst these resources and experiences provided some literacy and numeracy opportunities there was scope to further embed these across the environment and daily routines. The childminder had begun to introduce digital experiences for younger children, including I-pads for games and research. The childminder was considering how to extend this for older children in a developmentally appropriate way. This will support challenge and encourage children to further develop their skills in technology.

There was some evidence of effective questioning to deepen children's understanding and extend their learning. For example, during number games, the childminder facilitated playful interactions that encouraged problem-solving and early numeracy skills. These interactions were purposeful and contributed to children's enjoyment and engagement.

Children are supported to achieve **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 heading as very good.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

The childminder was warm and nurturing in their approach. This was clearly reflected in interactions with children. One parent told us: "The [childminder] offers a warm, caring environment and look after our child with the utmost care." Children appeared relaxed, confident, and secure, approaching the childminder for cuddles, laughing and enjoying spending time with the childminder. As a result children felt loved and valued, supporting their overall wellbeing and development.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected at all times. The childminder embedded the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into daily practice, ensuring children's voices were heard and their choices respected. For example, children were encouraged to express preferences during play, and their views were considered when planning activities by using visual prompts. This approach promoted their right to be included.

Personal plans were in place for each child and were regularly reviewed to ensure they remained reflective of individual needs and interests. These plans had been made in consultation with parents and were available within 28 days of children starting the setting. These plans were used effectively to support children's progress, with clear targets that were meaningful and achievable. Parents were consulted and regular updates through both formal and informal discussions ensured that information within the plans was current and relevant to children's needs and stages of development. As a result, children received care and support that was right for them.

The childminder worked collaboratively with other agencies, including local nurseries, to support smooth transitions for children. One parent told us: "I work with [childminder] to decide on targets for my child and we review these regularly. The [childminder] also works with my child's EYC key worker on milestones, communicating with them and us daily on progress and next steps". This partnership working ensured continuity of care and learning, and helped children feel confident and prepared for their next stage. Information sharing was purposeful and focused on supporting children's emotional and developmental needs.

Mealtimes were calm and well-organised, providing a valuable opportunity for social interaction and the development of independence skills. Where children required support with feeding this was done warmly whilst encouraging children to develop their independence skills. Children were supported to make choices, for example, serve themselves, and tidying up afterwards. The childminder used these moments to engage children in conversations about their day and discuss what children may like to do in the afternoon. This contributed to a quality mealtime experience for all children.

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

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

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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 ਵਿਚ 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.