

Diane's Childminding Child Minding

Forres

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
25 November 2025

Service provided by:
Diane Bremner

Service provider number:
SP2016988239

Service no:
CS2016348867

About the service

Diane's Childminding is registered to provide a childminding service to care for 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.

The service operates from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area in the town of Forres in Morayshire. She makes use of the kitchen/dining room, lounge and bathroom. There is also a large fully enclosed garden to the rear of the property which is very well used. The childminder also makes very good use of various local facilities including parks and walks to offer the children the opportunity to be healthy, active and have access to fresh air and exercise.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 25th November 2025 between 12:30 and 15:30. 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 previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with children using the service
- considered feedback from six families through an online questionnaire
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to the care of children 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, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children were all extremely happy, relaxed and enjoyed spending time in the care of the childminder.
- Children experienced very nurturing and responsive care and support that consistently met their individual needs and supported them to feel safe, secure and loved.
- The childminder was passionate and committed to her own professional development. They had an excellent knowledge of child development and caring for children's individual needs which was reflected in the quality of the experiences available.
- The childminder had established strong working relationships with families which contributed to positive outcomes.
- The children had access to a very warm and welcoming setting with a wide range of resources, including loose parts and open ended resources, which the children could independently access.
- The childminder used effective self-evaluation to identify and act on improvements, resulting in high quality care, play and learning experiences which were tailored to the individual needs of the children and their families.

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 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.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder demonstrated genuine passion and commitment to her role as a childminder. They welcomed the inspection process and feedback, showing a proactive approach to enhancing their service and continuing to provide a service of a consistently high standard.

The childminder had established a clear vision, values and aims including 'to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment', 'to promote a high standard of practice, including ongoing development and evaluation', and 'to ensure children are stimulated with a range of activities and resources'. The vision, values and aims were shared with families in the welcome pack prior to starting, helping them understand what to expect from the service. These values were reflected in daily practice and underpinned a nurturing, safe, and stimulating environment. We discussed with the childminder how she could actively involve children and their families in reviewing the vision, values and aims for the service.

The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Embedded systems of self evaluation and robust quality assurance processes had resulted in improvements to service provision and sustained positive outcomes for children and families. The childminder had used the document 'Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors : childminding' to evaluate their service against best practice. Self evaluation helped the childminder identify strengths and areas they would like to develop to ensure that they continued to deliver high quality care and learning tailored to the needs and choices of the children attending. The childminder had developed an improvement plan which was well thought out, clearly identified what areas of the service they wished to develop and realistic timescales to achieve these.

Regular informal processes of self-evaluation of the service were also in place. The childminder regularly reflected on their practice, using informal methods such as observations of children's play, conversations with the children and their families and feedback during settling-in periods. The childminder also made use of online questionnaires to get more formal feedback from parents. They explained how they took account of children's interests when introducing new resources and activities to reflect these interests and support meaningful play. Working in partnership with families was a priority for the childminder. Families felt meaningfully involved and able to influence change. Comments made included : 'Diane regularly asks for feedback via surveys' and 'Diane has always been open to suggestions on how she can improve the setting and service. We have felt very involved and she regularly issues questionnaires to gather feedback'. This demonstrated a responsive approach to gathering feedback and helped families to feel valued.

The childminder demonstrated their commitment to professional development and had attended a range of training to expand her skills and knowledge. They were very proactive in keeping up to date with best practice and routinely visited the Care Inspectorate Hub and other relevant websites.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children were extremely comfortable, motivated and deeply engaged with a thoughtfully resourced and stimulating environment which supported their play, learning and development. The childminder made considerably good use of the indoor space to offer children a learning environment which encouraged their curiosity, imagination and problem-solving. Children were able to learn at their own pace, independently choosing from a range of resources and toys which reflected their interests and were age and stage appropriate. The children particularly enjoyed and engaged with the wide range of loose parts and open ended resources which were creatively stored in a hanging storage display. Children were all having fun and there was a great deal of laughter and chat. One child invited the childminder to become involved in their imaginative role play with a dolls house, while another child was having fun selecting different loose parts from the storage display and talking about their shapes and sizes with the childminder.

Outdoor learning was thoughtfully prioritised and supported children's natural curiosity. Children benefited from daily outdoor play either in the garden, the local park or other places of interest which supported their health, wellbeing and development. Outdoor play experiences were popular with all the children. Families spoke positively about the childminder's commitment to outdoor play and learning. Comments made included: 'Constant access to a large garden', 'Diane's backdoor is always open, with the mindees able to go outside whenever they want. She regularly takes them outdoors to parks, beach, woods where they can explore and play', '

The childminder provided a well-balanced approach to child-led play and adult support, helping children build confidence, independence and key skills such as language, literacy, numeracy and emotional regulation. One parent commented 'She offers the perfect mix of child-led play with structured activities and supports the children in all aspects of their development'. Children experienced very warm, nurturing and responsive interactions. The childminder was attuned to their individual needs and interests, verbal and non verbal cues. Sensitive and high quality interactions were used to extend and enrich children's thinking and learning. We observed the childminder making very good use of open ended questioning and wondering aloud to encourage children to independently problem solve and to extend their imagination and learning. For example, the childminder was discussing colours, resources which were a similar shape and size with one child. As a result, children were happy, settled, and actively engaged in their play.

The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to professional development, having already completed a childcare degree and Peep training which is for practitioners to help to engage and support parents with their babies' and children's learning and development through talking and playing as part of everyday life. At the time of the inspection she was on the Peep Accreditation course. The childminder was able to confidently talk about how the training had had a positive impact on how she worked in partnership with families to support children's playing, learning and development.

The childminder demonstrated a strong understanding of how children learn, develop and progress. Their deep knowledge of child development informed high quality practice. The childminder completed meaningful observations and assessments, and this along with responsive planning approaches supported the children's

learning and development through play. Observations of children's play and development informed tailored experiences that reflected their interests and individual next steps. The childminder made use of floor books to record children's play, learning, progression and next steps with the voice of the children clearly recorded.

The childminder had established strong working relationships with families who appreciated the play-based approach and the quality of the information they received about their child's progression. Daily updates, including photographs and narratives, were shared with families to celebrate children's achievements and keep them informed. This strengthened partnerships with families, encouraged feedback, and supported continuity in learning enabling parents to build on their child's experiences at home. Parents commented to us: 'She always keeps us updated with progress of our child', 'Diane sends frequent updates and tells us on a daily basis', 'Diane regularly asks for feedback on the activities she offers, keeping up to date with each mindee's interests to take a child-led approach. She provides regular photographs and feedback on milestones/achievements. I've always felt fully informed and involved. She has been particularly helpful with potty training and really supportive when it comes to gross/fine motor skill development and language development'.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

There were three young children present on the day of the inspection who were all extremely happy and relaxed in the care of the childminder. From our observations and discussions with the childminder, it was clear that the childminder had a deep understanding of attachment and nurturing approaches. The children all had very secure attachments with the childminder who was consistently responsive to their individual needs. Children received exceptional levels of nurturing care from the childminder which supported positive outcomes for them. Loving, caring and warm relationships provided support to children, helping them to build resilience and promote their emotional wellbeing.

Children's wellbeing was supported through effective personal planning. The childminder had put in place personal plans which were individualised for each child. They contained relevant background information and details of the child's routine. The plans were completed with parents and carers and routinely reviewed to ensure that they continued to meet the changing needs of the children and allowed for consistency of care.

Individualised care routines were sensitively delivered and adapted to meet the child's evolving needs. During the visit, the childminder was extremely attentive and responsive to the needs of each of the children. We saw lots of warm and nurturing interactions, chatting, smiles, praise and encouragement. Parents were extremely positive about the quality of care their children received: 'I cannot fault the love and care Diane provides my child', 'Her establishment is a home away from home' and 'Diane is a wonderful childminder. We couldn't have asked for more! She has created a home away from home where her mindees are welcomed as part of the family'.

The childminder carefully considered children's transitions into the service, as well as when they moved on to nursery and later school. Transitions were flexible and tailored to meet the children's individual needs and ensured they had time to become familiar with the childminder and build a trusting, supportive relationship.

This helped children to settle at their own pace and supported families to feel confident and reassured during this important time.

The childminder worked collaboratively with families to ensure they supported children's routines and preferences. Having very strong working relationships with the parents allowed for open communication and information sharing as well as ensuring consistency of care. Regular communication was maintained through daily informal updates and the sharing of photographs and messages via private messaging apps. This approach helped families feel actively involved in their child's experiences and development. Parents were all extremely positive when discussing their relationship with the childminder and how welcome they were all made to feel. They very much appreciated the quality and quantity of communication. Comments made included: 'I trust her 100%', 'Comprehensive handovers. Diane tells me everything my child has done that day and how she has been', 'Diane is always happy to chat about anything relevant', and 'We have always been welcomed into Diane's home, and felt comfortable discussing our child's play, care and learning'.

Daily routines, such as mealtimes, were used to promote independence, learning and enhance their experiences. They were relaxed, sociable and safe for the children. Healthy home cooked meals were offered. All meals met children's specific allergies, preferences and dietary needs and took account of current guidance. At the time of the inspection, all children took packed lunches. The childminder sat with the children which supported supervision, social skills and language development. Fresh water was available to children throughout the day.

Children's overall health, wellbeing and development were supported by daily access outdoors. The children enjoyed time in the garden, visits to the local parks and walks in the local community. All these activities supported children to develop a strong sense of belonging, social connection and an awareness of the world around them. Parents all greatly appreciated the amount of time the children were able to be outdoors and comments included : 'Constant access to a large garden', 'Diane's backdoor is always open, with the mindees able to go outside whenever they want. She also regularly takes them outdoors to parks, the beach, woods and National Trust sites, where they can explore and play'.

Children's safety and wellbeing were promoted through implementation of appropriate procedures, including secure medication storage and administration, appropriate infection control procedures and robust safeguarding measures. The childminder had attended relevant training and demonstrated confidence in following these procedures, which contributed to a safe and nurturing environment 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

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