

Lizzie's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Dumfries

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 November 2025

Service provided by:
Elizabeth Ritchie

Service provider number:
SP2012984228

Service no:
CS2012312932

About the service

Lizzie's Childminding Service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any 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 the childminder's family.

The service is located in a residential area of Dumfries. The childminder provides her service from her home, which has a large garden and an area for car parking. The childminder's home is within walking distance of schools, shops and parks. The childminder aims to "provide my service in a homely environment, where you know your child will be cared for and looked after". The childminder has a focus on nature and outdoor learning and provides children with a variety of outdoor experiences and adventures.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 6 November 2025 and Friday 14 November 2025.

The inspection was carried out by an 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:

- spent time with children using the service
- observed practice and children's experiences
- reviewed documents
- received completed questionnaires from three families
- spoke with the childminder and another childminder who joined in with activities at the beach
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

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 had a caring, nurturing approach that supported positive relationships with children and families. She was highly attuned to children's individual needs and moods, ensuring that plans were flexible and adapted to need.
- The childminder worked closely with parents, sharing updates through daily chats, texts and an online app with photos. Parents felt well informed and reassured that their children were happy, cared for and learning.
- Children engaged enthusiastically with daily activities which supported them to develop curiosity and a sense of adventure.
- Children formed friendships, learned to share and negotiate, and enjoyed meeting their friends from another childminder.

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	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were cared for in a safe and secure environment where they were respected and valued as individuals. Children were offered a wide variety of activities which supported them to grow and develop their skills and interests. These aims were clearly set out by the childminder and provided to parents so that they knew what they could expect for their child whilst in her care. Parents had been informally consulted about these aims through daily conversations and we discussed involving them in future reviews.

The childminder was keen to learn and kept up to date with changes in practice. She was committed to providing high quality of care for children and their families. As well as being a member of the Scottish Child Minding Association the childminder made good use of a variety of professional learning opportunities, including online resources, social media and groups focused on nature and outdoor learning. The childminder was working in partnership with the local authority and valued the support they provided. Core training like Child Protection and First Aid were up to date, ensuring children's safety and wellbeing.

An improvement plan was in place and was based on areas which had been identified through self-evaluation. We have suggested that going forward it would be helpful for the childminder to become more familiar with the new quality framework to support the continuous improvement of her setting. Parents told us that they were confident that they could give feedback and make suggestions to the childminder. Whilst the childminder had very good relationships with parents, we agreed that her quality assurance procedures would be strengthened by a more formal approach to seeking parents' feedback and monitoring. Children's views were also valued and they had some involvement in decision-making, for example in deciding about activities and outings.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children/people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children were having fun and engaged enthusiastically in activities. They were excited about going to the beach where they took part in a variety of experiences like looking for different types of shells and seaweed. We heard them laughing as they paddled at the edge of the water. These activities support children's curiosity and sense of adventure.

Children's literacy skills were promoted through their daily experiences. At the beach they used cards to identify different shells and drew pictures in the sand with sticks. At the house, after lunch, children relaxed with stories and engaged positively with books. Numeracy and language development were supported as the childminder encouraged discussion about sizes and comparisons of shells and stones, building their vocabulary and understanding. Children also built stone towers which supported problem solving and fine motor skills.

Children were confident about asking questions about their discoveries and the childminder responded both by talking to them and helping them to research the answers on her phone. They told us that they often

collected treasures to take back and use later in arts and crafts, which extended their learning beyond the original activity.

The childminder supported children to learn about risk. For example, when jumping waves, they anticipated what might happen and were reassured by the childminder's guidance. We discussed the benefit of developing the use of open-ended questions to encourage independent thinking.

Children were forming friendships and were learning to share and negotiate with one another. They enjoyed meeting friends who went to another childminder, and this supported their social development. Children were encouraged to make choices and were involved in planning activities. Independence was promoted through tasks like putting on coats and shoes.

Planning was based on themes, seasonal events, and children's interests. We discussed the benefit of developing the current planning format so that it showed children's involvement more clearly, as well as making literacy and numeracy more explicit. While planning was informed by general observations, we also suggested that using focused observation techniques would support more individualised planning. This would ensure that activities are more tailored to each child's learning needs.

The childminder worked in partnership with parents, sharing information daily and through an online app. Parents received photographs of both group and individual activities, which helped them feel involved in their child's experiences. Parents told us "Our child loves to go to lizzie, always has brilliant fun, learns loads and grows! It makes such a difference knowing your child is happy, cared for and having fun. We are seriously happy with the care and service provided".

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/people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The childminder had a warm, caring and nurturing approach to children and their families, which supported the creation of friendly and positive relationships. She knew the children very well and was tuned into their individual needs and moods, and this enabled her to respond to them appropriately, for example she could see when children were tired and needed to rest. Parents told us "Lizzie is very good at recognising when quiet time may be needed and she adapts her plans round this".

Transitions were very well supported, both during daily routines and when moving between settings, helping children to feel secure and confident. Children's individual needs were respected, and they were enabled to adapt at their own pace, for example when settling in the morning.

The childminder worked in partnership with families and other settings, actively sharing information to support continuity of care. Parents were kept well informed through a range of communication methods, including daily chats, phone calls, texts, and an online app. Parents told us "I have no issues about [my child] with Lizzie and everything is reported and documented to me and photos are always given each day."

Both parents and the childminder provided meals, with the childminder also providing a variety of snacks. Meals provided were nutritious and included homemade options. Children were involved in growing and preparing food, promoting healthy choices and independence. The childminder was aware of current nutritional guidance and encouraged positive eating habits, such as sitting during meals and snacks. Parents told us "The kids always eat well with Lizzie and I'm told everyday what they have ate."

All children had personal plans which were based on the wellbeing indicators. Key information was gathered from parents when creating the plans and at the regular reviews and daily chats. We discussed how the planning process could be strengthened by evaluating information so that it helps to identify next steps. The recording of observations was at an early stage and tended to be general rather than focussed on the progress of individual children. We suggested that recording which focuses on progress would help to identify if extra support is ever needed and celebrates achievement.

Appropriate procedures were in place for medication, infection control and safe sleep. The environment was clean, secure and well-maintained, with children encouraged to tidy up and care for their toys.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The childminder should develop her current information format for personal plans. These plans should clearly record all details of children's health, safety and wellbeing needs and how she will help to meet these needs, in partnership with parents/carers. The childminder should ensure children with shared placements have a plan which reflects this aspect of their care.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards. My Life: My Support.

1.15 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.

This area for improvement was made on 6 May 2019.

Action taken since then

All children attending the service had a personal plan, which was based on the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. The information gathered from parents enabled the childminder to meet the needs of the children attending. It was clear that the childminder knew the children very well and worked in partnership with parents to make sure that their needs were well met.

Whilst information was gathered and reviewed with parents, personal plans would be strengthened by an evaluation of the information so that next steps and actions are clearly set out. Evaluations of next steps would help to track progress and identify where support is needed.

The childminder had identified that more formal liaison with shared placements would also be helpful and had put plans in place to support this improvement.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to provide minded children with rich, interesting and open-ended resources, the childminder should use current best practice documents to plan improved experiences for children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards-My Support: My Life.

1.32 As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment.

2.27 As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.

This area for improvement was made on 6 May 2019.

Action taken since then

The childminder provided children with a variety of experiences and resources which enabled them to learn about the world around them, be curious and to problem solve. These included regular outings to local beaches and forests, as well as museums and other places of interest locally. As well as the childminder's own garden, children also had a variety of outdoor learning opportunities at a nearby shared garden.

Further information is contained in the body of the report.

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	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.