

Dennehy, Lesley Child Minding

Alloa

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 December 2025

Service provided by:
Dennehy Lesley

Service provider number:
SP2003901626

Service no:
CS2003003282

About the service

Lesley Dennehy provides a childminding service 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. Other conditions unique to the service include, the parts of the premises not to be used are the upstairs bedrooms.

The service operates from the childminder's home in Tullibody. The service is close to local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery and school and local shops. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home and children have access to the lounge, kitchen, and bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 03 December 2025 between 11:30 and 13:30. This inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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/spent time with three children using the service
- received two completed questionnaires from families using the service
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

At the time of this inspection, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within Leadership.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children were mostly happy and content in the childminders care.
- Infection control measures must be developed to ensure they effectively maintain children's wellbeing.
- Safe sleep practices must be developed to keep children safe.
- Policies and procedures should be reviewed in line with best practice and guidance to support the effective running of the service.
- Quality assurance procedures should be introduced to support the effective management of the service.
- Interactions should be developed to promote nurturing and respectful relationships with children.

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 | 2 - Weak |
| Children play and learn | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children are supported to achieve | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |

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

Leadership 2 - Weak

Leadership and management of staff and resources

We made an evaluation of **weak** for this quality indicator, as there were some strengths, but these were compromised by important weaknesses.

The childminder established positive connections with families through regular communication within online platforms. Photographs and messages enabled the childminder to promote family's involvement in their child's experiences. One parent commented, 'Easy to talk to, she listens well.' This demonstrated that respectful relationships had been developed. We suggested methods the childminder could introduce to support families to help to inform positive changes within the service. For example, the aims and objectives would benefit from being reviewed, in consultation with children and their families, to ensure they remained relevant and meaningful. This would enable the childminder to promote shared aspirations for their service, strengthen meaningful communications and positive outcomes for children.

Policies and procedures need to be updated to ensure the service is managed effectively. A safe sleep policy and procedure must be developed to maintain children's safety as they sleep or rest. This should include regular checks on children as they sleep and ensure safe sleep messages are shared with families to maintain children's wellbeing. A mobile phone policy should be created to outline the childminder and families' responsibilities; this would help to maintain children's online safety and awareness. A missing child policy and a separate medication policy should be developed to outline the childminders procedures. This would support families' knowledge regarding the services processes and procedures and ensure children's needs were consistently met. (See requirement one)

Infection prevention and control measures must be introduced to ensure robust mitigations are in place to maintain children's wellbeing. Nappy changing procedures must embed effective infection prevention and control. Children must be changed on a suitable surface which can be easily cleaned between changes. The childminder should ensure that gloves and an apron are worn to minimise the risk of any spread of infection. Children's hands must be washed using warm water and soap at regular intervals, including before and after eating. Children's privacy and dignity should be maintained throughout personal care routines and consideration given to an appropriate space to change. This would minimise the potential risk of any spread of infection and maintain children's wellbeing. (See requirement two)

Quality assurance systems were not yet in place to promote consistent high-quality care. These should be developed to ensure they are effective in supporting the childminder to manage their service. We suggested improving the use of the childminders diary to track events that would support the services improvements. For example, children's personal plans should be updated, to reflect their current wellbeing needs, in line with legislation. Regular consultations with families should be introduced to gather their views and support the childminder to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Risk assessments should be reviewed and developed, to highlight the potential risks and actions taken to reduce these, within the childminders home and on outings in the community. This was a previous area for improvement which has been reworded. (See area for improvement one)

Requirements

1. By 02 February 2025, the provider must ensure that children's health and wellbeing needs are fully met and children are kept safe.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

- a) Safe sleep practices are implemented, and regular checks are carried out whilst children sleep
- b) Paperwork is developed to support the safe administration of medication
- c) Policies are developed in line with current guidance and best practice.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

2. By 02 February 2025, the provider must ensure that appropriate and effective infection prevention and control measures are put in place.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that:

- a) Infection control measures are followed during personal care, which includes a safe, easily cleaned space to change nappies
- b) warm water and soap are used to wash hands and this takes place at appropriate times, including before and after eating, personal care, and outside play.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) and (d) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'If I require intimate personal care, there is a suitable area for this, including a sink if needed.' (HSCS 5.4).

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that quality assurance processes impact positively on outcomes for children, they should be developed to help identify and inform improvement.

This should include, but is not limited to,

- developing a calendar to support the childminder to audit their service, including updating children's personal plans.
- seeking children and families' views through regular consultations to help shape improvements within the service

- developing risk assessments to identify actions taken to minimise risks and consider risks when on outings in the community.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19) and 'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership' (HSCS 4.7).

Children play and learn 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Play learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as **satisfactory/adequate** where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Children were happy and content in the childminders care. One parent commented, 'Love how the kids feel comfortable in her home.' Children moved freely and explored resources at their own pace. They made choices within their play and accessed resources which were age and stage appropriate. The resources were plastic and included cause and effect toys. We suggested that the childminder reviewed their resources to promote challenge and encourage children's imagination and curiosity. Organising resources would give children more choice and help them to lead their own play. This would value children's interests and provide opportunities for sustained engagement.

During the inspection, interactions between the childminder and children were limited. These could improve if the childminder consistently joined children at their level during play. This would create opportunities to extend children's learning through questioning, commenting, and modelling new language. For example, interest was shown in the interactive animal book, however there was limited engagement from the childminder and younger children's interest was not valued. This meant children were not fully supported to extend their playing, learning and development.

Children's progress and next steps were in the early stages of development. The childminder had begun to introduce progress reports which shared children's learning. They told us these reports helped them identify strategies to meet children's needs. For example, regular visits to the library had been introduced to support children's development of their speech and communication. Photographs highlighted the activities that children had participated in whilst in the childminders care. One parent commented, 'Lesley gives us regular messages and photo updates of my child's day.' Children would benefit from more regular observations of their play and learning to support and extend their experiences. This would ensure progress was meaningful and relevant to children's stages of development.

Children's social skills were promoted through regular community visits. They attended a local toddler group where the childminder networked with other childminders. This helped to develop children's sense of belonging within their community. Children benefitted from fresh air and exercise through walks and trips to the park. As a result, children learned about the world around them.

Children are supported to achieve 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as **satisfactory/adequate** where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

The childminder knew the children well and felt proud to have cared for their parents in the past, seeing this as a sign of trust in their service. One parent commented, 'Lesley is lovely and very caring.' The childminder was knowledgeable about children's current interests, however, there were few attempts to engage positively, during the inspection to extend these. Personal plans and some information about children's routines had been gathered, however this was not updated in line with legislation. The "All About Me" information should be reviewed to make sure children's likes, interests, and wellbeing needs are planned for and supported. For example, strategies to help children when they are upset or unsettled should be detailed, as we found this knowledge to be inconsistent. This would ensure children's needs were fully met and their wellbeing nurtured.

There were missed opportunities to support and develop children's early language and communication skills. Younger children's attempts to engage the childminder were often overlooked, and their attempts to communicate were not always supported. Interactions lacked warmth and care, with few smiles or laughter during the inspection. There were very few engagements with children which could result in children not feeling valued or respected. (See area for improvement one)

Mealtimes promoted children's independence as older children confidently used cutlery. Younger children sat in a highchair and were supported to eat. Some conversation took place, such as noticing a squirrel in the garden, but this was limited. Mealtimes should be valued as positive opportunities to enhance learning and experiences. This would help develop early language and communication skills and strengthen children's sense of safety and security. Children experienced a home that was warm, clean, and provided space to move freely. We suggested adding more light to the space so children can fully engage in play, as the home was sometimes quite dark. The childminder could encourage respect for the home by encouraging children to keep play areas tidy. This would enable children to develop their independence and life skills.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children experience skilled, caring interactions that foster their wellbeing and effectively promote communication, the provider should reflect on their practice to implement nurturing approaches.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that:

'As a young person I feel valued, loved and secure' (HSCS 3.10).

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

Children should experience high quality care, play and learning. The childminder should ensure formal quality assurance processes, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, are in place and lead to continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 11 July 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not engaged in any self-evaluation of the service and improvement processes were not yet having an impact on outcomes for children. This area for improvement had not been met and has been reworded.

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 | 2 - Weak |
| Leadership and management of staff and resources | 2 - Weak |
| Children play and learn | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Playing, learning and developing | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Children are supported to achieve | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |
| Nurturing care and support | 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate |

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