

Childminder- Outdoor kids Child Minding

Achterader

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 December 2025

Service provided by:
Maria Malaterre

Service provider number:
SP2023000389

Service no:
CS2024000004

About the service

Maria Malaterre provides a service from their home and operates under the name Childminder - Outdoor Kids. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age, of whom no more than six are under 12 years; of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household. Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the certificate. Simon Malaterre is employed as an assistant. No overnight care will be provided.

The service is based in a residential area of Aberuthven and is close to green spaces, schools, and other amenities. The home is an upper flat which can be accessed from a side door. Children use spaces within the property for indoor activities and have access to a bathroom. An enclosed garden provides a safe outdoor play space, with a further vast greenspace available for children to explore.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 10 December 2025 between 13:50 and 17:10. 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 four children using the service
- received four 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.

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.

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 highly motivated and thrived from a range of rich and challenging indoor and outdoor play experiences.
- Children developed confidence and resilience as they assessed and managed their own risks.
- Effectively planned transitions demonstrated that children experienced care, from a skilled childminder, who continually reflected on their practice.
- Children were happy, relaxed, and confident in the childminder's home.
- Self-evaluation and improvement priorities were beginning to promote high quality play, learning and development.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very 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

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 was committed to providing quality care and support for children. The aims and objectives of the service reflected the high aspirations of the childminder to provide 'a warm, friendly and nurturing experience.' They were committed to their own professional development and enthusiastic to share new learning. This promoted positive outcomes for children and their families.

Quality assurance systems had been established and were beginning to support continuous improvement within the service. A quality assurance calendar ensured the regular review of documentation and highlighted upcoming training opportunities. This should continue to be reflected upon to ensure that reviews effectively promote positive improvements. For example, ensuring personal plans are updated, at least every six months, with children and families. This would ensure children's needs were consistently met.

The childminder was a reflective practitioner which supported the self-evaluation of the service. The previous Care Inspectorate quality framework had been used to evaluate specific aspects of their practice and environments. We signposted the childminder to the new framework document 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding.' This would further support ongoing self-evaluation of the service and embed future improvements.

Policies mostly reflected best practice and supported the effective management of the service. We asked that a missing child policy be created to outline the childminder's procedures to maintain children's safety. Administration of medication paperwork would benefit from being reviewed to ensure accurate information was gathered. This would ensure children's health and wellbeing needs were consistently met.

The childminder and assistant had completed training to maintain children's wellbeing. The childminder had identified and planned to participate in first aid training as a priority. We asked that the assistant undertake child protection training. This would further safeguard children's wellbeing.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 5 - Very Good

Children experience high quality facilities

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**.

Children were cared for in a warm and welcoming environment which demonstrated that they were valued and respected. The space promoted children's independence and choice which recognised individual ages and stages of development. Activities planned were responsive to children's interests and enhanced the motivating environment. This gave children the strong message that they mattered.

Children had access to a variety of spaces where they could play independently or with their peers. The resources available to children were varied and responsive to their needs. For example, children enjoyed exploring animals and learning about their babies. Children developed their creative skills as they mixed colours when painting cards. Achievements were valued and respected as the childminder spoke with them about their creations and rewarded them with a sticker. This helped to develop children's resilience, wellbeing, and learning.

The childminder recognised the importance of daily outdoor play and its benefits on enhancing children's wellbeing to provide rich learning experiences. One parent commented, 'We have a huge amount of trust in her.' Children thrived in the vast outdoor greenspace where they had opportunities to take risks and explore their natural surroundings. The childminder was passionate about the outdoors, and this was evident throughout our conversations. Children told us that they loved playing outside and it was one of their favourite activities. This demonstrated that children were listened to and their views were respected. The childminder was a volunteer with Wild Scotland and planned to use this knowledge to further extend outdoor learning opportunities. This helped children to learn about the world around them in a meaningful way.

Visual risk assessments empowered children to develop their awareness of potential hazards in the outdoor space. These were actively shared and discussed with children to promote their understanding. The childminder was proactive and recognised the need to enhance children's understanding of road safety and told us about actions to support this. For example, sharing 'Ziggy' stories together. Detailed risk assessments highlighted potential risks and actions taken to reduce these. Daily checklists were completed which demonstrated the childminder's awareness of potential risks. Risk assessments could be further developed to highlight when reviews had taken place and consider actions required within daily risk assessments. This would further support children's safety within the environment.

Effective infection prevention and control measures enhanced children's wellbeing. Children experienced a home that was clean, tidy, and well maintained. The childminder followed good hygiene practices to help prevent the spread of infection. For example, they encouraged handwashing at key times such as before and after eating, after using the bathroom and after being outside. Children had individual hand towels in the bathroom which further supported effective infection prevention measures. The childminder actively encouraged children to learn about the importance of good hand hygiene and had developed visuals to support this learning. We suggested visuals could be laminated to ensure they were easily cleaned. This would further enhance the effective infection control measures in place.

Children's information was stored securely which meant that they were safe and protected.

Children play and learn 5 – Very Good

Play learning and developing

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**.

The childminder demonstrated a commitment to creating a nurturing environment where children were actively engaged in play and learning. Children experienced uninterrupted play and were consistently given opportunities to make choices and lead their own learning. This promoted children's independence and confidence in a respectful play space.

Interactions between the childminder and children were warm, responsive, and attuned to their individual needs. Children's interests were extended through wondering aloud and the childminders use of open questioning. Literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing were evident throughout children's experiences. For example, songs and rhymes were used to embed numeracy concepts, and activities such as the 'hot wires' game encouraged problem-solving and resilience skills. These approaches reflected a clear understanding of how children learned and developed as individuals.

Children's voice was evident within planning and floor books highlighted the childminder's responsiveness to their interests. One parent commented, 'Maria always welcomes us to share about my child's progress and performance.' We suggested that floor books could be strengthened by identifying clearer learning outcomes and next steps. This would ensure that children's contributions were meaningfully progressed. This would promote further opportunities for children to achieve and have their successes celebrated.

Children were highly motivated and fully engaged by the rich, challenging play and learning opportunities. The environment offered a balance of child-led and adult-initiated experiences. Outdoor play was a strong feature which provided a wide range of opportunities for exploration and risky play. One parent commented, 'My child loves it at Maria's and gets lots of quality outside time.' Effective links were established between children's indoor and outdoor experiences. Children planned to enter a competition to design a mushroom which engaged their imaginations and enriched their experiences. This provided potential opportunities for children to develop wider achievements through well-considered and innovative approaches.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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.

Children were happy, relaxed, and confident in the childminder's care. Nurturing interactions enabled children to feel comfortable and showed that positive connections had been established. One parent commented, 'My child is so happy when they come home and is building their self-esteem.' Transitions between settings had been considered and were effectively managed. Children engaged in conversations and decision making as they moved between indoors and outside. This demonstrated that children experienced a relaxed pace to their day.

Positive relationships had been established and were underpinned by the childminder's knowledge of each child and their family. Cuddles and comfort were shared and promoted children's emotional wellbeing. This meant that children felt respected and valued in a safe and caring environment.

Children's wellbeing was supported through the childminder's knowledge of their individual needs. Personal plans were in place for each child, which contained relevant information about children's health, likes and dislikes. One parent commented, 'We don't really have a written personal plan that I have seen, however I always know what she is doing with my child, what is being worked on, and I always get feedback on this.' We asked the childminder to ensure that personal plans and children's 'all about me' information was reviewed and updated, at least every six months. We signposted them to the Care Inspectorate document, 'Guide for providers on personal planning: early learning and childcare.' This would ensure that children's needs remained relevant and meaningful.

Mealtimes were relaxed and provided children with opportunities to socialise with their peers. One parent commented, 'Our child has a wonderful time at Maria's. We are particularly happy with the thought and effort Maria puts into the food she gives our child each day.' The childminder told us that children previously had opportunities to develop their independence skills by helping to make pizzas and soup. It would be beneficial to consider ways to support these life skills through snack experiences, for example pouring drinks and selecting foods. This would further develop children's independence and responsibility.

Families were warmly welcomed into the childminders home which supported effective communication sharing. Key messages were shared which demonstrated that children's wellbeing needs were valued. Families told us that they felt at ease when their child was in the childminders care. This meant that children and their families felt a sense of belonging within a supportive environment.

The childminder was knowledgeable in their role to safeguard children. They had completed and reflected on child protection training. This supported the childminder to have a clear understanding of their role in identifying and recording any concerns in line with their policy. We discussed the importance of sharing concerns in a timely manner with the appropriate professionals. The childminder was responsive to this which supported children's safety.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children experience high quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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