

Black, Susan

Child Minding

Falkirk

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 November 2025

Service provided by:
Susan Black

Service provider number:
SP2013984659

Service no:
CS2013315837

About the service

Susan Black provides a childminding service from her detached property in a residential area of Falkirk. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of seven children up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local amenities, school and park. The children are cared for downstairs and have access to a dedicated playroom, kitchen, with access to a downstairs toilet. Children also have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 October 2025, between 12:30 and 13:00 and 31 October between 12:00 and 13:45. 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed four minded children
- received feedback from two families
- spoke with the childminder
- 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.

Key messages

- Children and families benefitted from clear aims of the service which helped create a shared vision
- Children experienced interactions which were responsive and caring, contributing positively to their overall wellbeing.
- Planning approaches were informal and based on children's interests and curiosities.
- The childminder made good use of the local community to extend learning opportunities, helping children to become familiar with their wider world and supporting their social development.
- The childminder had developed positive and trusting relationships with families. They knew children and their families well, which created a warm and welcoming environment.

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	4 - Good

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

Leadership 4 – Good

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.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children and families benefitted from clear aims of the service which helped create a shared vision. Aims and objectives were in place which reflected the childminders ethos and approach to care. These had been reviewed, supporting an understanding of the service's purpose. We suggested to the childminder ways in which the aims and objectives could be further developed to include vision and values of the service and involving children and families meaningfully in shaping these. We signposted the childminder to 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' document to support the development of this.

Families were kept updated and informed through daily conversations and messaging, including photos. The childminder valued children's and families' views and sought their feedback through ongoing informal discussions. Parents agreed they were meaningfully involved in the development of the service. One parent commented, 'Susan welcomes our feedback and suggestions'. To make the feedback even more useful in the future, the childminder should review questions to focus more closely on specific areas they want to improve. This would help ensure that any changes made are based on what matters most to children and families and is purposeful, supporting targeted improvements.

The childminder showed consideration towards improvement through reflection. Self-evaluation had been completed, which helped them to identify what they were doing well, and aspects were requiring further development. The reflective process contributed to the development of an action plan that noted some areas for improvement. We suggested to the childminder to review the new framework; 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' to support the progress and development of their service.

The childminder was reminded of the requirement to submit notifications or changes of details promptly. Following this reminder, they responded appropriately and ensured all necessary notifications were submitted.

Children play and learn 4 – Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children appeared happy and content, they experienced interactions which were both responsive and caring, contributing positively to their overall wellbeing. These interactions demonstrated an understanding of each child and effectively supported their emotional development and engagement. Achievements were celebrated through praise and encouragement, fostering children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children had the opportunity to choose from a range of toys and resources, allowing them to lead their own play and explore their interests. The resources were age-appropriate, accessible, and supported their play. The childminder engaged playfully, listened attentively, and responded to children's nonverbal cues. The childminder should now focus on providing rich, challenging, and thoughtfully planned experiences that remain responsive to children's individual needs at home. Currently, there are limited opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills. The childminder should ensure these opportunities are consistently available.

Planning approaches were informal and based on children's interests and curiosities. The childminder used photographs to share children's experiences with families, promoting positive parental engagement. While planning was responsive and child-centred, there were limited systems in place to evaluate children's progress and plan meaningful next steps. To further enhance this approach, we discussed the value of strengthening observation and recording practices to support the childminder to effectively identify and respond to children's learning needs.

Children were developing a range of skills through everyday experiences. The childminder made good use of the local community to extend learning opportunities, helping children to become familiar with their wider world and supporting their social development. One parent commented, 'Susan does a wide range of activities with the kids, takes them on trips around Falkirk and has a selection of things to do at her house'.

Children are supported to achieve

4 - Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

Children were settled and secure as the childminder knew children and their families well and had developed trusting relationships. Families commented positively on the relationship with the childminder. Comments included, 'I have always felt happy and at ease when my kids are with Susan as I know she cares for them and will keep me informed of how they are', and 'Susan has taken time to really get to know [child] and I feel confident leaving them in her care. I feel like she makes an effort to get a full picture of our lives'.

The childminder worked in partnership with families to support children's routines, interests, and development. They listened to family views and used this information to tailor care and learning experiences. As a result, children experienced consistency between home and the setting, which supported their emotional wellbeing and sense of security. Personal plans were in place and contained information regarding children's healthcare needs, likes, dislikes and routines. Plans were discussed and reviewed with families. We asked that the childminder completed reviews at least six monthly, in line with current legislation. This would ensure the childminder had information that reflected children's current needs.

Lunchtime was calm, relaxed, and enjoyable for the children. They sat together with the childminder, which promoted positive social interaction and supported language development. Children were encouraged to try new and unfamiliar foods, with the childminder offering praise and encouragement to celebrate their efforts and achievements.

The childminder had developed positive relationships with families. They knew children and their families well, which created a warm and welcoming environment. Regular communication took place through informal daily updates and sharing of photographs and messages, which helped families feel involved in their child's experiences. This contributed to families feeling valued and reassured that their child was safe, happy, and well cared for. Parents comments included, 'I always feel welcome at Susan's and I feel confident in discussing my children's care at any point'.

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	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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