

Shirley's Little Angels Child Minding

Anstruther

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 November 2025

Service provided by:
Shirley Nuttall

Service provider number:
SP2014986050

Service no:
CS2014327636

About the service

Shirley Nuttall provides a childminding service from their detached property in the town of Anstruther, Fife. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six 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 the living room, kitchen, and conservatory 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 11 November 2025, between 11:30 and 12:15 and, 12:50 to 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 three minded children
- received feedback from ten 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

The childminder was kind, caring, and warm with the children, which supported them to feel safe, loved, and secure.

To support positive outcomes for children and families, the childminder should strengthen their approach to self-evaluation and improvement.

A key strength of the childminder's service was the variety of play experiences offered in the local community.

The childminder had built strong, trusting relationships with families, creating a welcoming environment.

Children's sleep arrangements did not follow safe sleep guidance and presented a significant risk to 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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Leadership 3 – Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children benefited from a nurturing, respectful environment where care was at the heart of daily practice. Actively involving children and families in shaping the service's vision, values, and aims would deepen their sense of belonging and strengthen relationships. This collaborative approach would support the service to remain responsive to their changing needs.

The childminder created a warm and welcoming environment where children felt safe, loved, and secure. 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 and the use of two stars and wish. This approach helped them to respond to individual needs and preferences. Parents strongly agreed and agreed they were meaningfully involved in the development of the service. One parent commented, 'Shirley often asks for feedback and always takes any suggestions on board, and she includes the children's views too'. 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 engaged positively with the inspection process. They were welcoming, open, and willing to answer questions that supported the evaluation of her service. There were no formal systems in place to assess the quality of the service or identify areas for development. 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 (**see area for improvement one**).

The childminder accessed relevant training through the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), which included child protection. However, policies and procedures had not been regularly reviewed to ensure they reflected current best practice. Establishing a routine for reviewing and updating policies would further support consistency and reinforce high-quality care.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for children and families, the childminder should strengthen their approach to self-evaluation and improvement. Involving children and families will help shape a responsive and inclusive service.

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).

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 experienced interactions that were responsive and caring. The childminder was down at children's level, using eye contact and facial expressions to support children. The childminder took time to offer explanations to address children's queries and curiosities. Children appeared happy and were enjoying their time with the childminder.

Children were able to play at their own pace. The childminder provided a range of accessible resources that supported these play experiences, including trains, small-world toys, large cars, and games. These resources encouraged exploration and independent play. Children had access to books to support early literacy opportunities.

A key strength of the childminder's service, highlighted by families, was the variety of play experiences offered in the local community. Children benefited from visits to the farm, beach, and forest, which provided opportunities for exploration, physical activity, and connection with nature. These experiences enriched children's learning and supported their overall wellbeing. One parent commented, 'My [child] has a fantastic time with Shirley, playing with other children and enjoying lots of walks, time in the garden and outings'.

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 are supported to achieve 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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

Nurturing care and support

The childminder was kind, caring, and warm with the children, which supported them to feel safe and secure. Interactions were responsive to children's needs, and the childminder offered comfort and cuddles when required. This nurturing approach promoted positive relationships and emotional wellbeing. Parents commented, 'Shirley is friendly, welcoming and understanding. She has built up a wonderful relationship with my [child]' and '[Child] is happy, secure and safe with Shirley, this is shown through their love towards Shirley and the confidence [child] has around her'.

The childminder knew children well which supported them to meet their care needs Personal plans had been completed and contained information about children's routines. These plans had been reviewed with parents, ensuring consistency and shared understanding of each child's needs. One parent commented, 'Shirley regularly updates me on my [child's] progress, is happy to follow her needs and requirements and we also regularly discuss how [child] is getting on and whether anything should change to help them'.

Children's wellbeing was supported during mealtimes. Children sat together around the table and enjoyed their lunch. They were offered a choice of foods to support good eating habits. The childminder understood prevention of choking and ensured small fruits were cut appropriately. We reminded the childminder that the television should remain off during mealtimes to promote positive interaction and focus on eating.

The childminder discussed sleep routines, noting that children sometimes fall asleep during walks or car journeys. During the inspection, it was observed that one child had fallen asleep in the car and was left unsupervised. This practice did not follow safe sleep guidance and presented a significant risk to children. The childminder was responsive to suggestions made at this time (**see area for improvement one**).

The childminder had built strong, trusting relationships with families, creating a welcoming environment where parents felt included and valued. This supported effective communication and partnership working, which parents identified as a key strength of the service. Flexibility in meeting family needs, such as arranging pick-ups, promoted continuity of care and made it easier for families to manage their routines. One parent commented, 'Shirley is invaluable to us, [child] loves her and Obi (the dog), I trust her and so I have peace of mind'. This responsive approach contributed to positive outcomes for children and families.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's safety, emotional security and wellbeing are supported the childminder should ensure they are knowledgeable of safe sleep guidance and implement this in practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

In order to ensure that up to date contact details are held, a personal care plan must be put in place for all children in attendance. All personal care plan information held must be reviewed at least once every six months or sooner if there are any changes to a child's care or wellbeing. These should be signed and dated by parents to support regular review. This must be met by 20 March 2020.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard 1.3 which states that "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." (HSCS 1.15). It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 5(b)(I)(ii) (Personal Plan) of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210.

This requirement was made on 26 June 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

A personal care plan was in place for all children in attendance. Information held had been reviewed within six months by families. This ensured up to date contact details were held.

Met - within timescales

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 provider should develop the current SHANARRI records for all children to capture developmental information to enable assessment of children's progress and identify relevant next steps to enable children to achieve.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "my future care and support needs are anticipated as part of my assessment (1.14)".

Inspection report

This area for improvement was made on 26 June 2020.

Action taken since then

The childminder had developed SHANARRI records for children to capture some information of children's progress. To ensure relevant next steps are identified to enable children to achieve, we discussed the value of strengthening observation and recording practices to support the childminder to effectively identify and respond to children's learning needs.

This area for improvement has been met.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Nurturing care and support	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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