

Senga's Little Stars Child Minding

Kirkcaldy

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 December 2025

Service provided by:
Senga Barrie

Service provider number:
SP2012983742

Service no:
CS2012309550

About the service

Senga Barrie operates a childminding service registered as Senga's Little Stars from their home in Kirkcaldy, Fife. The service offers children a dedicated playroom, on the first floor, where they can choose from a variety of toys, books and activities. There is access to toilet facilities on this level. The living-dining area of the home provides children with space to play, rest and relax. The large, enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the property offers children a secure area to play.

The childminder may provide care to a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16, 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 are inclusive of children of the childminder's family and household.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 11 December 2025 between 11:00 and 12:45. 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with two children in the service
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and interactions with children
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- 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 enjoyed a variety of activities tailored to their interests and developmental stages.
- Children were cared for in a homely environment.
- The outdoor area at the rear of the property was fully enclosed and offered children a safe space to play.
- The childminder had established positive and consistent relationships with children and their families.
- The childminder should ensure they engage in mandatory and relevant training opportunities to keep their knowledge and understanding current.

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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated different parts of this heading as good and satisfactory/adequate, with an overall grade of satisfactory/adequate. We identified strengths as well as areas that need to improve to maximise outcomes for children.

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 had developed some methods to gather feedback from children and families, including daily conversations and service questionnaires. Children's questionnaires were used to identify preferences and interests, and feedback was considered when planning activities and resources.

Positive relationships with children and families supported clear communication and helped to promote and maintain consistent care routines. The childminder was reflective in their practice and responded to individual needs, fostering honest and trusting relationships.

Self-evaluation was at an early stage, with initial steps taken to gather and record views from those involved in the service. To promote sustainable improvement, the childminder should continue to reflect on feedback and begin to document how this informs changes and developments. We highlighted The Care Inspectorate's 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' as a resource to support this work.

Staff Skills, Knowledge and Values

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

The childminder demonstrated professional values in their interactions with children, which were consistently warm, respectful, and nurturing. This was a strength of the service and contributed to children feeling happy and forming secure attachments. These positive relationships reflected a commitment to children's rights and inclusion.

The childminder had not engaged in any additional training or professional reading to develop their practice. This limited opportunities to enhance the quality of care and support based on current guidance and best practice. Children would benefit from the childminder adopting a more proactive approach to continuous professional development. This would support improvements in practice and lead to better outcomes for children. Core training, including child protection should be prioritised to ensure knowledge and understanding remain current and effective in safeguarding children.

(See area for improvement 5 under 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 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.

Children experience high quality spaces

Children experienced a welcoming and well-maintained environment that supported their sense of belonging. The childminder's home was clean, tidy, and thoughtfully organised. Children had their own space to store belongings on a child-sized coat stand before changing into their "baffies" (slippers). This helped to create a cosy and homely atmosphere that reinforced the message that they mattered.

The layout of the home reflected consideration for the different ages and stages of children attending. Younger children could independently access a range of activities and resources in the living/dining room. A dedicated playroom upstairs provided older children with a quiet space to relax or engage in activities such as building Lego models after school. This arrangement promoted choice and supported children to lead their own learning.

The outdoor area was fully enclosed and secure, providing a safe space for active play. A variety of resources encouraged children to explore and supported play and learning experiences. Regular access to fresh air and physical activity helped children understand the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Infection prevention and control measures contributed to maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. The childminder used appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when providing personal care. Robust and consistent handwashing routines at key times for all children, such as before eating, would help to ensure the risk of cross-contamination was minimised. This would further promote children's health and wellbeing.

The childminder demonstrated an understanding of the importance of confidentiality. Families were asked for permission before photographs were taken, and policies were shared to ensure transparency and safeguard children's personal information.

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 play and learning opportunities that reflected their interests and supported their development. The childminder demonstrated a good understanding of how children learn and develop. Activities were planned to take account of children's age and stage, enabling them to make choices and lead their own play. Children were encouraged to extend their thinking through some respectful and effective questioning. This supported them to build confidence and have fun.

The childminder had begun recording observations of children's experiences using photographs with narrative comments. Children's files were shared with families, and regular updates were provided through digital platforms such as WhatsApp, helping families feel connected to their child's learning. We discussed developing observations further by including dates and identifying the skills children had learned. This would highlight progress over time and celebrate achievements.

Children benefitted from experiences in the local community, such as visits to play parks and outdoor play in the fully enclosed garden. These opportunities supported children to develop confidence in their gross motor skills, stimulated their interests, and enhanced their play and learning experiences.

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 experienced warm, responsive and nurturing interactions that supported their emotional wellbeing. They appeared relaxed, happy and confident in the childminder's care. Positive relationships were evident, and the childminder knew children well, including their preferences and routines. This helped to form meaningful connections and develop trust.

Mealtime arrangements promoted safety and social interaction. Families provided packed lunches and snacks, and we observed children sitting at the table with the childminder while enjoying a nutritious snack. Dining chairs were fitted with appropriate booster seats to ensure children could sit securely and comfortably. The childminder remained close by throughout, demonstrating an understanding of the importance of supervision to keep children safe. These routines also supported positive social experiences, helping children feel included and valued.

Sleep routines were thoughtfully planned to provide continuity of care and a consistent approach for children. The arrangements supported children to feel secure and comfortable as they rested and supported their overall wellbeing. We discussed ways to enhance these routines further, such as introducing sleeping mats for children who prefer to rest close to the childminder. This would offer flexibility and ensure individual preferences are met.

The childminder had developed personal plans for all children in a way that worked well for the service, children and families. Important information was recorded, stored securely, and updated regularly. This meant that the care provided met the needs of individuals and respected the wishes of parents.

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

To support children's overall wellbeing the childminder should further develop the use of children's personal plans to include the views of children. Information shared by families should be recorded, and plans should be reviewed and signed by parents at least once every six months.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, 'my personal 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).

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2024.

Action taken since then

Personal plans had been further developed for all children and were being reviewed regularly with families.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure children are making good progress the childminder should develop ways to record and share observations of children's learning. These should highlight children's achievements and their proposed next steps.

This is to ensure I experience high quality care and support that is right for me, and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, 'I am supported to achieve my potential.' (HSCS 1.27)

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had created individual files for children which contained photographs and some narrative observations of children's experiences.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure children's safety is promoted the childminder should further develop risk assessments by adding detail as they consider risks and how these will be mitigated. These should include, but are not limited to, risk assessments for pets, outings, garden area and the upstairs playroom.

This is to ensure I experience a high quality environment and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, 'My environment is secure and safe.' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had considered and recorded their approach to risk assessment within policies. These had been shared with families.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure children receive high quality care and support from the continued development of the service, the childminder should develop quality assurance and self-evaluation processes. Procedures should be created that include ways to formally gather families' views. This will help to identify areas for improvement that will impact positively on outcomes for children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, '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 1 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had introduced methods for collecting feedback from children and families. Their responses were being considered to inform future improvement priorities.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To provide the best possible outcomes for children, the childminder should ensure they engage in mandatory and relevant training opportunities to keep their knowledge and understanding current. This should include, but is not limited to, Child Protection training.

This is to ensure I have confidence in the people who support and care for me, and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards(HSCS) which state, 'I experience high quality care and support that is right for me and is based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had not yet engaged in additional training or professional reading to keep their knowledge of best practice up to date. We emphasised the need to prioritise refreshing Child Protection training as a starting point.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

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	4 - Good
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
Children experience high quality spaces	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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