

Anthony, Elaine Child Minding

Livingston

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 January 2026

Service provided by:
Elaine Anthony

Service provider number:
SP2003906226

Service no:
CS2003012502

About the service

Anthony, Alaine is a childminding service provided by Alaine Anthony. The service is provided from the family home in a residential area in Eliburn, West Lothian. Children have access to the lounge, conservatory, and bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The service is close to local amenities including green spaces, libraries, and local shops.

The service is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children under 16 years of age.

At the time of the inspection there were three children in attendance, and ten children registered with the service over different days.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 January 2026 between the hours of 09:20 and 12:00. 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:

- spoke with and observed children using the service
- received digital feedback using an online form from five families
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents relating to children's care and development, and the management of the service.

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

- A clear, child-centred vision, values, and aims based on joy, safety, and learning through play strongly shaped daily practice, and underpinned positive outcomes.
- Strong self-evaluation and ongoing professional learning, drove sustained improvements, and ensured the service continually evolved to meet children's needs.
- Children's confidence, development, and curiosity flourished through warm, attuned interactions and highly engaging play.
- Positive, collaborative relationships with families ensured children's needs were understood and met consistently.
- Children felt safe, secure, and emotionally nurtured because of the childminder's warm and responsive care which met their needs.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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 experienced high quality care and support because the childminder had strong vision and values guiding their service. A values led ethos centred around children being happy, safe, and learning through play. Practice was grounded in the belief that children thrive when their interests lead their learning. This was reflected in the childminder's own evaluation of recent training, where they commented, "If I give children joy, they will thrive. This is everything I strive to provide in my homely, nurturing setting." This ethos was clearly visible in daily practice, and used as a guiding principle for improvement.

Families agreed. They described the setting as safe, friendly, and nurturing, with one parent sharing that their child viewed it as a "second home." Parents expressed confidence that their children were eating well, experiencing positive attachments, and benefiting from routines that supported safety, development, and enjoyment. One parent commented, "My child adores the childminder, and thrives there. We have peace of mind that they are safe, learning, and having fun." Another said, "My child finds it a safe and friendly environment where they get to grow, learn, and interact."

Warm, consistent relationships were a significant strength, with families describing the childminder as caring, approachable, and patient. Children were viewed and valued as individuals, and the childminder worked closely with families to build a consistent partnership approach, to supporting children's emotional and developmental needs. This included collaborative work with families exploring additional support needs, where the childminder sensitively adapted the environment and experiences to support the child's sensory preferences and communication needs. They also supported families by sharing strategies used in the setting, such as visual tools and emotional literacy stories, to maintain consistency between home and the service. One family said, "We talk after every session. I could bring up anything and not feel judged - they are wonderful."

Parents were routinely asked for their views through daily conversations and more formal opportunities such as reviews, settling in feedback, and 'idea sharing' maps. These approaches were used well and created a clear link between identifying what needed to improve, planning changes, and reviewing the impact. This was demonstrated in the improvements made to mealtime experiences over the past year. Changes were based on children's interests, preferences, and feedback from families, and the positive impact was evident in daily practice. Families who shared feedback agreed they felt included, and able to influence developments within the service. One parent told us, "The childminder regularly asks for feedback, and any ways to improve."

Children's experiences and outcomes were enhanced, because the childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to ongoing reflection and continuous improvement, using self-evaluation purposefully. They were beginning to use the new quality framework well, having previously drawn on the earlier framework to evaluate different aspects of their service. This resulted in a broad and informed understanding of strengths and areas for development. A planned and well-structured approach to improvement was evident, supported by an effective quality assurance calendar, and supporting checklists. These processes helped ensure that improvements were sustained, and responsive to national developments. The new improvement plan, with a

focus on enriching mealtime experiences, reflected a thoughtful and achievable approach, and was already resulting in improved outcomes for children.

The childminder's commitment to their own learning and development reinforced their ethos well. They actively sought out training opportunities, and reflected critically on how new knowledge could enrich children's experiences. Their professional learning was purposeful and closely aligned with their vision for child-led, joyful learning. As a result, the service continued to evolve in ways that were meaningful for children and families. For example, the introduction of sensory tents, calm down spaces, and enhanced emergent literacy and numeracy opportunities, demonstrated how training and reflective practice were consistently translated into high quality experiences and improved outcomes for children.

The childminder demonstrated understanding of regulatory notification requirements, and had appropriate systems in place. Updated guidance was discussed to further support confidence and clarity in this area.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator: Children play and learn

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 strong understanding of how children developed, learned, and progressed, and this was reflected in the high-quality experiences offered. One family said, "We often ask them for advice, because of their knowledge and experience." Their practice showed clear evidence of reflection on relevant theory, and current best practice, which contributed to purposeful and engaging play and learning. Children were observed to be happy, confident, and relaxed, moving freely around the environment, and engaging enthusiastically in experiences that followed their own interests. This supported their motivation, curiosity, and sustained engagement in learning.

A wide range of loose parts was used effectively to stimulate children's imagination and enrich their play. The childminder had built on a growing interest in colour, by providing colour themed loose parts and sorting pots, which supported early numeracy in meaningful and playful ways. Literacy was embedded naturally across the environment through accessible books, displays, and clear labels on drawers at child height, making the space attractive, enabling, and well-suited to promoting independence and choice.

The childminder responded sensitively to children's cues. When children appeared restless, they introduced singing and dancing, which delighted the children and promoted early literacy, physical wellbeing, and emotional regulation. Children also benefited from a wide range of experiences beyond the home, including regular visits to parks, toddler groups, soft play, and the farm. These outings contributed to children's growing confidence, social development, expanding interests, and increasing familiarity with the local community. One family commented, "My child loves the farm visits, trampolines, seeing animals, and outdoor parks." While another said, "There's always a fun, interactive learning day planned with many adventures."

Interactions were warm, encouraging, and attuned. The childminder used effective scaffolding to support independence, such as helping children develop the skills to open their own snacks, or manage dressing after using the toilet. They consistently supported children to understand and manage conflict, promoting empathy and self-regulation. The childminder demonstrated strong knowledge of each child's

communication style and preferences, allowing them to judge when to interact, when to observe, and when to extend learning. A particularly positive moment was observed during a playful communication game, where a child eagerly sought interaction and demonstrated clear attachment.

The childminder showed an emerging but developing approach to planning and assessment. They recognised and planned for different stages of learning, and had begun to use trackers and observations to formalise progress. Patterns of play were being identified and used to inform planning and support. Observations were detailed and meaningful. Families appreciated the level of insight shared, with one parent stating, "My child has come on so much, her speech and independence have improved massively." Another said their child had "gained more confidence around other adults and children."

Families valued the regular communication and updates provided. Parents described the childminder as approachable, responsive, and willing to adapt practice to help their child settle and thrive, with one noting, "They always try their best to accommodate both the parent and the children."

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

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 experienced warm, attentive, and nurturing care that supported them to feel safe, valued, and emotionally secure. Throughout the inspection they were relaxed, happy, and confident. This showed the childminder had built trusting relationships, and provided consistently responsive care. For example, when one child fell, the childminder immediately offered comfort, acknowledged their feelings, and checked what they needed. This sensitive and attuned response helped the child feel understood, reassured, and loved. A parent commented that the childminder, "gave warmth, structure, and support," reflecting the positive impact of these nurturing relationships. Another said the childminder was, "very friendly, caring, approachable, patient with my child, and is like going from a home to a home."

Families felt well-informed about their child's day and experiences. The childminder shared regular updates through conversations and messages, supporting strong communication and meaningful partnership working. Families told us they appreciated being kept up to date about daily routines, meals, naps and activities, and felt confident their child was safe and happy in the childminder's care. This good communication strengthened relationships, and contributed to consistent support for children.

Transitions were well supported through calm, respectful, and developmentally appropriate approaches. Settling in processes were managed sensitively, and in partnership with families, helping children adjust at a pace that suited them. The childminder used objects of reference and simple explanations to help children understand and prepare for smaller transitions, such as nappy changing, or moving to snack time. Children were asked for permission before care tasks, and the childminder used soft tones and unhurried interactions, ensuring children felt respected, nurtured, and in control. This also helped promote children's sense of security and encouraged independence, for example when children were supported to use the toilet and praised for doing what they could themselves. The childminder was also considering using visuals more widely to support communication and transitions, which could further strengthen routines, especially for children developing language at different rates. Such strategies may also support emerging self-regulation,

and reduce distress during sharing or turn-taking.

Mealtimes and snacks were nutritious, and aligned with current best practice guidance. Children had regular access to drinks, and routines were used effectively to support social skills, vocabulary, and learning about health and wellbeing. Parents told us the childminder offered a wide variety of healthy foods, and understood children's individual preferences.

Sleep routines were flexible and responsive to children's needs, with children able to rest when required, using safe sleep practices. Personal care was carried out with good infection prevention and control measures, contributing to children's safety and wellbeing. Risk assessments of the home and outings were robust, supporting safe exploration, and a wide range of experiences.

Personal plans were well organised and detailed, capturing children's routines, interests, strengths, and areas where support was needed. Plans were reviewed within required timescales, and families valued being involved. One parent noted they had regular six-monthly reviews but also daily conversations, and that the childminder willingly adapted practice to support their child's additional needs whenever required.

Overall, the childminder used well-planned and flexible approaches to meet children's individual needs, enabling them to feel safe, secure, and nurtured. Families consistently described the childminder as approachable, accommodating, and supportive, with one saying, "I couldn't possibly ask for anymore."

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

1. We recommend that the childminder complete Police Act Enhanced Disclosure applications with Disclosure Scotland, for all members of the household who are aged 16 years and over. This will ensure that children are kept safe in the service. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - Standard 12: Confidence in Staff.

This area for improvement was made on 28 October 2016.

Action taken since then

All disclosure checks had been carried out through PVG process.
This area for improvement was 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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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