

Kim Barclay Childminding Child Minding

Fochabers

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
15 January 2026

Service provided by:
Kimberley Barclay

Service provider number:
SP2024000139

Service no:
CS2024000268

About the service

Kim Barclay is registered to provide a childminding service to six children at any one time, up to 16 years of age, 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.

The service is situated in a rural village close to a community garden and play park. Children are cared for in the conservatory which operates as a designated playroom, the adjacent lounge and dining area. There is also a downstairs bathroom and bedroom which is used for children needing to sleep. A secure garden to the rear of the property is accessed directly from the dining area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14 January 2026 between 11:45 and 15:00. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. There were two children present at the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- received two questionnaires from families
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances
- observed practice and daily experiences
- 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 had created a warm and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported.
- Children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care that fostered their wellbeing.
- The childminder made the best use of spaces to create a motivating environment for the children.
- Children's privacy, dignity and preferences were fully respected and appropriate spaces supported their care needs.
- Children experienced quality play and learning that excited and engaged them and was supported by the childminders skilful use of their own knowledge and practice.
- Children were able to play at their own pace and had fun as they explored.
- The childminder was in the process of establishing purposeful self-evaluation, that helped to identify improvements and led to positive outcomes for 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	4 - Good
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 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.

The service vision, values and aims were being embedded in everyday life and helped to inform the childminder's practice and how the service would be delivered. The aims of the service included the provision of quality care that enabled children to play, learn and grow. That was supported by friendly relationships with families and effective communication.

To help ensure that children and families were well informed and shared responsibility for changes, we suggested that the childminder actively involved them in the review and design of the vision, values and aims.

The childminder was in the process of establishing purposeful self-evaluation, that helped to identify improvements and led to positive outcomes for children. The childminder had informal discussion with parents and regularly shared information with them. We discussed the importance of evidencing and using the views of children and families to inform improvement, and how it was central to the evaluation process.

The childminder had started an early year's qualification that would also provide an opportunity for reflection and the promotion of improvement. Continued use of local, national and best practice guidance would also help to support thoughtful changes.

The childminder ensured that their volunteer assistant was suitable to work with children. To help ensure that they remained confident in their role, we suggested a clear process for mentoring and support.

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.

The childminder's home was welcoming and was maintained to a high standard, it gave a strong message to children that they mattered. The childminder made the best use of spaces to create a motivating environment for the children. The playroom provided a variety of resources and play materials that catered to children's needs and interests. Furniture was well positioned in the adjacent lounge that also supported floor play, quieter activities and rest. The physical environment supported children to feel safe and secure and loved while they experienced play and learning centred on their needs and interests.

The childminder recognised the importance of outdoor play and the benefits for enhancing children's wellbeing and self-confidence. The childminder considered that planned improvements to increase natural real and natural play materials in the garden, would further enhance children's experiences. Children were being supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of their community and wider world. They attended a local mother and toddler group that enabled them to socialise with other children and enjoyed different play experiences. They also visited the community garden that was located close by. Parents shared that their child was involved in a range of fun experiences to meet their individual needs and supported their development.

Children were safe as the childminder had taken action to ensure the safety and security of children and each other. The childminder and their assistant understood and shared appropriate risk assessments and were vigilant to risk whether indoors or outdoors. As a result, children were able to enjoy fun play experiences that were not compromised. We suggested that the childminder familiarised themselves with SIMOA (Care Inspectorate Campaign to keep children safe) to support reflection and assurance of practice. Efficient record keeping systems were in place and complied with relevant best practice and legal requirements.

The childminder had a clear understanding of arrangements for cleaning and food safety practice and that helped to promote a quality, clean and safe environment. Where children required personal care, arrangements promoted safe practice. Effective levels of infection prevention and control were implemented, such as hand washing and personal protective equipment (PPE). Children's privacy, dignity and preferences were fully respected and appropriate spaces supported their care needs.

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.

The childminder had an understanding of how children developed and progressed in their learning. Children experienced quality play and learning that excited and engaged them and was supported by the childminder's skilful use of their own knowledge and practice. Children were able to play at their own pace and had fun as they explored. They repeated actions, using utensils to scoop and pour dried coloured rice into different containers and made patterns in the rice with their hands and feet, that supported their learning and development. Children were given the time, space and support they needed to make decisions and use their voice.

Well considered innovations and creative approaches engaged children's imagination and enriched their play. Children were being helped to develop a broad range of skills including language, literacy and numeracy through their interactions with the childminder. Children looked at a story book together with the childminder, who involved them in the story and used opportunities to develop their communication and thinking. During play with different cars, trucks and a play toy tool kit, the childminder talked about colours and shapes, they explored with children in a valuable way to build and foster their understanding.

Careful observations and effective assessments were beginning to recognise and promote children's progress and achievements. Continuing to share them with families and inviting them to share their knowledge would help to deepen their understanding and planning for their child's journey. We suggested that the childminder streamlined their formats used for the purposes of assessment. This would help ensure that children's progress was easily identified and any additional supports were planned for and implemented.

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.

The childminder's practice was built on the understanding that nurturing relationships were essential for children's growth and development. As a result, children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care that fostered their wellbeing. The childminder balanced promoting children's independence with providing

support where it was needed.

Children were able to enjoy food choices that were nutritious and aligned with dietary guidelines including 'Setting the table'. Foods provided were culturally appropriate and safely prepared, and took account of any specific dietary needs, allergies or intolerances. Fresh water was available to the children through the day and they were encouraged to remain hydrated. The childminder considered daily routines such as snack and mealtimes a valuable opportunity to promote children's involvement and independence. Children clearly enjoyed the opportunity to put spread on their crackers, with help as needed. The childminder intended to introduce the option of children pouring their own drinks, which would also enhance their experience.

Consistency in routines such as mealtimes, nap times and personal care provided children with a sense of safety and security. The childminder recognised that these daily routines offered time to connect with children and support their growth and development.

Children's wellbeing was supported through personal planning, the plan was tailored to each child's individual strengths, needs and interests. Children and families were meaningfully involved in their child's plan. We advised the childminder to ensure that any changes to a child's care were updated on the personal plan and to maintain regular review, that ensured they were suitable and effective. The childminder had recently introduced a format to record key information to support continuity and progression in a child's care, that was shared appropriately with families.

The childminder had created a warm and welcoming environment where children and families felt valued and supported. Connections with families increased their engagement in the service, positively impacting the quality of children's experiences. The childminder had systems in place to support regular communication with families. Parents shared, they had formed good relationships with the childminder, they were always welcomed into the childminder's home to share in their child's care and learning.

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	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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