

Pauline's Childminding Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
15 January 2026

Service provided by:
Pauline Barrowman

Service provider number:
SP2014986501

Service no:
CS2014333124

About the service

Pauline Barrowman is registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six children under the age of 16, 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 the childminder's family.

The service is provided from the childminder's home in a residential area in Broomhall, Edinburgh. The service is near local schools, shops and public transport routes. Children have access to the open plan living/dining room/kitchen within the home. They can also access the spacious enclosed back garden.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 13 January 2026 from 11:00 until 13:50 and 15 January 2026 09:30 to 10:30. 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.

This inspection was based on the Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors, which has been introduced since the last inspection. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with two children using the service and gathered feedback from their families online
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed progress on all previous areas for improvement
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were safe, secure and comfortable in the childminders home, which provided a variety of play experiences to support their development.
- Children had positive relationships with the childminder, her family and other children attending the service helping them to build confidence.
- Children benefitted from accessing a range of experiences in the local community. This supported them to learn about the local area, nature and enabled them to develop their social skills through group experiences.
- The childminder accessed training to keep children safe, support her ongoing development and continue to build on the quality of care and experiences offered to children.
- The childminder plans to continue to learn about and implement self-evaluation and quality assurance systems to further develop the service.

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	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder had developed their vision, values and aims to reflect their aims for high quality care and support for children and their families. Children had positive experiences in the service because the childminder had embedded these values into every day life in the service. Families commented: "Pauline is a fantastic child centred person. I can tell that she really values what the children in her care have to say". The childminder's values led to an ethos centred around children feeling safe, loved, happy and learning through daily experiences and play.

The childminder reflected on their practice regularly and accessed training which supported their professional development. As a result, children experienced care which met their needs well. The childminder had accessed online training and resources to develop formal self-evaluation of the service. For example, the childminder had started to reflect on the new 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors; childminding (HMIE and Care Inspectorate, 2025)' to support their evaluation of the service. We shared some resources which would support them to further evaluate and develop the service to continue to improve the quality of provision. For example, resources on the Care Inspectorate's 'Early Learning and Childcare improvement programme hub'.

Families told us they were very happy with the care provided for their children and that they felt involved in a meaningful way in developing the service through regular chats. For example, they discussed how the childminder could tailor trips to the interests of their children. Consideration should be given to how children and families can be further involved in giving feedback on the service. This could support the childminder to shape the care tailored to the children's and family's current needs and further improve the service.

The childminder met up with other childminders regularly which supported them to reflect on changes in legislation and national guidance. To further support them to benchmark the service, the childminder should also continue to access training and resources on current best practice guidance. The childminder told us that they were at the start of their quality assurance journey and plans to develop the self evaluation and improvement planning would further support their development of the service. The area for improvement made at the last inspection has not been fully addressed and has been continued (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').

The childminder had developed their understanding of the legislative responsibilities of a provider of a care service. The childminder demonstrated a understanding of regulatory notification requirements and had appropriate systems in place to support this in the service. This action addressed an area for improvement made at the last inspection.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Children experience high quality spaces

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

The childminder's home was clean, tidy and well maintained. The living space was well organised to provide children with safe play spaces. Children enjoyed a variety of opportunities indoors and outdoors. The childminder made good use of the local community, which added to the range of experiences for children.

The childminder shared that they always considered risks and took action to minimise these in the home and when out of the service. Risk assessments should now be developed to demonstrate how they ensure that they will keep children safe in their home and on outings (see area for improvement 1).

Children and the childminder were following good handwashing routines. Nappy changing and toileting took place upstairs, which meant that there was hand washing sink nearby to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder used Personal Protective Equipment to prevent the spread of infection when supporting children with personal care. This addressed part of an area for improvement made at the last inspection. Improvements had been made to the management of infection control but to ensure children's wellbeing further developments should be made. For example, reviewing hand drying in line with current infection control guidance, if more children were attending the service. And, reviewing how cleaning equipment like mops are stored when not in use to ensure that they are not accessible to children.

Recent work in the garden had made this a safe and inviting space for children to play. The fence had been repaired and replaced following the last inspection and is now secured around the garden perimeter. This addressed an area for improvement made at the last inspection.

Children could choose toys, resources and where and what to play from the resources in the living room and nearby storage. The childminder also added to the resources available in the service to support individual children's interests helping them to lead their own learning. For example, adding more vehicles and small world people to build on their imaginative play.

Documents and children's personal details were stored securely and confidentially. The childminder had a doorbell with recording equipment on the entry to the house. The childminder should review information about responsibilities when using recording equipment and develop a policy and any signage needed in line with legislative requirements.

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's safety and reduce risks the childminder should develop records to show how risks are managed in the home, garden and on outings.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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The childminder is qualified and used their understanding of how children develop and learn through play to support them to learn new skills. For example, supporting a child's learning play through loose parts and developing their dexterity with more challenging resources, like threading cards. Some high quality resources were used for example, those which offered no fixed outcome. These materials helped children to be creative, experiment, problem solve and explore areas of interest.

Children enjoyed a rich variety of play in the service had regular access to the outdoors and natural environments. This helped them to stay active, healthy and develop an interest in and respect for nature. Families agreed telling us: "They often visit parks where my child has the opportunity to play and run around outdoors to explore." Another said: "Lots of park visits and outdoor walks. I love that they also take the bus to different places".

Play experiences were fun and varied. Play was age and stage appropriate with the childminder providing challenge for children as they developed skills. For example, when children needed different levels of challenge this was facilitated in a ways which meant younger children could not access small items which could present a risk. Children were supported to choose and lead their own learning through the variety of resources laid out. They could also select resources from the child height storage in the living room helping them to choose how to develop their play.

The children enjoyed positive relationships with the childminder and each other and this helped them to build social skills. One family commented: "Pauline has built a strong relationship with my child, I love hearing stories about the day ahead and how it's gone. I can see how much she cares because she takes the time to listen carefully to my child. I can tell she is really caring and nurturing." The childminder narrated experiences helping to build children's vocabulary and problem solving skills. The children experienced responsive support, which helped them build new skills and consolidate learning.

The children's personal plans shared pictures and notes about their achievements linked to the wellbeing indicators. The childminder knew individual children well and could share how they were developing and areas she was working on with them. The childminder should now continue to develop how the observations in personal plans are used to identify development needs, next steps and planning for play. This could support children's ongoing development. The childminder should also consider how to evaluate the success of the play experiences offered and how they will ensure that all play types are being offered to support children's development.

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.

The childminder knew the children and their families well and had built positive relationships with them all. The children experienced nurturing care, which was respectful, well planned and consistent. This helped them to feel safe and loved.

The childminder was sensitive to individual children's needs. For example, consideration of children's preferences through transitions in to the service, out on trips and back to families meant children felt safe. We saw that this careful consideration of their individual personality helped the children to feel relaxed in the service, helping them to play and learn successfully.

Children enjoyed snacks and meals at times which suited them and they were encouraged to eat healthy foods and stay hydrated. Children were learning about good infection control practice like handwashing before snacks. Children enjoyed helping to tidy up after meals, developing new skills and independence.

Sleeps and personal care were also provided responsively helping children to feel listened to. Sleeps were provided safely on sleep mats with sensitivity shown by the childminder to children's comfort needs. This addressed an area for improvement made at the last inspection.

Personal planning approaches supported the childminder to meet children's individual needs and provide consistency of care and support in line with their home life. This helped the children to feel secure and nurtured. Regular communication with families including reviews of personal plans helped them to feel involved in their child's care at the service. Identified needs were planned for helping children to develop independence, new skills and supporting their emotional wellbeing. This addressed an area for improvement made at the last inspection. The childminder should continue to develop personal plans in line with guidance. For example, showing how they have used information from daily conversations to plan for individual care.

Families felt well informed about their child's day and experiences. The childminder shared regular updates through conversations and lunchtime messages, supporting strong communication and meaningful partnership working. Families told us: "We are in regular discussion about my child's development and needs. There is a good balance between informal/more thoughtful reviews of their care." A family also told us the most positive aspects were: "The relationships between Pauline and our child but also the relationship that has been built between the two families. Really nice clear communication and we feel we can ask Pauline anything in terms of our child's development and feel really supported." This helped families feel fully involved in their child's care and development.

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 wellbeing and development the childminder should enhance personal plans to ensure that these are meaningful for children. This should include, but is not limited to, strategies to support children where needs or next steps are identified, significant changes in children's lives and how children are supported to progress in the service.

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

This area for improvement was made on 17 June 2024.

Action taken since then

Personal plans were in place which gathered all the information needed to provide care for the children consistently from home to the service. Children's individual needs had been identified and the childminder detailed how they would be supported with regular evaluations on progress with families.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure the service is being managed in line with legislative responsibilities the childminder should familiarise herself with her responsibilities as a provider. This should include what must be notified to the Care Inspectorate.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

This area for improvement was made on 17 June 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had familiarised themselves with their responsibilities as a provider of a service. The childminder had submitted appropriate notifications and records since the last inspection, for example the completion certificate for building works completed on their house.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To support children's safety and wellbeing the provider should review the practice and arrangements for:

- children's sleeping
- nappy changing
- infection prevention and control for mealtimes.

To ensure this is being provided in line with current best practice guidance. The childminder should refer to Public Health Scotland 'Health protection in children and young people settings, including education' and the Scottish Cot Death Trust 'Reduce the Risks of Cot Death, Early Years Safe Sleeping Guide, For Childminders, Foster Carers or a Nursery Setting' to support this improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 17 June 2024.

Action taken since then

Children were offered sleeps on sleep mats in the living room with new bedding on them. This meant that sleeps were safe and in line with best practice guidance. Nappy changing took place upstairs with a handwashing sink available helping to prevent the spread of infection. Children were washing their hands before meals and eating in high chairs or at a clean table. The childminder should continue to develop children's skills in washing hands after mealtimes.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure that children can access the garden safely the provider should take action to secure the fencing around the whole back garden. Until this is in place the provider should risk assess the use of the garden to ensure that children are kept safe.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I can independently access parts of the premises I use, and the environment has been designed to promote this' (HSCS 5.11) and 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

This area for improvement was made on 17 June 2024.

Action taken since then

The garden fence had been repaired and in places replaced to ensure that the garden was fully enclosed and safe for children to access.

This area for improvement is met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To continue to improve outcomes and experiences for children and families, quality assurances processes, including self-evaluation and improvement planning should be further developed. The childminder should become familiar with best practice guidance and use this to support them to reflect and plan for continuous improvement. Consideration should also be given to sharing how they have used feedback from children and their families to improve the service.

This is to ensure care and support that 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 17 June 2024.

Action taken since then

The childminder had started to look at how to quality assure the service. The childminder shared that they were at the start of their journey with self-evaluation. However, the childminder had shown ability to make improvements and align their service to best practice guidance. As a result, we were confident the childminder would continue to develop the service through more embedded self-evaluation approaches.

This area for improvement is not fully met and is continued in this report.

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

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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	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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