

McNeil, Leeann Child Minding

Beith

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 January 2026

Service provided by:
Leeann McNeil

Service provider number:
SP2013985394

Service no:
CS2013321195

About the service

Leeann McNeil provides a childminding service from their home in Beith, North Ayrshire. The service is in a quiet, residential area. The children are cared for in the living room. They have access to an upstairs bathroom and a secure garden.

The childminder may care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age: 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 include the children of the childminder's family/ household.

At the time of our inspection, 11 children were registered with the service. There were three children in attendance during the inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8 January 2026 between 12:00 and 14:40. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with three children using the service
- received eight completed questionnaires from 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

- Children experienced warm, nurturing relationships with the childminder.
- Children were included in their community through access to a variety of groups.
- Families felt well informed and involved in their child's care.
- The childminder needed to develop self-evaluation and improvement planning approaches.
- Processes for observation and assessment of children's learning needed to be put in place.
- The childminder should continue to develop personal plans to support children's wellbeing.

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 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

Quality Indicator: 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 engaged positively with the inspection process and was welcoming and open. They were eager for feedback they could use to support the development of their service. This demonstrated they were committed to improving outcomes for children.

Community learning was central to the service. The childminder made effective use of local groups and amenities to create meaningful experiences for children. This reflected their commitment to helping children feel included and connected. This approach supported children to develop a strong sense of belonging within their community.

The childminder had issued service questionnaires to gather feedback from families. These indicated they were satisfied with the service. We discussed how the childminder could seek more specific feedback to help guide developments. The childminder chatted with children daily to gather their views. This supported them to provide activities based on children's interests. This meant they could continually adapt and improve the service to better meet children's needs and support positive outcomes.

Self-evaluation processes and improvement planning were informal. For example, they purchased new toys based on their observations of children's interests. To help the childminder identify their strengths and areas of development, we signposted them to the self-evaluation toolkit 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding'. Identifying strengths and areas for development could support the childminder to plan for improvements. This would guide progress and the development of their service.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

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 were happy and having fun playing with the toys available to them. Children confidently chose from a range of toys, including jigsaws, balls, Duplo, animals, and a toy kitchen. This supported them to lead their own play and make independent decisions. We suggested that the childminder could, at times, use toys and activities more purposefully. This could create play experiences that offer greater challenge and depth of learning. This would help extend children's learning and support their ongoing progression.

The childminder made good use of local amenities and community groups to enhance children's learning and development. Children regularly attended toddler groups, Bookbug sessions, sensory play sessions and an outdoor play group. These activities supported them to build social skills, confidence and resilience in different environments. One parent told us, "[the childminder] goes out of their way to plan activities and exercises that will get [my child] involved". These varied community experiences enriched children's play

and broadened their learning opportunities.

The childminder interacted with children to support them. They helped children identify colours, helping them develop their knowledge in a supportive and encouraging way. The childminder also modelled co-operative and respectful language. This helped children interact positively with one another, setting a warm and calm tone. These approaches supported children to build positive relationships, strengthen their communication with peers, and develop confidence when interacting with others.

The childminder observed children informally and shared updates with families. To help improve practice, we suggested they use observations more purposefully to track children's progress. This would support them to plan clear next steps in learning (see area for improvement). This will help ensure that they support and extend children's learning needs and guide continued progress over time. To support the development of observing children's learning and identifying next steps, we signposted the childminder to Education Scotland's 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' document.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children make good progress in their learning, the childminder should develop individual next steps, based on their observations, that build on children's achievements.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

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 benefitted from the childminder's kind and gentle approach. They received comfort and reassurance when needed, which helped them feel secure and valued. At times of transition, the childminder explained to the children what was happening, and what would happen next. They supported children well using respectful language. One parent told us, "[the childminder] is fantastic with my child, [they will not] go to anyone else". As a result, children developed positive, trusting relationships with the childminder. This supported their emotional wellbeing and contributed to a nurturing environment where children were confident and settled.

The childminder clearly knew the children in their care. They read children's cues well - for example, when supporting children with toilet training. This meant children received timely support that helped them feel understood and well cared for.

Good infection prevention and control measures were in place. The childminder ensured children washed their hands before eating, and after personal care. This helped protect children from infection and supported healthy hygiene habits.

Families had daily opportunities to discuss their children's care, development and learning. Parents told us they felt involved in their child's care, and were happy with the communication from the childminder. One

told us, "I get a great handover every day and if there has ever been any issues, we have discussed it together and made a plan ... and reported to each other how the plan was going". As a result, families felt well informed and confident that their children's needs were understood and met. This helped strengthen positive partnerships between the childminder and families, supporting children's overall wellbeing.

Personal plans were in place which contained basic information. This included emergency contacts, children's likes and dislikes, and records of milestone achievements. The childminder had trialled a new personal plan format with one child. This supported them to effectively review the child's wellbeing and set achievable targets. They should now extend this approach across all personal plans. We asked the childminder to date all reviews, and ensure any additional support strategies children require are highlighted (see outstanding area for improvement). This would enable the childminder to provide well targeted support that enhances children's wellbeing 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

The childminder should continue to develop written personal plans for each child, within 28 days of attending the service, and implement a plan for review within a six month period, or before if necessary, involving parents or, where appropriate, children.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, as a child, "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 14 February 2019.

Action taken since then

The childminder submitted an action plan on 14 April 2019. They told us:

I will continue to have a care plan in place for each child in my care.
I will follow up and review these on a 6 month basis or more regular if required.
I will involve parents, children in the care plan by asking for their input.
We will work together.

The childminder had written personal plans in place for all children. These reflected children's current needs. Personal plans had not been dated to reflect that they had been reviewed with parents within the required timescales.

This area for improvement has not been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should develop more robust risk assessments, referring to most recent good practice guidance, to ensure a safe environment for children. This should include risk assessments for walking home from school, car journeys and taking children swimming.

This ensures a safe environment for children that is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, as a child "My environment is safe and secure" (HSCS 5:17)

This area for improvement was made on 14 February 2019.

Action taken since then

The childminder submitted an action plan on 14 April 2019. They told us:

I will do a written plan for all areas we attend.

I will put a risk assessment in place for all outings and prove this information needed rather than tick a box .

I will work towards this over the next 6 months.

The childminder had developed a variety of appropriate risk assessments to support them in reducing risks for children.

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	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	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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