

Carrie On Childminding Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 January 2026

Service provided by:

Service provider number:
SP2022000171

Service no:
CS2022000251

About the service

Carrie On Childminding operates from their family home in north-west Edinburgh. They are registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six children at any one time under 16 years, of whom, no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom, no more than one is under 12 months. Children have access to the kitchen/diner, living room, toilet facilities on the ground floor and designated space in the back garden. The service is close to schools and nurseries, green spaces, local amenities and can be reached by public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Tuesday 13 January 2026 between 14:30 and 16:55. We returned to the service on Friday 16 January to share feedback. This 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/spent time with four children using the service.
- received three questionnaires from families.
- spoke with one parent.
- spoke with the childminder.
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.
- observed practice and daily life.
- reviewed documents.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure that children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained, and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, one area for improvement was identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within the section "Children are supported to achieve."

Key messages

- The childminder had a welcoming ethos to their service.
- Children were kept safe due to clear risk assessments and procedures for safety.
- Children benefited from enhanced wellbeing and richer learning because outdoor play formed a significant part of their routine.
- Children's wellbeing and sense of belonging were enhanced through the childminder's warm and responsive interactions.
- The childminder should ensure personal planning is reviewed with families every six months or sooner. This will meet regulatory timescales and evidence that children's needs are being met.
- Daily communication with parents promoted trust and helped build a collaborative approach to the care of the 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

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's vision was to provide a fun, interactive service where children could develop independence and respect. There was evidence of the childminder's values in practice such as respectfully listening to children. A welcoming ethos was observed, with a parent saying: "I feel that I would always be welcome to visit. I have also appreciated visits when my child was settling." The childminder had their aims and objectives in place, and we suggested further developing these in collaboration with children and families to enhance inclusion and shared ownership.

Self-evaluation for improvement was in development helping to identify some strengths and next steps for the service. The childminder had previously used questionnaires to gather feedback from families. One improvement made following feedback was the provision of spare clothing and wellie boots to support outdoor play. We signposted the childminder to A quality improvement framework for the early years and childcare sectors: Childminding (Care Inspectorate, 2025) to support reflective practice and ongoing service development.

Policies and risk assessments were in place, supporting safe and consistent practice. Fire safety procedures were particularly strong, with regular equipment checks and well documented fire drills that included review dates and reflections. Children spoke confidently about taking part in drills, demonstrating their understanding of safety routines and the positive impact of consistent, well-planned reviews.

While fire safety was robust, the childminder's approach to reviewing wider policies and risk assessments was less consistently applied. Applying the same regular review cycle across all policy areas, and clearly documenting the process, would strengthen overall quality assurance. This would provide transparent evidence of continuous improvement and demonstrate how changes positively influence children's safety, wellbeing, and daily experiences.

The childminder was a member of a national childminding organisation, which helped them stay updated on sector developments and access professional learning. Training in child protection and first aid ensured children were kept safe from harm.

Children's emerging interest in languages was supported through the childminder's learning of British Sign Language (BSL). We observed the childminder modelling signs and the children engaging enthusiastically. This enriched children's awareness of communication diversity and promoted inclusion. We encouraged the childminder to more clearly record how training informs practice to show the benefits for children. Parents expressed strong confidence in the childminder's skills and experience. One parent commented on the childminder's professional background: "Trusted, experienced - childminder is a former teacher and currently a pupil support assistant at a school so has a wealth of knowledge and experience. My child loves being looked after by the childminder."

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Children experience high quality spaces

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 kept safe through careful planning and consistent safety routines across the service. During the walk from the local school, children demonstrated a clear understanding of road safety rules, supported by the childminder's calm, well managed approach. This helped them develop confidence, responsibility, and an awareness of how to keep themselves safe in the community.

Children's physical development was well supported through secure and thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces that encouraged active play and challenge. Safety and risk assessments informed outdoor planning, and children understood these expectations. For example, they confidently explained the rules for using the trampoline and swing. A balanced "risk versus benefit" approach ensured children enjoyed the outdoors while risks were minimised. They navigated the space safely and used resources appropriately, enabling fun, active play with reduced hazards. One parent told us they had "no concerns about the safety of the environment."

Rich opportunities to explore nature further supported children's development. Activities such as using the mud kitchen, planting in warm weather, and observing frogs in the small pond offered hands on learning about the natural world. A parent shared: "Outdoor exploring is a big part of my child's time... learning about nature and care taking after animals." These varied experiences helped children deepen their understanding of living things and develop a sense of responsibility for the environment.

Children benefited from an inviting learning environment with well maintained resources. Outdoor materials and indoor activities, such as crafts at the kitchen table, offered a balanced mix of active and calm play. Children knew what was available and confidently approached the childminder to request specific toys, showing ownership of their play and independence in making choices. There was some consultation with children through a mind map, and we encouraged the childminder to add dates and record completed actions. This will better show how children's views influence planning and strengthen engagement.

Information gathered by the service was appropriate and securely stored, demonstrating good safeguarding practice. The childminder also recognised challenges related to school age children bringing personal mobile phones and school iPads into the home. During the inspection, the childminder encouraged social interaction and purposeful play, which kept children engaged with one another and reduced digital risks. We advised developing a brief statement for families outlining expectations around digital device use. Clear guidance will help children and parents understand how digital safety is managed and support the development of responsible digital habits.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality indicator: Play, 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.

During the inspection we observed that the childminder had created an environment that actively promoted independence, choice and age appropriate challenge. The children's stages of development had been taken into account, enabling them to confidently choose activities and lead their play. Children's current interests were meaningfully considered with evidence of the childminder adapting experiences in response to these. A parent said: "I can share my child's current interests and the childminder is creative with integrating this into the day."

This showed that communication with parents was used to support children's interests in the service.

Child and parent feedback told us that the childminder provided varied experiences, with outdoor play being a valued feature of daily routines. Regular outings promoted engagement and the childminder listened to children's preferences about what they would like to do after school. One parent said: "Outdoor play is always encouraged and there are lots of things for them to do in the garden. On longer days they take walks up the hill and to the woods or to the local play park." This highlighted the childminder's strong commitment to outdoor learning and active play which positively contributed to children's physical development.

Interactions between the childminder and children were consistently warm, respectful and attuned to children's needs. The quality of interactions contributed to the positive ethos of the service. Parents recognised this with one saying: "The childminder has a great relationship with the children and they all trust and respect her. She adapts to their needs and provides a great safe space for after school." This feedback demonstrated that the relationship-based practice had positive outcomes for children's play and learning.

Children were routinely offered meaningful choice at pickup from school, for example an energetic walk or quieter activities in the home. This flexible approach gave children choice to manage varying levels of energy support with emotional regulation. The childminder was also aware of parents' preferences regarding homework and offered support for children. Children's need for relaxation and play at this time of day reflected a child-centre approach. This contributed to a balanced after-school experience for children.

The childminder's positive behaviour policy reflected the rights-based approach the childminder used. Children told us that the childminder actively supported them during social play and listened when issues arose. This demonstrated a responsive and respectful approach promoting children's social learning. We advised the childminder on refining the wording of the policy to reflect the rights-based approaches seen in practice. Strengthening the written policy to align with practice will support parents' understanding of the childminder's commitment to rights-respecting care.

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 experienced nurturing, consistent care through well established routines that supported their wellbeing and learning. During the inspection, they showed a high level of emotional security, reflecting strong, trusting relationships. As one parent said, "I can see my child's relationship with the childminder is also strong."

Personal planning demonstrated a tailored approach that met children's individual needs. One parent described the childminder's sensitive support during their child's moments of anxiety. At the time of inspection personal planning was formally reviewed with parents annually. Parents confirmed that informal discussions were regular and meaningful. Recording these ongoing interactions would strengthen evidence of collaborative planning. A parent shared: "The childminder updates me regularly on my child's activities, development and plan. I am able to contribute to this. I also receive feedback at the end of each session." We discussed documenting personal planning reviews at least every six months to align with best practice. (See Area for Improvement 1).

The childminder's consistently warm and responsive approach with the children created respectful interactions. The childminder listened attentively to children and supported age appropriate independence. One child said, "They're kind, they're caring and I really like them. The childminder always has something fun for us to do." This approach promoted children's confidence, safety and developmental progress.

Snack time provided a calm social experience with opportunities for independence. The childminder, who had food hygiene training, provided snacks. We reminded the service to register as a food business with the City of Edinburgh Council, as snacks were regularly supplied. Families provided packed lunches during full day holiday sessions. We also discussed enhancing partnership working around healthy eating through the Setting the Table (Scottish Government, 2024) guidance.

The childminder had experience supporting medical needs, allergies and child protection. First aid training was up-to-date, ensuring current knowledge to support children's health and wellbeing. Accident forms were prepared, though parents were usually informed verbally about minor incidents. We advised completing written forms and sharing copies with parents to support monitoring and safeguard children should an injury change or worsen.

Regular photos, messages and verbal updates gave parents a clear understanding of their child's experiences. Families valued the individual WhatsApp updates and daily conversations, which contributed to a strong sense of security. One parent commented: "The childminder is warm and caring. I feel that my child is in safe hands and I am very happy with the communication between my childminder, my child and myself. My child always enjoys going to their childminder and often has fun stories about their time there." This illustrated how effective partnership working supported children's consistent, trusting care and overall wellbeing.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience care and support that meets their needs, the childminder should evidence review of personal plans every six months, or sooner if children have developmental needs to be met.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: '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).

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
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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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