

Free Range Kids Child Minding

Kinross

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 January 2026

Service provided by:
Sarah Fulke

Service provider number:
SP2018989805

Service no:
CS2018365774

About the service

Free Range Kids is registered to provide a childminding service. The service is provided from the childminder's home in the village of Fossoway, Kinross.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of seven children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than six are of an age to attend primary school. Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons not named on the registration certificate and no overnight care will be provided.

Children have access to a large open plan living room, kitchen and dining area, a toilet and an enclosed garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 15 January 2026 between 14:30 and 17:30. 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.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with children in the service
- spoke with the childminder
- received five completed questionnaires from parents
- observed practice and children's 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, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within Leadership.

Key messages

- Strong, positive relationships were established with children and their families.
- Quality assurance processes, including risk assessment and policies needed updating.
- Required notifications were not consistently submitted within expected timescales.
- Children enjoyed opportunities to build friendships and social skills.
- The environment offered a balance of active play spaces and quiet, comfortable areas for rest.
- A relaxed routine supported children's choice and self-directed play.
- Children experienced warm, caring relationships with the childminder, who knew them well and understood their individual needs.
- Strengthening personal plans and reviewing them routinely with families would ensure accurate, up to date records of children's needs and any changes over time.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Children experienced a service that reflected the childminder's vision, values and aims. The homebased setting provided a welcoming and nurturing environment where children were supported to feel safe and respected.

Positive relationships had been established with families. The childminder provided a service where families felt confident and comfortable to share their views. This supported them to share suggestions to support improvements and influence their child's care. Families told us that they felt they could initiate change. One family shared, "{the childminder} asks for feedback and is open to hear my thoughts". All families that shared feedback with us said they strongly agreed that they had a good relationship with the childminder. This highlighted effective partnership working, in which families felt valued and listened to.

The childminder reflected on their practice to support them to identify improvements they could make to the service. It would be beneficial to familiarise themselves with the 'Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors: Childminding'. This would strengthen self-evaluation processes, enabling the childminder to recognise what is working well and where further improvements could be made. Effective self-evaluation would support continuous improvement and help to secure positive outcomes for children.

Quality assurance systems should be further developed to ensure the consistent delivery of high quality care. Policies, procedures, and risk assessments needed to be reviewed and updated so they align with current best practice guidance. Strengthening these systems will support the childminder to maintain clear oversight of the service and help to identify areas for improvement in a more organised and consistent way (see area for improvement 1).

Required notifications were not consistently submitted promptly, which limited the provider's ability to meet their responsibilities as a registered service. Notifications relating to accidents, as well as changes within the household, had not been provided within expected timescales. These processes are essential as they allow the Care Inspectorate to carry out relevant safety checks and ensure that any potential risks are identified and addressed appropriately (see area for improvement 2).

It would be beneficial for the childminder to engage in further professional learning and training to help strengthen their practice. Building on existing knowledge through additional opportunities, such as accessing current guidance, legislation, and best practice materials, would support continued improvement. We suggested that the childminder sign up to Care Inspectorate provider updates. This would help them to stay informed about sector expectations and developments.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that quality assurance processes impact positively on outcomes for children, they should be developed to help identify and inform improvement.

This should include, but is not limited to,

- updating policies and procedures in line with guidance and best practice,
- developing risk assessments to identify potential safety concerns and the actions taken to minimise risks.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

2. To ensure that children experience a service which is well-led and managed, and keeps them safe, the childminder should notify the Care Inspectorate, within required timescales, of certain events or changes to the service.

This should include, but is not limited to,

- accidents that result in an injury requiring medical advice or attention,
- changes to who is living at the premises.

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

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS 4.23).

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 busy and settled throughout the inspection visit. A variety of age-appropriate resources were available that reflected children's interests and supported different areas of learning. This meant that experiences were fun and engaging.

Resources were rotated to support children's changing interests. Resources were organised and easily accessible, enabling children to make independent choices and engage in a variety of play experiences. Access to a large outdoor space provided opportunities to extend children's experiences and allowed them to be active and explore.

Children experienced positive opportunities to develop friendships and build their social skills. Children laughed, smiled and chatted together, highlighting that their time in the setting was fun. Children could choose to spend time alone if they wished or time playing together. As a result, they felt included and respected which supported confidence and social development.

The spaces available to children supported a range of play experiences and opportunities for rest. There was ample floor space for active play and exploration, while sofas and comfortable areas provided places to relax and enjoy quiet time. This layout enabled children to make choices about how they used the environment, whether being active or taking time to rest. The setting was clean, tidy and well-maintained, contributing to a welcoming and pleasant environment.

A relaxed pace supported children to make choices and lead their own experiences. Children were able to decide how they spent their time, exploring their ideas and interests without feeling rushed. The childminder demonstrated an appropriate awareness of when to engage in play and when to step back, allowing children to play independently. This approach helped children develop confidence and a sense of control over their play and learning.

Planning for children's experiences were responsive to their suggestions and ideas. This helped children feel included and respected. We discussed the potential to reintroduce a floor book which had previously been implemented. This would support to evaluate experiences and provide children ownership of planning for and recording activities.

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 were supported through warm and nurturing relationships with the childminder, who knew them well and demonstrated a good understanding of their individual needs. The childminder engaged in conversations with children about their day and their experiences out with the setting. Regular check-ins about how children were feeling helped them to feel valued and listened to.

The childminder's interactions supported a calm and nurturing atmosphere that helped children feel safe and secure. A welcoming ethos was evident, with children appearing relaxed and settled. Positive relationships extended to families, who were warmly welcomed into the home as part of daily practice. One parent shared, "[The childminder] is warm, welcoming and friendly, making drop offs and pick ups very easy and enjoyable". This demonstrated strong partnerships in which families felt included and respected.

Mealtimes were positive social opportunities. Children sat together and chatted with friends, creating a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere. They were able to eat at a pace that suited them and return to play when ready, which respected their individual needs. Snack options reflected children's preferences and offered choice. Children told us they enjoyed the food provided. There were some opportunities for children to develop self-help skills. We discussed ways that would further their involvement in the snack routine, such as involving children in snack preparation. Children had access to their own water bottles and could refill these as needed, which supported them to stay hydrated.

Personal plans needed to be further developed to ensure they fully supported children's needs. While the childminder knew the children well and had ongoing discussions with families to understand changes in routines or wellbeing, written plans had not been consistently reviewed or updated. Strengthening these plans and ensuring they are regularly completed in partnership with families would provide clearer, more accurate records of children's needs and any changes over time (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should further develop personal plans to ensure they contain up-to-date and accurate information to support children's health, wellbeing and safety needs. Plans should be reviewed with children and families at least once in every six month period.

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

'My personal 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

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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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