

Wilson, Elaine Child Minding

Kilmarnock

Type of inspection:
Announced

Completed on:
27 January 2026

Service provided by:
Elaine Wilson

Service provider number:
SP2004935881

Service no:
CS2003045295

About the service

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12, 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 children of the childminder's family.

The service is provided from the childminder's family home, in the village of Kilmaurs in East Ayrshire. It is close to local shops, schools and other places of interest.

About the inspection

This was an announced visit which took place on the morning of Monday 26 January 2026.

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 using the service
- received three completed questionnaires from families
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and children's experiences and
- 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 were happy, confident and included, experiencing care where their ideas, interests and needs were listened to, respected and acted upon.
- The childminder provided a safe, nurturing environment, supported by well developed aims, values, policies and risk assessments that were reviewed and shared with families.
- Ongoing professional learning was a priority. She actively engaged in training and used new knowledge to develop and improve her practice.
- Outdoor play was a strength, offering children space to be active, explore nature and enjoy quieter, cosy areas for reading, role play and construction.
- Children benefited from a wide range of stimulating activities, including imaginative play, baking, potion making, creative arts and problem solving with open ended materials.
- Warm, responsive interactions supported children's communication, confidence and independence, including opportunities to practise speaking and share ideas.
- Warm, trusting and nurturing relationships were a strength. Parents praised the high quality, loving care she provided.
- Respect and dignity were central to care routines. Personal care was carried out sensitively, and children were encouraged to develop independence in age appropriate ways.
- Communication with parents was effective, using daily discussions, a private social media page and messaging apps to keep families informed.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very 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 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children experienced care within a setting where their needs, interests and ideas were respected and valued. They were listened to and involved in shaping their daily experiences. This supported children to feel confident, safe and included.

The childminder had a clear statement of aims, vision and values. These were supported by a suite of policies and procedures, including an outdoor play policy and relevant risk assessments. Together, these set out how the childminder ensured that children experience a safe, nurturing environment that meets their needs to a high standard. Parents received copies of these documents when they first started using the service, helping them to understand what they could expect. Policies were formally reviewed and updated annually, with updated versions being shared with parents online.

The childminder was a reflective practitioner and actively welcomed feedback from parents, children and other professionals. Teachers, for example, had recognised and praised children's increased confidence as a result of the childminder's support. This openness to learning ensured ongoing improvement in the quality of experiences provided.

The childminder was committed to staying up to date with current practice. In addition to local authority and SCMA training, she actively sought out further online learning opportunities to deepen her knowledge and enhance her ability to meet children's needs. Training completed included child development and planning, child protection and First Aid, which all helped her to support children's safety, wellbeing and learning effectively. Following training the childminder considered how these learning opportunities would impact on her practice and shape improvements to her service.

There was a clear focus on improvement and providing the highest quality of care possible. Self-evaluation was embedded within the service, and the childminder's improvement plans told the story of how her service had developed over time. She had begun engaging with the latest self-evaluation framework and we made some suggestions about how she could develop this practice further and agreed to share some additional learning resources for her interest.

Parents and children were included in the evaluation of the service. Parents told us that "Elaine often asks for our suggestions" and "Elaine always encourages and welcomes feedback". Children's views were gathered through daily conversations, observations, questionnaires and floorbook planning. The floorbook had captured how children influenced decisions about the service, for example in snack choices and the development of the arts and crafts area within the playhouse. To deepen this work further, we suggested developing a mosaic format, which will build on her strong existing practice.

The childminder told us that she also engaged in professional dialogue with other childminders. These discussions supported shared learning on topics such as Setting the Table and self-evaluation. Working with her peers, strengthened her professional development and contributed to the continuous improvement of her service.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Children were happy, confident and clearly enjoyed spending time at the childminder's home. There they had access to a wide variety of toys and resources that helped them to explore their interests and develop new skills. Outdoor play was a major part of their daily experiences and supported their wellbeing. The garden offered space to be active, with activities like jumping and balancing, as well as quieter areas like the playhouse and gazebo for role play, construction and reading.

Very young children were well supported to explore safely. The layout of the space allowed them to crawl, pull themselves to standing and investigate sensory materials like pinecones, corks and other open-ended materials.

The childminder shared photographs and videos showing the wide range of activities children enjoy. These included imaginative play, such as writing and performing their own plays, potion making in the outdoor kitchen, baking and helping to make playdough. Children were also encouraged to be creative and problem-solve with materials like cardboard boxes.

Digital technology was beginning to feature in children's learning, for example looking up information online to learn new skills like drawing a highland cow. This is an area the service can continue to build on.

There was a good balance between child-led and adult-led experiences. The childminder used her knowledge of each child to offer a variety of play and learning opportunities. Children's ideas were recorded in the floorbook, and this showed how their ideas were developed, for example how favourite books were used to develop games and experiments. The childminder told us that she plans to review her use of the floorbook to ensure it continues to work well for her setting.

Interactions were warm and responsive. The childminder supported children to communicate, building their vocabulary and supporting older children to develop confidence, for example when practicing their Scottish poems.

Parents told us they were well informed about their child's experiences and development. One parent said, "Elaine supplies us detailed written development forms every six months". The childminder was continuing to use a photo collage format to show children's progress, and children helped to create these, giving them another chance to share their views. We discussed ways this could possibly move to a digital format in the future to make sharing updates more frequent. Daily verbal updates were shared with families, and additional information appeared on a private social media page. The childminder was using Realising the Ambition, and we discussed how using the headings in this document in her planning and collage format would further strengthen links between activities and children's developing skills.

Children experienced regular outings in the local community. They visited beaches, parks, museums and other places of interest. Parents particularly valued the outdoor nature of the service and told us, "Elaine takes the kids out for day trips... they often come home with intricate arts and crafts creations". Children also told us they loved "the snacks she gives us, basketball and art".

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The childminder had built warm, trusting and nurturing relationships with children and their families. Parents spoke highly of the care provided, describing her as "caring, nurturing and professional". They told us "Elaine is a fabulous childminder. She cares attentively, giving lots of love and encouragement".

Children were supported to settle in gradually, with short visits tailored to each child's needs and previous experiences. The childminder spent time getting to know families well, gathering information and providing regular updates and reassurance. Collages of photos and comments were shared every six months. Parents also confirmed they had daily opportunities to share information about their child and family routines. This meant the childminder knew the children very well and could support them kindly and appropriately.

During our visit, we observed a secure attachment between the childminder and the very young child present. The childminder responded to the child's needs, noticing when the child was hungry, thirsty and tired and providing for the child calmly and sensitively.

Children were treated with respect. Personal care routines were carried out sensitively, protecting privacy and dignity. The childminder described how she encouraged children to develop independence, for example by putting on their own coats, feeding themselves, helping to set the table and preparing snack. She told us that older children enjoyed helping and taking responsibility.

Although only one child was present during the visit, photos and videos showed children playing well together, sharing and supporting one another. We could see that they were able to make choices throughout the day and had been involved in planning healthy snack options.

Whilst parents supplied meals, the childminder offered a range of healthy, nutritious snacks and followed up to date guidance on feeding young children. We also saw a video of a Burns Supper where children tried new foods and discussed which shop sold the best haggis. The childminder sat with children at mealtimes, talking with them and encouraging independence.

Infection control measures were very good, including a dedicated handwashing sink in the garden for arrivals, before meals and after nappy changes. No children were receiving medication at the time of the inspection, but an appropriate policy and procedures were in place.

The childminder was familiar with safe sleep guidance and had a procedure for outdoor sleeping in a buggy. Parents had commented that their children slept better as a result. She visually monitored sleeping children and should continue to ensure temperature checks are a part of this.

Each child had an up-to-date personal plan using the health and wellbeing indicators, SHANARRI. Plans included "All About Me" details, observations and next steps. We suggested adding a dedicated space for children's own comments on review documents, which will strengthen the way older children are already involved sharing their views. Plans were reviewed with parents every six months, with ongoing conversations in between. We reminded the childminder that reviews should also happen when there are significant changes. Parents were kept informed through a private social media page, texts and another

communication app. We discussed different ways of increasing the frequency of digital updates during our visit.

The childminder clearly understood her role in keeping children safe. She had completed child protection training and told us she felt confident in the actions she would take if any concerns arose. This ensured that children's safety and wellbeing were well supported.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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