

Patrick, Tania Child Minding

Inverness

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
23 January 2026

Service provided by:
Tania Patrick

Service provider number:
SP2005947773

Service no:
CS2005098418

About the service

Patrick, Tania is a day care of childminding service, provided from the childminder's home. The service is situated in the Hilton area of Inverness.

The service is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of seven children aged under 16 years of age.

The service is situated in a residential area near shops, a primary school with nursery and other amenities. The children are cared for in a diner/living room with direct access to a decked area and an enclosed, secure garden to the front of the house.

During the inspection, there were two minded children present.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 January 2026 between 10:30 and 12:30. This inspection was carried out by one inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke/spent time with children using the service
- received five completed questionnaires received from families/carers of children.
- 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 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

- Regular reviews of personal information ensured that any adaptations to care routines could be identified and implemented in a timely way.
- The childminder had taken some early steps to introduce systems to support evaluation of the service.
- To further strengthen practice and inform improvements the childminder should now engage regularly with national guidance and best practice documents.
- Children experienced warm, consistent, nurturing care and attention which meant their needs, preferences and cues were responded to without delay.
- Children were encouraged to explore, play, and reach their potential within a nurturing environment where they could select from a range of play and learning opportunities that were well matched to their stage of development.

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

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

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The values of the service were reflected in the everyday life of the service and in aspects of the childminder's practice. They were particularly evident in the caring, warm and supportive interactions children experienced. The childminder advised that the vision, values and aims of their service had not been reviewed in recent years. We suggested refreshing these to help families, children and the childminder understand how they work together. This should strengthen a shared understanding about how making changes and improvements could help meet the needs and preferences of children and families.

Quality assurance processes were at an early stage of development. Some initial self-evaluation had been carried out with information gathered from parent feedback forms. This was a positive early step towards gathering meaningful views and ideas from families to influence improvement to children's care, support, learning and development. The childminder was at an early stage of reflecting on their practice and using this learning to make improvements. These small improvements were beginning to impact positively to children's outcomes. Developing a more regular cycle of self-evaluation would contribute to quality assurance processes that help identify improvements in practice. To further strengthen practice and inform improvements the childminder should now engage regularly with national guidance and best practice documents (see also section, 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection').

Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

Children experienced interactions which demonstrated compassionate, positive and responsive care which supported their wellbeing, ensuring individual needs were met. The childminder had built good relationships with children and families using the service. All respondents to our survey strongly agreed with the statement, "I have a good relationship with my childminder." One parent told us, "Strong relationship built and established over the years. Genuine care and connection built."

While the childminder demonstrated a good working knowledge of child development, this was not always supported by knowledge of current best practice and guidance. We signposted the childminder to professional reading, including 'Realising the Ambition', to help strengthen their knowledge and understanding of child development.

The childminder had completed core training remotely online, including child protection and first aid. We advised that they should now seek face-to-face training, particularly for first aid training, to ensure the practical elements were fully covered.

Arrangements for communication with parents helped to provide continuity of care for children. This included establishing consistent routines, helping children to experience smooth transitions and to feel secure.

The childminder had developed a contingency plan with another childminder. This meant that, in the event

of an emergency, arrangements were in place to keep children safe until families could be contacted. The childminder informed us this arrangement had been discussed and agreed with parents.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children were encouraged to explore, play, and reach their potential within a nurturing environment. They could select from a range of play and learning opportunities that were well matched to their stage of development. Interactions with children were consistent, and responsive. Both minded children were content and settled in their play during the inspection. A younger toddler was attentively supervised to support safe and developmentally appropriate play. The second minded child readily approached the childminder for help to access more resources to enhance their play and ideas. A parent commented about the variety of play experiences their child enjoyed: "(Child's name) does lots crafts, plays, dances, goes out on outings."

Although no formal planning was in place, basic resources were provided which reflected current interests. These included a selection of role play items, mark-making resources, sensory experiences and books. Children were supported to choose from a larger selection resources as their play developed. This promoted ownership of their play and learning as they were able to follow their curiosity and develop their play with imagination and creativity. We suggested that the childminder considered how they could recognise and foster children's progress, successes and achievements through careful observations.

Children's learning and development was supported by the childminder playing with them, down at their level. Literacy and language development was promoted through opportunities to draw, listen to music and read stories together. Early language and communication skills were recognised and enabled by the childminder. They modelled language and explained as they played with a younger child. This helped children feel valued and that their needs and choices were understood. There was scope to introduce more numeracy language and experiences to play activities. For example, counting and comparing sizes.

During the inspection the minded children did not play outdoors due to cold weather conditions. The childminder shared photos of children engaged in a variety of sensory and physical play opportunities in the garden. Children benefitted from opportunities to explore and connect with the wider community with photos showing children enjoying outings to outdoor environments, such as parks.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

Children experienced warm, consistent, nurturing care and attention. The home was a calm and welcoming space, and both minded children were confident, comfortable and happy in the childminder's care. Their needs, preferences and cues were responded to without delay. This helped them to feel valued, safe and

secure. As a result both children had formed a strong, trusting attachment to the childminder.

Children's wellbeing and experiences were supported through personal plans that recorded their basic needs and routines. The childminder also used a range of communication methods to identify any changes required as younger children developed. Their understanding of each child's individual needs enabled care that was consistently responsive and nurturing, contributing positively to children's wellbeing and development. Regular reviews of personal information ensured that any adaptations to care routines could be identified and implemented in a timely way. Daily verbal updates further strengthened relationships with parents and supported continuity of care. As a result, children experienced predictable care that reflected parents' wishes and contributed to their overall wellbeing.

Snack time was relaxed, unhurried and sociable. The childminder was attentive and focused on children, supporting them to eat safely. While they demonstrated a basic awareness of choking prevention, some fruit was not prepared in accordance with best practice guidance. Further steps should now be taken to further reduce the risk of choking. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate's 'Good practice guidance: prevention and management of choking episodes in babies and children' document.

Children received personal care which respected their dignity and privacy. Some improvements were needed to reduce the risk of cross infection. This was mainly ensuring that all items in the area used for nappy changing were appropriately stored and all surfaces fully wipeable.

Transitions were well considered. The childminder explained how they worked collaboratively with parents to support children's moves to nursery and school. Clear procedures were also in place to help older children develop independence when walking home from school, using a staged and agreed approach. This demonstrated thoughtful planning and effective risk awareness.

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 high quality outcomes for children and families, the childminder should introduce clear systems in place to evaluate the service provided. This should include, but not be limited to, using best practice guidance documents, including 'Realising the Ambition' and 'A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding, and school-aged childcare' to assess the service they provide and identify areas for development.

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)

This area for improvement was made on 31 March 2025.

Action taken since then

The childminder had taken some early steps to introduce systems to support evaluation of the service. For example, feedback had been gathered from parents and families through a questionnaire. This emerging involvement of parents should be further developed by continuing to gather their views and ideas. This will help identify meaningful improvements that parents can actively influence in shaping the service to meet the needs of children and their families.

Quality assurance processes to evaluate the service or to identify improvements were not fully developed. They were not informed by current best practice guidance such as, 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding'. This meant that any improvements were limited in their impact on children's experiences and outcomes. We signposted the childminder to appropriate best practice guidance to support development of their professional knowledge and understanding and to inform their practice. This included, 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding, Setting the Table and Realising the Ambition'.

This area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

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
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	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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