care inspectorate

# Potts, Charlene
# Child Minding

Kilwinning

**Type of inspection:**
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**
15 December 2025

**Service provided by:**
Charlene Potts

**Service provider number:**
SP2008968669

**Service no:**
CS2008170067

HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

## About the service

The service is provided from the childminder's home in the town of Kilwinning. The service is close to local primary schools, shops and parks, and other amenities. The children are cared for in the lounge, dining/kitchen area and have access to a downstairs toilet and enclosed rear garden.

At the time of the inspection there were 13 children registered with the service and two minded children were present on the day of the inspection.

## About the inspection

This was an announced (short notice) inspection which took place on 9 December 2025 between 11:15 and 14:00. 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:

- gained feedback from four parent/carers through Microsoft Form questionnaires
- 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 benefited from a childminder who was warm, caring and nurturing in their approach.
- Children were happy, content, engaged and having fun.
- To better support children's individual needs, the childminder should further develop children's personal plans.
- Mealtimes were inclusive, relaxed and supported positive social experiences.
- To achieve more positive outcomes for children, the childminder should strengthen their approach to continuous improvement.

## 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

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources**

The childminder had established visions, values, and aims which supported their practice and contributed to positive outcomes for children. These principles helped ensure consistency and purpose in daily practice. Continued reflection on these, with consultation with families, would support the childminder in ensuring they remain relevant to the changing needs of families using the service, helping to strengthen shared understanding and partnership working.

Policies and procedures were in place; however, some required updating to ensure they reflected current best practice guidance and supported consistent, safe care. Although policies were shared with families when they first joined the service, it was not clear if and when they had been updated. For example, they were not always dated to indicate when they were implemented or reviewed. This limited the ability to track changes over time. We asked that the childminder date policies and share updated versions with parents. This would support consistency, transparency, and a shared understanding of the childminder's aims and objectives in practice.

The childminder had begun reflecting on their practice, and questionnaires had been used to gather feedback from families. However, this was not yet embedded, and there was no evidence to demonstrate the impact of reflection on outcomes for children. Although an improvement plan had been completed, it was unclear whether the actions identified had been implemented. We discussed with the childminder using this plan as a working document, highlighting when actions had been taken in relation to the areas for improvement identified. This should strengthen these processes and support the childminder to make meaningful improvements to provide better outcomes for children (see area for improvement 1).

Accident and incident records had been completed and signed by both the childminder and the parents, supporting clear communication. However, some records did not detail any further actions taken. For example, further monitoring following head bumps. We asked the childminder to continue keeping accurate records of additional checks on children following any accidents or incidents. Auditing accident and incident records would help identify recurring themes, such as specific resources or areas of the environment. This would support preventative action to improve children's safety.

The childminder supported children to stay safe and actively reduced risks within their home. For example, they removed objects from the floor and encouraged children to tidy up before moving on to new experiences, helping to prevent trip hazards. A secure boundary fence in the childminder's garden helped ensure children remained safe while playing outdoors. However, the low-positioned lock on the garden gate and keys left in internal doors presented potential risks. The childminder explained that measures were in place to reduce these risks, and we advised that these should be consistently implemented to maintain children's safety.

Although risk assessments were in place, they needed updating to reflect current practice and risks within the childminder's home. For example, some referred to risks that were no longer present. We asked the

childminder to review and update the risk assessments to accurately reflect the risks to children. This would support them to take any necessary action to keep children safe.

### Areas for improvement

1.
To support more positive outcomes for children, the childminder should strengthen their approach to continuous improvement. This should include, but is not limited to, including meaningful consultation with families about identified areas for development and clear planning of the actions required to address these.

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).

## Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing**

Children were able to lead their own play and made choices from a range of accessible resources, which related to their interests and supported their independence and decision making. They engaged in meaningful play and demonstrated sustained interest in the available activities. The childminder had supported children effectively by joining their play when invited, which helped them develop their ideas. For example, when building with Lego blocks, the childminder supported the children to find the various parts, encouraging problem solving and collaboration.

The childminder supported the children in staying engaged in meaningful play experiences. For example, when children became unsettled, the childminder redirected them calmly and positively, offering choices about what they would like to do next. They asked children about their preferences before introducing experiences and respected their ideas, which helped children feel valued and listened to.

Children were supported in developing their ideas through play experiences. For example, while exploring the texture of oats, the childminder followed the children's lead when they wanted to introduce dinosaurs into the activity. This responsive approach helped the children stay engaged, have fun, and enjoy rich imaginative play, with plenty of shared laughter throughout. Parents commented: "My child comes home from (the childminder) so excited to tell me what they have been doing."

The childminder helped children to develop their knowledge and skills through play while supporting children's independence. For example, during playdough activities, the childminder supported children's understanding and skill development by using descriptive language, such as "jaggy" and "smooth," when exploring textures. They had talked children through the steps of using cutters and rollers, offering support without taking over, which enabled children to take ownership of their learning. Conversations about colours and preferences further enhanced children's learning, and praise was offered appropriately throughout. While plastic tools were used, introducing more natural materials, loose parts, and opportunities for children to make their own playdough would have further enriched children's creativity and imagination. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, redesigned, and used in multiple ways. This would further support

children's curiosity, imagination, and creativity in play experiences.

The childminder had supported children's early literacy and numeracy skills through regular, meaningful conversations. They asked about children's wants and needs, giving them time to respond, and engaged in both short and extended discussions linked to their interests. Children also explored mathematical concepts such as size and colours through play. These interactions supported children's language development, thinking skills, and their understanding of the world around them.

## Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

**Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support**

The childminder supported children using warm, nurturing approaches, offering cuddles and reassurance when needed. Positive relationships were evident, with children appearing happy, relaxed, and content in the childminder's care. Children naturally sought comfort and connection, and the childminder responded appropriately to both verbal and non verbal cues, supporting children's individual needs. As a result, children experienced a strong sense of security and emotional wellbeing, enabling them to engage confidently in play and learning. Parents commented: "(The childminder) is such a lovely person and both myself and my child have a great relationship with them."

Mealtimes were relaxed and unhurried, contributing to a positive experience for children. The childminder had encouraged children to wash their hands at key times, such as before eating, supporting good hygiene routines. Children's choices had been respected, with the childminder checking whether children were hungry before preparing lunch and offering options throughout mealtimes. Sitting together at the table created a sociable atmosphere, and the childminder had encouraged children to remain seated while eating, reducing the risk of choking. Children were offered drinks throughout the day and had access to their own water bottles, helping them to stay hydrated. As a result, children experienced a calm and inclusive environment that promoted independence, decision-making, and positive social interactions. Parents commented: "(The childminder) knows the children's likes and dislikes well and does their best to accommodate these."

The childminder had gathered information to support children's health, welfare, and safety needs when they first started at the service. Effective communication and positive relationships were promoted through daily interactions and the use of messaging platforms such as Messenger and WhatsApp to share information with parents. Parents commented: "(The childminder has great communication skills and always lets me know what my child is up to whilst I'm at work." While some updates, such as changes to routines, were shared verbally with parents, these were not consistently reflected in children's personal plans, and there were inconsistencies in the information recorded. Some plans lacked detail on how the childminder would support children's interests and development, and some had not been reviewed within the required six-month period. The childminder should update personal plans to reflect children's current needs, include clear strategies for supporting children to meet their targets, and review plans with parents at least every six months, or sooner if required. This would support them to ensure that personal plans remained up to date and effectively supported children's individual needs. To support this, we shared the Care Inspectorate's 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning' with the childminder (see area for improvement 1).

The childminder showed an understanding of safeguarding procedures and was aware of the agencies to contact to maintain children's safety. Continuing to update their child protection knowledge should support ongoing professional development.

The childminder had good links within the local and wider community. The childminder and the children attended the local toddler group weekly, as well as a range of other experiences within the local community. Parents commented: "My child has a very busy calendar with (the childminder). They are always out and about each day, they attend book bug, playgroup sessions, sensory sessions at a local soft play, the park, beach and digital sessions at the library just to name a few." This enabled children to develop their knowledge of their local and wider community.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's individual health and wellbeing needs are met, the childminder should further develop children's personal plans. This should include, but not be limited to, recording clear information about how each child's needs will be met and ensuring personal plans are reviewed at least once every six months.

This 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).

## 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 develop personal plans for each service user which inform of how their health, welfare and safety needs are to be met (example provided). Parents and children (where appropriate) should be involved in this process and plans should be reviewed at least six monthly.

This is in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services), Regulation 5 - Personal plans.

National Care Standards 'Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16', Standard 6 - Support and development.

**This area for improvement was made on 9 April 2018.**

### Action taken since then

The childminder had personal plans in place for children attending the service which include children's health, welfare and safety need, and they had involved parents and children in this process. However, some plans had not been reviewed within the required timescales and plans that were in place did not have clear strategies of how the childminder would support children to develop. Some information recorded relating to

children was not consistent and did not support the childminder to plan for children's learning. Therefore, this area for improvement has not been met; it has been re-worded and included as part of this inspection.

## 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 |

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

### Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

### Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.