

# Looby Lou's Childminding Premnay Child Minding

Insch

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
23 February 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Lorna Gray

**Service provider number:**  
SP2023001455

**Service no:**  
CS2024000130

## About the service

Looby Lou's Childminding Premnay provides a childminding service from their property in a residential area of Auchleven, Aberdeenshire. The childminder may care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than six are under 12 years; of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

The service is close to the local primary school and green spaces. Children have access to the dining kitchen, living room and a fully enclosed garden.

Two children were present at the time of the inspection.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 February 2026 between 08:25 and 12:25. 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 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 two responses to our request for feedback from families
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- spoke with the childminder
- 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, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

**Key messages**

- Children were at the heart of the service and were cared for by a childminder who knew them and their families well.
- Children experienced warm and caring interactions from the childminder.
- The setting made good use of the outdoors, at their home and in the wider community.
- Quality assurance practices could be improved to promote a culture of continuous improvement and positive outcomes for 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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
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 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.

The ethos of the setting reflected the childminder's values by providing a homely environment where children felt nurtured, relaxed and confident. However, these values had not been reviewed in consultation with children and families. Involving families and children in shaping the ethos would ensure an inclusive approach where everyone feels valued and respected, reinforcing a strong sense of partnership (see area for improvement one).

There was some evidence of opportunities for children and families to participate in the service and contribute to ongoing improvements. The childminder explained that questionnaires had previously been used to gather feedback; however, this method had not proved effective in capturing meaningful views or suggestions. As a result, the childminder was reviewing this approach and considering alternative methods. The childminder had recently secured funding for new resources and had actively involved children and families in developing a wish list. For example, one child particularly enjoyed climbing, and it was recognised that the garden did not currently provide a safe, suitable space for this. In response, a climbing frame was included within the planned resources. While some informal consultation was evident, introducing more structured ways for gathering feedback would further strengthen partnership working. This would help ensure that the service continued to develop in line with the needs, preferences, and interests of children and their families (see area for improvement one).

Parents told us they were involved in a meaningful way to develop the service. One parent shared; "[The childminder] listens to my thoughts and responds to my children's personalities." Another shared; "[The childminder] is always getting feedback and noting what different children like and prefer." This demonstrated that the service was evolving in line with children's individual needs and parental perspectives.

Some quality assurance processes were in place to support positive outcomes for children and families. The childminder used a monthly planner to support the smooth running of the service. They found this to be an effective tool for planning key tasks. Policies had been established, were reviewed regularly, and were shared with families to support transparency and consistency. To further strengthen practice, the childminder should ensure that day to day routines consistently reflected the guidance outlined in their policies. For example, implementing a system to ensure consistent hand washing procedures. The childminder was aware of best practice guidance, such as 'Setting the Table,' and should ensure that mealtimes align with this to promote relaxed, unhurried routines and the provision of nutritious food options. Ensuring greater consistency between documented policies and daily practice would enhance the quality of the service (see area for improvement one).

As part of the childminder's ongoing self evaluation, they were participating in the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) mentor pilot scheme. Guidance from a more experienced childminder had encouraged reflective practice, enabling the childminder to identify areas for development and begin implementing improvements. For example, through this mentoring support, the childminder recognised the need to strengthen personal planning and had already begun taking steps to enhance this aspect of their service. This demonstrated a positive commitment to professional development and reflection, which was beginning to impact on outcomes for children.

The childminder had yet to engage with recognised audit tools, such as the new Quality Improvement Framework for Childminding. We discussed the benefits of self-evaluation and using this document to identify strengths within the service and highlight areas for development. Implementing a structured self-evaluation process would support continuous improvement, ensuring the service evolved in line with best practice and delivers consistently high-quality outcomes for children and families (see area for improvement one).

### Areas for improvement

1. To support improvement to the service and ensure positive outcomes for children, the childminder should develop quality assurance practices. This should include but is not limited to;
  - a) Reviewing values, visions and aims in consultation with children and families.
  - b) Recording children and families views used to inform developments.
  - c) Ensuring practices are in line with policies, procedures and best practice guidance.
  - d) Implementing a self-evaluation process to support improvement, including the use of the new Quality Framework for Childminding.

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 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.

The home provided a welcoming, cosy, and homely environment for children. Indoors, the childminder primarily used the living room for play and the kitchen/dining area for mealtimes. Children had access to large sofas for relaxation, and the carpeted floor area offered a comfortable space for floor based play. A downstairs toilet was easily accessible, and children had direct access to an enclosed rear garden. Some resources were freely available such as games on a shelf and a book stand, while others were rotated and presented in clear, lidded boxes depending on the children's needs and interests. The physical environment was well organised and nurturing, offering children a safe and comfortable space that supported a variety of play and learning experiences.

Parents told us their children were always involved in a range of opportunities and fun experiences which met their needs. One parent said; "My children love making dens and [the childminder] has taken time to respond to this and give them opportunities to do so. She has given them drawing materials which they enjoy and been adaptive to their current stages of development." Another shared; "[The childminder] takes the children out as much as [they] can weather dependant and provides a range of activities in her home and garden." This highlighted that the childminder took a responsive and child centred approach, ensuring children benefited from varied experiences tailored to their interests and abilities.

The childminder demonstrated an inclusive approach by adapting the environment to meet the needs of individual children. Following recent discussions with a parent, they developed a downstairs bedroom into a chill out space for older children. This room included a comfortable sofa, a lava lamp and music, creating a calming atmosphere. The childminder also planned to further enhance the space with additional sensory resources. This adaptation had already made a positive impact, with children finding it significantly easier to regulate their emotions when using the space. The childminder's responsive approach to inclusion clearly supported children's emotional wellbeing.

Although the children were not outdoors on the day of the inspection, they generally benefited from daily outdoor experiences, either in the garden or within the local community, helping them learn about the wider world. The childminder had also recognised the need to further develop opportunities for risky play and had considered this when planning for new resources. It was identified that the garden did not currently offer a safe space for children to climb, and a climbing frame had therefore been ordered. Installation was being supported by the local Men's Shed to ensure it was set up safely. Risk assessments were in place and reviewed regularly to help keep children safe. We discussed the benefits of developing these into benefit-risk assessments, particularly in relation to outdoor play and the introduction of new equipment. This approach would ensure that opportunities for challenge were not limited and would support children to learn how to access and manage risk safely.

The childminder had completed Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) training. The childminder now needs to ensure that daily practice consistently reflects their policies and procedures, particularly around effective hand washing routines. The environment was observed to be clean, safe, and well maintained. Personal care was carried out appropriately, with children being changed on a wipeable mat in the bathroom. The childminder used some personal protective equipment (PPE) while cleaning the area afterwards. Privacy and dignity were respected, with the childminder positioning themselves with their back to the door or keeping the door partially closed during nappy changes. This maintained a safe and hygienic environment however; closer alignment with infection control procedures would further strengthen practice.

## 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.

The childminder was a qualified teacher and a parent however, had recognised that there was scope to further strengthen their knowledge of child development, particularly in relation to children aged up to three years. They had begun researching patterns of behaviour and demonstrated growing awareness of schemas, discussing this while observing a child who enjoyed emptying games. The childminder was keen to expand their theoretical understanding, which would support continued improvement in the quality of experiences offered to young children.

Children were motivated and engaged in their play throughout the inspection, confidently accessing a range of resources to support their interests. Younger children showed a particular fascination with animals and trains. A variety of age and stage appropriate resources were available to support early literacy and numeracy development. While these were not used directly during the visit however, the childminder effectively used natural interactions during play to promote learning. For example, when a child identified having "two cars," the childminder reinforced this by commenting, "[Child] has two cars," supporting numeracy through meaningful conversation. Young children also enjoyed copying language, such as repeating greetings exchanged during school drop off, demonstrating developing early communication skills. Children's engagement and emerging early learning skills were well supported through responsive, play based interactions.

The childminder's interactions effectively supported children's learning and development. They observed children's play and stepped in at appropriate moments to scaffold learning. For example, when a young child picked up an elephant figure, the childminder commented, "[Child] has an elephant," helping to reinforce language and recognition. The childminder also used well timed interactions to extend play and introduce new concepts. When a child was turning cars around on the track, the childminder suggested, "You could make a corner or junction," prompting them to respond, "I'm going to make a junction," and they went on to create a red junction while talking about the cars and matching colours. The childminder's responsive interactions supported children's play experiences and their developing skills.

The childminder used both intentional and responsive planning. Intentional planning included seasonal themes such as Valentine's Day. Responsive planning was also evident, with the childminder following children's interests and enabling them to lead their learning. One example included a child showing curiosity about colour mixing: after creating orange paint by mixing colours, the child expressed interest in exploring further combinations. This led to the childminder providing additional activities using paint sticks and opportunities to link this learning to their personal plan. Planning for learning had been identified as an area for development through discussions with the childminder's mentor. As a result, we discussed ways the childminder might document experiences, such as using floor books, to share learning with families and support children to revisit and reflect on their experiences.

The childminder carried out simple observations of children's play and development. We discussed ways to strengthen this practice by sharing both brief snapshots of children's experiences and more detailed observations that clearly documented learning. In particular, the childminder should ensure observations are meaningful, highlight significant learning and identify next steps to support ongoing progression. We also discussed the value of sharing these observations with parents to promote strong partnership working.

## 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.

The childminder was warm and responsive in their interactions with children, creating a nurturing and supportive atmosphere. Children were confident in expressing their needs, readily indicating or asking the childminder for help. The childminder joined children in their play at floor level, showing genuine interest and actively inviting them into shared experiences. They were attentive to children's cues and responded sensitively for example, recognising early signs of hunger and offering lunch sooner to meet their needs. Trusting bonds were evident, demonstrated through the comfort and reassurance children sought from the childminder, such as when a child became upset and was soothed with cuddles. The childminder's responsive and nurturing approach supported children's wellbeing and contributed to secure, trusting relationships.

The childminder supported transitions well, using natural conversation to help children understand what would happen next. This helped prepare children for upcoming activities in a calm and predictable way. Children were also familiar with daily routines, such as sitting at the table in the kitchen for snack and lunch and settling in their usual rooms for naps. While routines were generally well established, children would benefit from more consistent support with hand washing before and after eating and following nappy changes. This would promote good hygiene habits. These natural transitions and predictable routines contributed to children feeling safe, secure, and confident in their environment.

Children were safe and well supervised during mealtimes. They were given opportunities to develop independence, such as chopping their own fruit at snack time. The childminder was aware of the 'Setting the Table' guidance; however, the foods offered could be more closely aligned with this. The childminder ate lunch alongside the children, creating opportunities for positive conversations, although doing so while standing meant the experience was less relaxed than it could have been. Sitting with children would help promote a more unhurried mealtime experience. Children did not drink much during the inspection. The childminder should ensure children have access to water throughout the day as this is important for supporting hydration and wellbeing. Overall, while mealtimes were safe and sociable. However, aligning food choices with best practice guidance and improving hydration routines would further enhance children's health and mealtime experiences.

Personal plans were in place to support children's care and wellbeing and were being updated regularly to ensure information remained current and responsive to individual needs. However, the recording of updates was not always clear. To strengthen clarity and consistency, updates should be clearly dated, and parents should review and sign personal plans at least every six months. We discussed streamlining the personal planning format by using the wellbeing indicators to provide a more holistic overview of each child, with next steps and strategies clearly outlined. Chronologies were also in place to record and track significant events in children's lives, and these were followed up appropriately when required.

The childminder knew the children well and had established positive, trusting relationships with families. Parents were welcomed into the home daily, supporting open communication and helping to build strong connections. The childminder also provided practical support to families by offering nursery pick ups in a nearby town and, when needed, dropping children home. They expressed a clear commitment to developing communication methods further to ensure they met families' preferences while also enabling the childminder to document information more effectively.

Parents told us they had a good relationship with the childminder and were welcomed into the service to discuss their child's care, play and learning. One parent said; "[The childminder] is open and friendly and clearly cares about the children." Another shared; "[The childminder] welcomes us in every time and always gives us feedback on what they've been doing and takes time to adapt to their needs, such as developing a quiet space." This reflected nurturing relationships and a responsive approach that supported children's individual needs and promoted effective partnership working with families.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

Leadership	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	4 - Good
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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