

Lorna Smith Child Minding

Livingston

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 February 2026

Service provided by:
Lorna Paterson

Service provider number:
SP2007963296

Service no:
CS2007142746

About the service

Lorna Smith is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age, these numbers include the children of the childminder's family, of those six, no more than three are not yet attending primary school, of those three, no more than one is under 12 months.

The service is provided from the childminder's family home in the town of Livingston, West Lothian. Children have access to the ground floor and enclosed front garden. Nearby are local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced visit which took place on 12 February 2026 between 10:45 and 12:35.

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:

- spoke with children
- reviewed two online completed questionnaires from families
- 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 nurturing relationships with the childminder.
- Children experienced nurturing and responsive care.
- Regular outdoor activities enriched children's experiences.
- Partnership working with families was positive, and supported children's wellbeing and continuity of care.
- The childminder should continue to strengthen their approach to self-evaluation and improvement, to support positive outcomes.

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 quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work, and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Quality indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder's vision and values were clearly reflected in daily practice, and in the positive relationships with children and families. Children experienced a warm, welcoming and homely environment, where they were valued and respected. Families were welcomed into the setting, and daily handovers supported effective communication, helping parents feel included in their child's care. One parent commented, "It feels like a home away from home. My toddler always has such a fun time and is excited to visit."

Policies and procedures were regularly reviewed and updated in line with current good practice. The childminder had begun to familiarise themselves with 'A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors: Childminding (Care Inspectorate, 2025),' to support ongoing evaluation and identify areas for further development.

Quality assurance processes such as policies, risk assessments and personal plans had been reviewed to ensure they reflected current practice. While informal methods had been used to reflect improvements, for example, identifying the garden as an area for development, a more structured approach to improvement planning would enhance progress. Clearly defined priorities, actions and timescales would support more effective evaluation. We discussed creating an improvement plan to help track progress, identify gaps in children's experiences and promote sustainable, continuous improvement. This would help influence and lead positive changes for children.

The childminder regularly engaged with parents informally to seek feedback, and took their views into account when making decisions about the care and learning provided. Questionnaires had recently been shared with parents, however, these would benefit from a more focused approach. We encouraged the childminder to continue to develop ways to formally involve children and their families in improving the service and further strengthen self-evaluation.

To support positive outcomes for children, the childminder had completed several short training courses, including allergen and provocation training. Core training, such as child protection and food hygiene were up to date, and the childminder was due to carry out a first aid refresher course within the following month. The childminder made effective use of the 'Care Inspectorate Hub and the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA)' to stay informed about updated practice guidance.

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 relaxed, engaged and motivated in their play. Resources were well-matched to their needs and interests, and children accessed a range of activities including drawing, books, building bricks, dolls, dinosaurs and a train set. These supported purposeful and meaningful engagement. To further enhance play, the childminder could introduce a wider range of natural and real life materials, to promote curiosity and imagination.

Interactions between the childminder and children were warm, positive and demonstrated strong, trusting relationships. Children told us they enjoyed attending and playing with "bricks and books." The childminder spoke positively about children's achievements, which reflected children were firmly at the centre of the childminder's approach to care.

Literacy and numeracy were promoted through play. Children accessed a variety of books, and the use of songs and rhymes supported early communication and language development. This enriched their play and learning experiences. Introducing more numeracy focused language and activities would further strengthen learning opportunities.

The childminder had begun monitoring and tracking children's learning and experiences. To further support development, they should consistently extend children's interests into related play opportunities to deepen learning. We discussed how using 'floor books' could strengthen this approach by recording children's interests, observations and next steps. This would ensure their needs are continually recognised and supported.

The childminder made good use of the local community to enrich children's learning and play. Activities such as park visits, 'bookbug' sessions, soft play and nature walks provided varied experiences and promoted active, healthy lifestyles. Attendance at local playgroups offered additional learning opportunities, and supported children to build social connections and feel included in their community. The childminder also met other childminders to further support social development and broaden experiences.

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.

Quality indicator: Nurturing care and support

Children benefited from the childminder's warm, responsive and caring approach. They received comfort, reassurance and support when needed, helping them feel secure and valued. As a result, children formed strong, trusting relationships, supporting their emotional wellbeing and creating a nurturing environment. Parents were very positive about the care the childminder provided, and comments included, "My child sees it as a second home, which is incredibly reassuring as a parent."

Transitions and daily routines were managed calmly and consistently, helping children understand what to expect and promoting a sense of safety and confidence. New families were welcomed through settling visits tailored to meet their needs. This supported strong relationships with families and contributed to an inclusive, homely environment.

Personal plans were in place for all children and contained clear, relevant information to support their health, welfare and safety. Parents commented positively on the childminder's communication and the sharing of information about their child's day, for example, through conversations and daily photographs. This demonstrated effective partnership working and supported continuity of care. The childminder spoke confidently about individual children's needs and the strategies used to support them, such as potty training. This helped families feel confident in the quality of care provided.

Children's privacy and dignity were respected during personal care routines. The childminder encouraged children to use the toilet independently while remaining available when needed, helping them feel safe and supported. Good handwashing routines were also promoted, helping children build confidence in managing their own care and developing healthy habits.

Although no children currently required medication, appropriate procedures were in place in line with the Care Inspectorate's guidance, 'Management of Medication in Daycare and Childminding Services.' This ensured the childminder was well prepared should medication be required in future.

Parents supplied meals which were eaten together in the dining area, creating a relaxed and social mealtime experience. These were unhurried, which meant children could eat at a pace that was right for them. The childminder offered a range of healthy snacks in line with current guidance, which supported children to be healthy. However, further opportunities for children to be more involved in preparing snacks would support the development of life skills and independence.

The childminder had established strong, trusting relationships with families, creating a welcoming environment where parents felt valued and included. Parents were welcomed into the setting daily, providing regular opportunities for meaningful conversations and supporting positive settling routines. This open and responsive approach helped parents feel informed and reassured, contributing to positive outcomes and a strong sense of belonging for children.

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

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