

Dunn, Pauline Child Minding

Livingston

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 March 2026

Service provided by:
Pauline Dunn

Service provider number:
SP2009974288

Service no:
CS2009228296

About the service

Pauline's Childminding operates from their family home in Murieston, Livingston, West Lothian. They are registered to provide a childminding service to a maximum of six children at any one time aged under 16 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 are inclusive of the childminders family.

Children have access to a designated playroom on the ground floor, toilet facilities, kitchen-diner and large enclosed garden. The service is close to parks, green spaces, schools and nurseries and can be reached by public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 5 March 2026 between 08:30 and 11:30. This inspection was carried out by ne inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke/spent time with two children using the service
- received four completed questionnaires from families
- 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

- Children experienced high quality care and learning in a safe and nurturing environment.
- Children and families were consulted and their views influenced experiences for children.
- Self evaluation was embedded and effective at supporting reflective practice and continuous improvement.
- Strong professional links with other agencies enhanced the childminder's knowledge, practice and ability to deliver high quality care and learning.
- High quality play and learning experiences were well planned, with environments and resources tailored to children's stages of development, promoting independence, imagination and curiosity.
- Rich literacy and numeracy opportunities were embedded and support children to develop and thrive.
- Children experienced nurturing interactions and engagement with the childminder that supported them to lead their play and learning.
- Children and families benefitted from the childminders commitment to training and development informed by best practice.

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 major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children and families benefitted from the childminders commitment to deliver a high quality service. Their vision, values and aims were embedded. They offered flexible care that respected children's rights, valuing each child as an individual in a safe and secure home from home environment.

Children and families were regularly consulted, gathering their views to inform change. For example, children's suggestions influenced new resources and allowed them to lead their interests. Families agreed they were involved in meaningful ways to develop the service.

The childminder engaged well with current best practice guidance to support self-evaluation. They demonstrated a sound understanding of 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding (Care Inspectorate, 2025)'. Their effective use of this enabled them to identify what was working well in the service and areas they would like to further develop. This demonstrated a strong awareness of reflective practice, with a vision of continued improvements. This commitment enabled them to deliver high quality care and learning tailored to children and families.

The childminder had established positive connections with other professionals in the area. This offered opportunities to share best practice, support and reflect together. They spoke positively about the impact this had on delivering high quality care and learning. For example, they had been involved in working groups to review current guidance to embed self-evaluation. This supported their knowledge and understanding of the new framework and they were able to put this into practice. Families told us they liked that the childminder met with other childminders in the area and children had opportunities to socialise.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Playing, learning and developing

The childminder had a sound understanding about how children develop and learn. They used this to create inviting play spaces and resources that were appropriate for children's stage of development. For example, spaces had been carefully designed to ensure younger children were able to explore and investigate a range of toys safely. Families comments included "I really love how she puts a huge amount of effort into creating a fun, safe, and stimulating environment. One of the things we really value is how often she updates different areas of her setting, always introducing new activities, toys, and themed areas to keep the children engaged and learning through play. It's clear that she's always thinking of new ways to give the children a variety of experiences." As a result, families had confidence children had a breadth of learning experiences to support them to thrive and flourish.

Children were able to choose from a wide selection of resources that had been carefully arranged to promote independence and choice. The childminder followed children's ideas and designed activities around their interests. For example, dinosaurs and loose parts were provided in the tuff tray to promote children's imagination and curiosity and a wide selection of books were available linked to World Book Day. Families strongly agreed children were cared for in a safe, secure and well maintained environment. Comments included "Stunning room and well equipped for the different age and stage of children. Areas updated regularly on things the children are interested in."

The childminder was knowledgeable about the importance rich literacy and numeracy activities had on development. Children had access to a wide selection of age appropriate books, attended book bug sessions and engaged with quality resources. The childminder supported children to engage in fun, play experiences through responsive interactions, singing, reading and nurturing care. They were able to reflect the positive impact these experiences had on children's outcomes. For example, they identified language development in younger children and their love for songs. The childminder had also trained in book bug so they were able to share this experience with all children in their home. As a result, children made progress at a pace that was right for them through rich and engaging activities.

The childminder was skilled at observing and reading children's cues. From these observations, they planned activities and resources that promoted curiosity, imagination and engagement. Observations were shared with families through an online platform. From this, next steps on how learning could be further enhanced were suggested. This supported positive connections between home and the service and meant families felt informed about how children spent their time.

Children were at the centre of planning, demonstrating their views and interests mattered. The childminder used a balance of responsive planning and intentional promotion to ensure children experienced a breadth of learning indoors and outdoors. Families told us "One of the things we really appreciate is how much effort she puts into planning exciting outings each week. From trips to local parks and farms to fun learning activities, there's always something new for the children to look forward to." As a result, families were confident children were receiving high quality play and learning.

The childminder tracked children's progress and used this to identify next steps in discussions with families. This meant children made progress at a pace that was right for them and were well supported to reach their full potential. The childminder was skilled at recognising what was important to each child, their stage of development and their interests. For example, school aged children wanted to visit local attractions after school. The childminder recognised their need to play and explore in nature and offered these opportunities regularly. Children were able to revisit and talk about their learning from the floor book where the childminder displayed pictures and children's voice. Children enjoyed looking at these and recalling experiences.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement, therefore we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Nurturing care and support

Children and families experienced positive, warm and caring connections with the childminder. They demonstrated a strong understanding of nurturing relationships and how this was essential for children's growth and development. The childminder worked closely with families, getting to know what was important to each child. This supported smooth transitions and tailored care. Families strongly agreed they had a good relationship with the childminder. As a result, children and families had formed positive, trusting relationships.

The childminder demonstrated their approach was guided by best practice guidance and person centred care. This was reflected in children's plans and collaborative work. The childminder worked closely with health professionals and other agencies to deliver additional care to support some families for periods of time. They were able to reflect on the positive outcomes this intensive support had on children's development.

Children experienced a relaxed and unhurried mealtime that was influenced by their preferences and routines. They were able to choose where they would like to eat in the kitchen-diner. The childminder provided safety seating that meant young children could be seated securely at the dining table to minimise potential risks. Children were involved in putting snack choices on to plates to share with peers. This created rich opportunities to understand sharing, counting and caring for each other. The childminder stayed close to children during mealtimes and used the opportunity to talk about favourite foods. They shared important information regarding food guidance with families on their online platform. This supported awareness of healthy connections with foods.

Children's rights were promoted through nurturing interactions and respectful relationships. Their privacy and dignity had been carefully considered during personal care routines. Older children could access a downstairs toilet independently and younger children's personal care needs were carried out respectfully. As a result, children were supported to develop a positive image of themselves.

Children's wellbeing was well supported through personal plans. The childminder had begun to use a new format to record what was important to children in line with Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) principles. This meant that plans were individual to each child, highlighting their strengths, needs and interests. Plans were reviewed regularly with families in line with guidance. We suggested recording when plans were reviewed for ease of monitoring. Families told us " We can discuss our child's needs openly and she is very keen to help us support [them]" and "Pauline has a caring nature, informs me of [my child's] progress and also tells me of any achievements that [they] may have.

The childminder knew children and families really well and tailored the service to meet their individual needs. They created a warm, welcoming ethos that reflected their aim to provide a home from home experience. They demonstrated a professional love and care for children and their commitment and enjoyment for their role was evident. Families commented "We feel really lucky to have found someone who genuinely cares about the children's happiness and development. We couldn't recommend her more highly!"

Forming positive connections with families was important to the childminder and meant they were able to tailor care that promoted inclusion. Learning from families meant they were responsive to children's unique needs. For example, they were keen to learn words to communicate with children who have English as an additional language. This supported an inclusive approach to ensuring all children reach their full potential.

The childminder understood that each child's development was shaped by family, experiences and their wider community. To further support children and families, the childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to understand and support individual needs. Families told us "We are so happy with the care our children receive from our childminder. They are always so settled and happy in her care, and it's clear how much they enjoy going each day. She creates such a welcoming, nurturing environment where the children feel safe and comfortable", "Pauline is very professional in her manner of caring for children" and "She is very attentive to [their] needs and likes to make sure she knows exactly what [their] routine is." As a result, children experienced continuity of care between home and the service.

Children and families benefitted from the childminders commitment to professional learning and development that positively impacted the delivery of high quality care and learning. This involved attending regular courses, keeping up to date with guidance and working towards a degree. Training included trauma informed practice, children and adult mental health, autistic spectrum disorder and ongoing child protection training. They were able to reflect on the impact of learning and implement this into practice. As a result, children's individual needs were met through tailored care.

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

We recommend the childminder familiarise herself with Building the Ambition, GIRFEC and the children's named person for information sharing across agencies. Relevant adults in children's lives should be contacted when the childminder realises there is a need for further support. She should continue to use the national wellbeing indicators (Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Responsible, Respected and Included) to help her assess individual children.

This will ensure the childminder adheres to new legislation surrounding the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014) available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted> and help to keep children safe.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard: 3 - Health and wellbeing.

This area for improvement was made on 6 March 2017.

Action taken since then

Children benefit from consistently high-quality care and learning experiences. The childminder now uses personal planning formats that clearly reflect the wellbeing indicators. Planning is meaningfully shaped by Realising the Ambition, alongside skilled use of space, interactions, and experiences, ensuring children's needs, strengths, and interests drive practice.

Close collaboration with the Health Visiting service and the community childminding programme enables targeted support and additional places for children. Through effective partnership working with other agencies, children experience coordinated, timely support that positively impacts their wellbeing and development. As a result of these improvements, progress is clear and the area for improvement has been fully met.

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

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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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