

# Longstaff, Linda Child Minding

Duns

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
25 March 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Linda Longstaff

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003908005

**Service no:**  
CS2007166462

## About the service

Linda Longstaff operates the service from her home, which is a semi-detached house within the rural village of Duns, Scottish Borders.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

Between 24 March 2026 and 27 August 2026 (or before if a child leaves the service) Tuesday to Thursday the childminder may care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 4 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

Between 01 September 2026 and 26 August 2027 (or before if a child leaves the service) Tuesday to Thursday during school holidays the childminder may care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time up to 16 years of age: of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 4 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

Children are cared for in the living room and supervised access to the kitchen. There is a good sized garden with an outdoor play den to provide shelter when playing outside. The service is well situated to access the local town, park and other local amenities

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 March 2026 between 13:00 and 15:15. 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, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with two children using the service
- received ten 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

- The childminder knew children well, and children were happy, settled and content in their care.
- Children engaged in play that was enjoyable, meaningful and supported their development.
- The childminder had established positive and trusting relationships with families, which contributed to continuity of care.
- Children's personal plans held a range of information, further development of strategies would ensure children received care tailored to their individual needs.
- Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes were in place and this supported continuous improvement.
- Families were extremely positive about the quality of care provided by the childminder and the warm and supportive relationships they had built with her.

## 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.

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

The childminder had clear aims and objectives that outlined how the service would operate and how high quality care would be delivered. The vision for the service was underpinned by strong values. These were shared with families prior to starting, this helped them to understand what to expect from the service. These focused on providing children with a safe, secure environment where they could learn and develop through play and interactions. A family commented "I could sing my childminder's praises all day. They are professional and welcoming to all" and "my childminder is one of a kind. The best childcare setting my children have attended. As a result, outcomes for children were positive.

Self evaluation processes supported the childminder to identify strengths and areas for development. Recording the impact of these improvements would strengthen self evaluation and demonstrate how changes enhanced outcomes for families. In addition, the childminder could document learning from Care Inspectorate updates, best practice guidance and training. This would show how professional learning influenced practice and supported a strong culture of continuous improvement. Increasing opportunities for children and families to contribute would ensure their views informed meaningful improvements and reflected their needs.

A quality assurance calendar supported the childminder to carry out key tasks, including regular audits of medication, accidents, children's records and personal plans. This approach to quality assurance meant systems were in place to effectively monitor and evaluate the quality of the service provided.

Policies and procedures were routinely reviewed. The childminder should revisit these when new or updated best practice guidance becomes available to ensure they remain current. Policies were shared with families through the closed Facebook page.

Children and families were meaningfully involved in evaluating the service. The childminder gathered routine feedback through questionnaires and discussions, and families told us that their views were listened to and acted on. Some commented, "we are always informed if any changes are happening, we have had questionnaires about these things" and another stated "I am able to make suggestions if I feel I want to but I don't feel I need to and I'm very happy with how the service is run". This demonstrated responsive and collaborative leadership. To extend this further, the childminder could involve children and families in reviewing the vision, values and aims. This would ensure they reflect everyone's needs.

To keep children safe and free from harm the childminder had developed risk assessments for their home, garden, trips and regular outings. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they were relevant and up to date. A child commented "we hold hands when walking near roads and it keeps us safe". A family commented "The childminder provides a safe and secure home environment" and "she puts the children's safety first always and it's so reassuring to see". The area for improvement made at the last inspection has now been met.

**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.

**Quality Indicator: Play learning and developing**

Interactions were a particular strength within the setting. The childminder consistently engaged with the children, including reading stories and interacting meaningfully throughout care routines and play. This naturally embedded early literacy and communication within daily experiences. Their gentle, nurturing approach supported secure attachments, enabling children to relax, feel safe and confidently explore their environment. The childminder used activities such as small world resources and play dough to extend children's learning. Families commented that the childminder "makes sure all the children's needs were included and chooses activities that all will enjoy" and "does lots with the children. From groups to activities, she puts lots of effort in". The children were chatting, counting, arranging the resources and singing. These experiences encouraged curiosity, promoted sustained engagement and supported the development of early problem solving and fine motor skills.

Planning and assessment processes were established. The childminder used responsive, in the moment planning to meet children's immediate interests, while also incorporating seasonal themes and other activities. One family commented that they "would like more toys for older children" and a child stated they would like "More park after school." The childminder had already identified that further opportunities were needed for older children to be involved in the planning. This would ensure children had ownership of their learning and experienced opportunities that were meaningful.

Developmental tracking was in place for younger children, with observations recorded in individual folders. The childminder also shared monthly learning updates and photographs through the closed Facebook page, helping families stay informed and involved. To further enhance this process, the childminder should consider sharing identify next steps with families. This would ensure planning was responsive to children's interests and aligned with their stage of development. This would support meaningful and targeted learning experiences.

Regular opportunities to access fresh air and explore the local and wider communities supported children's health, wellbeing, social skills and understanding of nature. They had trips to parks, the library and local toddler group. Parents told us this was a strength of the service. Comments included "Frequent trips to the park and always playing in the garden" and "Days at the beach, different parks, playing in the garden, walks to see the ducks".

**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.

**Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support**

Children benefited from kind and respectful care within a nurturing setting. The childminder responded attentively to children's cues, offering calm and reassuring support that helped them feel comfortable, confident and at ease. A child commented that "the childminder is lots of fun, gives good cuddles" and a family stated "the childminder is reliable, they are kind, caring and look after my child well". The childminder had a strong understanding of each child as an individual and adapted routines to reflect

changing needs and preferences. As a result, children's wellbeing was consistently supported, this enabled them to feel happy, secure and valued.

The childminder effectively supported transitions with nurseries and schools. This helped children manage change with confidence. Parents spoke positively about the reassurance and preparation their children received when moving into new environments. This approach was further validated by positive feedback from the senior leadership team at the local school. They acknowledged the childminder's commitment to ensuring minded children felt cared for and well supported.

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning. Families commented "My child's development is always discussed with myself and the personal plan is reviewed when needed" and "Regular reviews but also a close relationship means we can update at any time". Plans clearly outlined each child's personal information, 'all about me details' and chronologies were maintained to track significant events. To further enhance this, the childminder should record and evaluate whether any additional support is required. This would ensure the childminder understands and responds to each child's individual needs. Older children were actively involved in creating their own plans. This demonstrated their views and opinions were respected and valued. While parents routinely reviewed plans for younger children, we asked the childminder to ensure that parents also review and contribute to the plans for older children. The area for improvement identified at the previous inspection has now been met.

Children had access to comfortable rest spaces, including quiet areas for reading, cuddles and relaxation. A family commented "All the children are given time to relax and re-charge. The childminder's home is a calm environment". These spaces contributed to a calm, soothing environment where children could regulate their emotions and rest when needed. The childminder understood the importance of sleep and rest for children's development and wellbeing. They followed safe sleeping practices which helped keep children safe. A family commented "there are sleep mats and I have no idea how the childminder does it, but they manage to get our toddler to nap there. They certainly don't do that at home". Regular discussions with parents about their child's sleep or rest supported each child's needs and respected the family's wishes.

Children's care routines were delivered in a manner that protected their dignity and promoted independence. Nappy changing areas were clean, private and well equipped, and the childminder consistently followed safe procedures. Mealtimes were calm and sociable experiences, with healthy snacks provided and meals stored appropriately. Medication was stored correctly, and all associated documentation was completed as required.

## 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 ensure that personal plans are in place for all the children who use the service. There should be evidence of these being reviewed by parents or by children themselves.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 6 support and development

**This area for improvement was made on 29 June 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

Children's wellbeing was effectively supported through personal planning. Plans clearly outlined each child's personal information and chronologies were maintained to track significant events. To further enhance this, the childminder should record and evaluate whether any additional support is required, to ensure they fully understand and respond to each child's individual needs. Older children were actively involved in creating their own plans. This demonstrated their views and opinions were respected and valued. While parents routinely reviewed plans for younger children, we asked the childminder to ensure that parents also review and contribute to the plans for older children.

**This area for improvement is met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should develop a risk assessment for her home and indoor space. Children should be involved in this process.

National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Standard 2 - a safe environment.

**This area for improvement was made on 29 June 2016.**

#### Action taken since then

To keep children safe and free from harm the childminder had developed risk assessments for their home, garden, trips and regular outings. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they were relevant and up to date.

**The area for improvement is met.**

## 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

<b>Leadership</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
<b>Children play and learn</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
<b>Children are supported to achieve</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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