

Elaine's Amazing Spaces Child Minding

Dundee

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 March 2026

Service provided by:
Elaine Bruce

Service provider number:
SP2023000226

Service no:
CS2023000344

About the service

Elaine's Amazing Spaces provides a childminding service in Broughty Ferry in Dundee. The service is registered to provide care to 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. Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the certificate. No overnight care will be provided. The service currently has three children registered.

The children have access to the playroom which is in the childminder's conservatory, kitchen and dining area, bathroom, and a safe and secure outdoor play space. Children also access an outdoor art cabin.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 March 2026 between 14:00 and 17:45. Feedback was shared with the childminder on 16 March 2026.

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 complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke to and spent time with three children using the service
- spoke to two parents and received four completed questionnaires
- 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.

During this inspection we gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

Key messages

- Children were confident and were fully engaged in their play and learning.
- A varied range of quality resources supported children to develop their curiosity, imagination, and creative skills.
- The childminder knew the children well and had a good knowledge and understanding of each child's needs and current interests.
- Children were happy and were having fun during their play experiences.
- Parents were welcomed into the childminder's home which supported positive relationships and effective sharing of information.
- The childminder was responsive to the ongoing development of the service's policies to further support safe 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	4 - Good
Children thrive and develop in quality spaces	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 4 - Good

Quality Indicator - Leadership and management of staff and resources

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 had developed clear aims for the service, which were shared with children and families and were evident in daily practice. These aims helped shape a consistent and nurturing environment. We discussed that involving children and families in the next review of the service aims would strengthen participation and further support positive outcomes for all.

The childminder regularly reflected on their practice, the environment, and children's experiences, recording this within a floor book. This approach supported ongoing improvement, enabling the childminder to make informed changes that further developed play and learning opportunities for children.

Policies were aligned with current guidance and reflected best practice. We discussed that developing additional policies would further strengthen safe practice within the service and provide clearer guidance to support consistent decision making.

The childminder had a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience from previous roles within the early learning and childcare sector. This contributed to positive outcomes and high quality experiences for children. We discussed that updating mandatory training would be beneficial to ensure their knowledge and skills remained current and continued to support safe and effective practice.

Parents were meaningfully involved in the life of the service. They were warmly welcomed into the childminder's home, which helped build positive relationships and supported effective sharing of information. The use of questionnaires encouraged families to provide feedback about the service, which promoted ongoing improvement. A parent shared, 'Elaine often consults me to ensure I am onboard with future planned activities.' Children were consulted daily and offered choice, ensuring their needs, wishes, and preferences were valued and respected.

Children thrive and develop in quality spaces 5 - Very Good**Quality Indicator - Children experience high quality spaces**

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.

The childminder's home was well maintained, safe, and secure. Free flow access between the playroom and outdoor area enabled children to move independently between spaces, promoting choice and active play. A parent shared, 'Elaine has a brilliant outdoor set up which I love.' Daily risk assessment checks were carried out before children arrived, ensuring a safe and well-prepared environment for play and learning. Safety discussions were naturally woven into interactions with children. This helped them recognise potential hazards and develop the skills and confidence needed to manage their own safety.

A warm and welcoming environment was provided for children and families. Children's artwork was displayed within the art cabin. This reinforced that their contributions were valued and that they had ownership of this space. Each area of the environment was thoughtfully planned and well resourced, inspiring curiosity and encouraging children to explore, investigate, and engage in meaningful play experiences.

Effective infection control measures were in place, reducing the risk of cross infection. The childminder ensured environments were cleaned prior to children arriving, and surfaces were cleaned after use to maintain high standards of hygiene.

These approaches contributed to a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children could play, learn, and achieve positive outcomes.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator - Playing, learning and developing

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.

Children were happy, having fun, and engaged in a broad range of play and learning experiences. The childminder had a good understanding of children's current interests and ensured these were reflected across all play spaces and available resources. Children confidently involved the childminder in their play, seeking additional resources and engaging in meaningful discussions to extend their learning. For example, one child shared, 'I like doing science.' This was effectively supported through a variety of experiments and investigative experiences. These approaches promoted children's curiosity, critical thinking, and sustained engagement in their play.

Children were able to make choices about their play throughout the session, including where they wished to play and the resources they wanted to use. A parent commented, 'Elaine provides such a varied experience, my child will do something different almost every time.' All children spent time in the well resourced and inspiring art cabin, where they were creative and developed their imagination. For example, one child painted a mirror, mixed and blended colours, and then transferred the design onto paper to create a print. They were proud of their work and received encouragement and praise from the childminder. Another child shared, 'I love baking, we make cakes sometimes,' highlighting the range of experiences available. Children were actively included in varied and meaningful play and learning opportunities, supporting their creativity, independence, and overall development.

Observations of children's play and learning were recorded in individual learning journals and within a floor book. These clearly identified children's specific learning and the development of new skills. Relevant next steps were documented to support children's continued learning and progression. Parents were meaningfully included in this process and were able to add comments to their child's journal. Photographs of children's play and learning were also regularly shared with families, helping them remain involved in their child's daily experiences. This collaborative approach strengthened relationships and contributed to improved outcomes for children.

Language, literacy, and numeracy skills were effectively supported through meaningful and sustained discussions between the childminder and the children. A focus story, enhanced with props, encouraged children to use their imagination and engage in story sharing experiences. Visual supports within the art cabin, including pictures, signs, and displays, further promoted children's language and literacy development.

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good**Quality Indicator - Nurturing care and support**

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.

The childminder demonstrated strong, nurturing practice that resulted in consistently positive experiences for children. They knew children well and had developed trusting, secure relationships. Warm and responsive interactions meant children were confident seeking support, which promoted their emotional wellbeing. A parent shared, 'Elaine is extremely nurturing and welcoming with my children. She takes time to engage with them individually, exploring their interests, making them feel valued.' The childminder's sound understanding of individual needs ensured tailored strategies were used effectively, leading to positive outcomes for all children.

Children were at the heart of the service, with their views meaningfully influencing daily experiences. They were offered choice throughout the session and transitions between school and the childminder's home were well planned and sensitively managed. As a result, children moved confidently between play spaces and communicated their intentions independently. This supported children to develop responsibility and make informed decisions about their play.

Personal plans were in place for each child and reviewed at least every six months. This ensured information remained current and enabled the childminder to respond appropriately to changing needs. We discussed the importance of parents signing plans to further strengthen shared understanding.

Snack time contributed to a positive social experience. Children were offered healthy options and were supported to stay hydrated. A parent shared, 'Elaine provides an after-school snack for my child which is varied and they always enjoy. Elaine encourages them to take part in preparing any food and they often do food-based activities which my child loves.' Informal conversations during snack helped the childminder understand children's preferences and plan activities that reflected their interests, which enhanced engagement.

The childminder had established positive and trusting relationships with parents. Daily communications at pick-up times ensured important information was shared effectively. A parent commented, 'As a parent, Elaine was extremely warm and welcoming to me from my first visit.' Families spoke highly of communication, describing it as consistently strong. This high quality partnership working helped maintain continuity of care and contributed to positive outcomes 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 thrive and develop in quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children experience high quality spaces	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
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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