

Strachan, Gillian Child Minding

Dundee

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
30 March 2026

Service provided by:
Gillian Strachan

Service provider number:
SP2012983765

Service no:
CS2012309752

About the service

Gillian Strachan provides a childminding service in Monifieth, Angus. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 12 of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending Primary School and no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight care may not be provided. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate. The service currently has eight children registered.

The children have access to the playroom, kitchen, dining area, bathroom and secure outdoor play space.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 30 March 2026 between 09:15 and 12:15. Feedback was shared with the childminder on 30 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 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.

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 experienced a wide range of play and learning opportunities that supported their engagement and ongoing progression.
- A well resourced environment offered quality experiences that promoted children's life skills, independence, creativity, and imagination.
- Children were happy, confident, and relaxed during their play.
- Strong, positive relationships had been established between the childminder and children.
- The childminder knew children well and demonstrated a clear understanding of their developmental stages, needs, and interests.
- Parents were welcomed into the childminder's home at pick up time, supporting effective, ongoing information sharing to ensure children's needs were fully met.
- The childminder was committed to the continued development of their service and was responsive to improvement suggestions.

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	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 a clear vision and values for their service, but these had not yet been formally documented or shared with families. They were responsive to this and considered appropriate ways to communicate their vision. A parent shared, 'Gillian's values are similar if not the same as ours.' Documenting and sharing the vision would help to ensure families understood the service's values and expectations. This would provide a shared purpose and support consistent, positive experiences for children.

Policies and procedures were in place and reflected current guidance and best practice. We asked the childminder to consider the further development of two policies which would provide greater clarity and strengthen implementation within the service. Strengthening these documents would provide clearer guidance for the childminder and families, supporting more consistent and robust practice.

The childminder regularly reflected on children's play and learning experiences and considered the quality of the environment. Some next steps were recorded which identified areas for further development. The childminder also described recent changes made to the playroom to ensure each area was well used and offered quality experiences for children. More detailed recording of changes and ongoing improvements would provide clearer evidence of how reflective practice was developing positive outcomes for all.

The childminder had undertaken a range of training since the last inspection. This had further supported practice and positive experiences for children. A training plan had been developed which identified further learning needs, including child protection training. This supported ongoing professional development and helped ensure the childminder maintained the knowledge and skills needed to promote children's safety and wellbeing.

The childminder had established positive and trusting relationships with families. Regular questionnaires, which focused on settling in, resources, and outdoor play, were used effectively to gather parents' views and suggestions. This approach meaningfully involved families in the development of the service and supported ongoing improvement.

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 having fun and demonstrated confidence during their play. They led their own play and learning, made choices, and independently asked for further resources. For example, the children asked for Barbies to be brought out to extend their play. This contributed to a sense of ownership in their play experiences. A parent shared, 'my child has the opportunity to partake in imaginary role play, creativity tasks, reading, and relaxing in a calm homely environment.' A wide range of quality resources were available to support meaningful play and learning. The childminder further extended children's play by introducing additional materials that deepened their engagement.

Children chose to participate in a creative play experience, demonstrating confidence and independence in selecting their own activities. They engaged purposefully in an Easter themed art activity. They independently glued materials onto paper and discussed colours, chicks, rabbits, and eggs with the childminder. Children also accessed a well planned tuff tray sensory experience, where they explored a variety of textures and colours and used the materials creatively. These experiences effectively supported children's early communication and language development through meaningful conversations. They also promoted creativity, sensory exploration, independence, and choice making.

Children benefitted from regular outdoor play, with good use made of the outdoor environment and wider community to offer varied and stimulating experiences. A parent commented, 'lots of free play, usually child led. Opportunities for outdoor play.' The dedicated playroom provided a well organised and inviting space that supported children's play and learning. This promoted creativity, imagination and choice making. Books were readily available which promoted early language and literacy. Numeracy was naturally incorporated into everyday routines, such as during snack time. This meaningfully supported children's play and learning.

The childminder was highly committed to ensuring children had rich experiences within their local community. They routinely planned outings to a variety of places, including parks, cafés, libraries, the beach, a community garden, and a local toddler group. These opportunities enabled children to explore different environments, develop social confidence, and experience a sense of belonging within their community.

An observation sheet was in place which captured children's progress across specific areas of development. Photographs and observations were shared with families through a private Facebook page. This provided parents with the opportunity to share comments about their child's learning experiences. This supported ongoing communication and strengthened partnership working to ensure children's learning needs were progressed and met.

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 knew children well and used this knowledge to deliver care that was consistently responsive to their individual needs. Positive and trusting relationships had been established, which supported children to feel safe, secure, and confident in the childminder's care. A child shared, 'I like playing with the other children. I like giving Gillian a hug.' Children were encouraged and supported to share and express their feelings, helping them develop emotional awareness and self regulation skills. The recent introduction of an 'emotion station' further strengthened this and provided children with a way to explore and understand their feelings. These approaches promoted children's emotional wellbeing and supported secure attachments. This contributed to positive outcomes for all.

Personal plans were in place for each child which detailed key information to support their wellbeing. These would benefit from six monthly reviews being signed and dated to accurately reflect children's changing needs.

Children's personal care routines were well supported, with infection prevention and control measures in place and followed effectively. The childminder used appropriate strategies to support children's toileting routines. This promoted independence while ensuring children felt comfortable and reassured. Safe sleep practices were implemented which included the use of two travel cots. Children were supervised and monitored throughout their sleep. We also discussed approaches for children who fell asleep in buggies to ensure practice remained consistent with safe sleep guidance. These approaches helped ensure children's health, safety, and wellbeing were consistently maintained.

Snack and mealtimes provided quality social experiences for children, with warm and nurturing interactions observed throughout. This supported children to build positive relationships and experience relaxed, unhurried routines. Children's choice making, independence, and life skills were consistently promoted throughout. These positive routines enhanced children's social development, strengthened relationships, and supported children to become increasingly independent.

The childminder had developed positive and meaningful links with other local childminders. They regularly visited the community together, creating opportunities for children to socialise beyond the immediate setting. A parent shared, 'my child gets to be involved in social outings to develop their skills and communication with other children.' This collaborative approach supported children to build positive friendships and develop their confidence when engaging with a wider peer group.

Parents were invited into the childminder's home at pick up time, which supported effective daily communication and strengthened relationships between the childminder and families. This regular exchange of information ensured that children's needs were fully understood and consistently met. Parents commented, 'Gillian offers a home from home environment for my child. She puts nurture at the heart of her job and my child adores the time she spends in her care,' and 'communication has always been easy and clear.' Children benefitted from continuity of care, a consistent approach between home and the setting, and responsive support that reflected their individual needs and routines.

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 continue to develop her skills and knowledge through broad training, self-directed reading and learning and developing awareness of current early years frameworks and good practice guidance to further enhance outcomes for children.

Referring to Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 11 June 2018.

Action taken since then

The childminder has taken part in a variety of training since the previous inspection to support knowledge and practice. The impact of some of this training has been recorded. First aid training has been completed to support the health and wellbeing needs of children. A training plan is also in place which has identified future training needs.

This area for improvement has been 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

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - 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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