

Watson, Joanne Child Minding

West Calder

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 March 2026

Service provided by:
Joanne Watson

Service provider number:
SP2010977911

Service no:
CS2010248262

About the service

Joanne Watson is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending Primary School and no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

The service operates from the childminder's home in West Calder, West Lothian. Children are cared for across the spacious living area, with a secure outdoor space available. The service is in a residential area close to parks, primary schools, shops, transport links and other amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 19 March 2026 between 09:30 and 12:05. 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 registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke/spent time with children using the service
- received two completed questionnaires from families
- spoke to the childminder
- observed interactions, routines, practice and daily life
- spoke with one parent
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

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 positive outcomes due to strong values-based practice.
- Strengthening service self-evaluation would support development of a clear improvement plan.
- Children were highly engaged as the environment was organised to support their choice and independence.
- The childminder planned for depth and breadth in children's learning experiences.
- Children were kept safe due to the childminder's attention to managing risk.
- Strong partnership working between the childminder and parents supported positive experiences for children.

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's vision was to provide a service where children experienced a happy, caring, warm and friendly environment. Children experienced positive outcomes as values based approaches were evident in daily practice. A parent said: "the childminder is a very knowledgeable, caring childminder and every time I see them with the kids they are so happy and looked after." The childminder had their aims and objectives in place, and we suggested further developing these in collaboration with children and families to enhance shared ownership.

Self-evaluation for improvement was established, with the childminder sharing that improvement planning contributed to planned sensory play experiences. Children benefited from child centred improvements with a parent sharing that the childminder: "has a great variety to what they do with my child." We discussed challenge questions in the guidance 'A quality improvement framework for the early years and childcare sectors: Childminding' (Care Inspectorate and HMIE, 2025). The use of this resource would support the service self-evaluation process and contribute to the development of a clear improvement plan.

Children experienced safe and consistent care as relevant policies and risk assessments were in place. Regular review and reference to national guidance further strengthened policies, risk assessments and practice. For example, the childminder's knowledge of choking hazards for young children meant that the environment was checked for potential choking hazards. Therefore, policies and risk assessments impacted positively on children's safety, wellbeing, and daily experiences.

The childminder was a member of a national childminding organisation, which helped them stay updated on sector developments and access professional learning. Children were kept safe from harm due to training such as child protection and first aid. The childminder recorded training undertaken. We encouraged the childminder to more clearly record how training informs practice to show the benefits for children. Parents expressed confidence in the childminder's skills and experience with one saying they are "very knowledgeable."

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 highly engaged as the environment was organised to support their choice and independence. We saw that children had high quality, planned and responsive experiences appropriate to their age and stage. We observed children moving freely between imaginative play, construction, and experiences offered by the childminder such as reading books and dressing up. Children felt included as the childminder helped children of various ages and stages to play and learn together.

The childminder was open to children's interests and children could ask what they wished for. Children's language was supported by developmentally appropriate strategies such as narrating actions and using simple language. The childminder was also tuned into younger children not yet speaking who used gesture to communicate their needs. Younger children felt valued as the childminder understood their communications and met their needs.

Interactions between the childminder and children were warm, respectful and responsive. The children displayed a trusting relationship with the childminder and the playfulness they offered. This promoted the emotional security of the children and supported their development. Conversations about the children's lives and their interests reinforced that the children were valued.

Active play was planned for in the community through well planned outings that promoted engagement. Photo books, questionnaires and family feedback confirmed regular outings to Book Bug events at the library, local outdoor spaces including woods and looking at horses and sheep in the rural community. One child told us: "The mummy sheep is my favourite." Children experienced a child led approach as the childminder consulted with them on outings and experiences on offer.

Children had ownership of learning through contribution to big books with photographs and children's comments. The childminder planned for depth and breadth in children's learning experiences. For example, the story 'Stickman' was extended through play experiences in wooded areas and developed through the childminder's outdoor play training. This meant children had opportunities to extend and consolidate their learning through physical play and nature play opportunities.

Families benefited from partnership with the childminder sharing quality observations of their child's learning on a digital app. Children's skills and developmental progress was recorded in areas such as mark making, imaginative play and outdoor play. The regularity of updates meant that families felt well informed. A parent told us: "I love the childminder's updates which shows my child's progression and development. They have come on so much since going." Next steps identified through observations recorded on individual development trackers meant that children's learning was planned for on an individual basis.

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.

Children experienced high levels of emotional security throughout the day due to nurturing, individualised care. Their confidence within daily rhythms was evident, for example in the predictable routine of preparing for snack, where children independently washed their hands and made food choices confidently.

Warm, responsive interactions contributed to children feeling consistently safe and settled. The childminder offered comfort when needed, including cuddles and reassurance, while maintaining a predictable environment. Care routines such as toileting and nappy changing were sensitively managed. This meant children had minimal disruption to their play and the flow of their learning experiences.

Children benefited from a calm, social and well organised snack time. The childminder ensured safe food handling through up-to-date food hygiene training and food business registration.

Families' cultural and personal choices were respected, and the childminder approached healthy eating discussions sensitively. The childminder made reference to Setting the Table guidance (Scottish Government, 2024) as further supporting reflective practice around nutrition. Supervision at mealtimes was attentive, with strong awareness of choking risks applied consistently across play and mealtimes.

Children experienced care in a secure, clean and well maintained home, with access to a safe outdoor space. A child told us: "I feel safe and secure with the childminder while having lots of fun." Infection prevention measures were followed, including effective handwashing and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) used during nappy changing and when out in the community. The toilet area off the playroom supported children's independence and privacy. Overall children were kept safe due to the childminder's attention to managing risk.

Although no child protection concerns had arisen, the childminder was knowledgeable and confident in procedures, including building chronologies. Training in child protection and first aid was up-to-date with the childminder aware of managing allergies and medication procedures. Children's safety was prioritised due to the childminder's commitment and well-informed approaches.

Children's wellbeing, individuality and rights were promoted through effective personal planning. Personal plans were reviewed every three months with families, and "All About Me" booklets captured older children's interests. Parents spoke about the childminder's contribution to their child's development: "My child's development has excelled since going to the childminder and their social skills." Although planning for younger children's preferences could be strengthened further, the childminder demonstrated deep knowledge of each child through strong partnerships with parents. Developmental progress trackers were used to identify next steps in learning collaboratively. Wellbeing indicators were used meaningfully in reflection and planning. This meant the children's development was planned for by the childminder.

Partnerships with families were strong, supported by regular communication and updates via app. Parent feedback told us: "We always feel we can talk to the childminder about anything." We discussed opportunities to further develop parental feedback for service's self evaluation.

Overall, children's development was supported in a nurturing, responsive environment where emotional security, safety and wellbeing were prioritised. The home environment promoted independence and positive relationships where children felt safe and could have fun.

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 review and improve policies and procedures to ensure these accurately reflect the service. Reference: National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 - standard 14 - Well managed service.

This area for improvement was made on 28 June 2018.

Action taken since then

The childminder had developed a robust set of policies and procedures which were reflected in the practice observed. These were written clearly and were accessible for families to understand. Dates showed these were reviewed regularly and the relevant guidance is referred to, for example infection prevention and control and medication. We saw good practice in some policies and procedures e.g. retention policy.

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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.