

Sim, Amanda Child Minding

Grantown-on-Spey

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 March 2026

Service provided by:
Amanda Sim

Service provider number:
SP2010980132

Service no:
CS2010273726

About the service

Amanda Sim provides a childminding service from their semi-detached property in the town of Grantown-On-Spey. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local amenities, school and park. The children are cared for downstairs in an open living room and kitchen with access to a downstairs toilet. Children also have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the property, which was not in use at time of inspection.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 3 March 2026, between 11:15 and 12:50. 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed two children; one was a minded child and one was a family member
- received feedback from two 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 had developed positive and trusting relationships with families.
- The childminder provided warm and nurturing care and were responsive to children's needs.
- Children had access to some toys, the environment's layout and organisation limited independent, interest led play, with few open ended natural resources to spark curiosity and creativity.
- Planning approaches were informal and based on children's interests and curiosities.
- The childminder should further develop their approach to self-evaluation and improvement systems to allow them to revisit and reflect what worked well.

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder's aims and objectives described offering a homely, safe and nurturing environment, which was mostly reflected in practice. Parents comments included, '[Child] is completely settled and loves going from home-to-home environment' and 'Mandy is very laid back and easy going which suits us. She is approachable and friendly. She clearly cares a lot for our child'. Actively involving children and families in shaping the service's vision, values, and aims would deepen their sense of belonging and strengthen relationships. This collaborative approach would strengthen partnerships and ensure the vision is meaningful, inclusive and relevant.

The childminder had created a welcoming environment where children felt loved and secure. Families were kept updated and informed through daily conversations and messaging, including photos. The childminder valued children's and families' views and sought their feedback through ongoing informal discussions. To make the feedback even more useful in the future, the childminder should review feedback opportunities and focus more closely on specific areas they wish to improve. This would support the childminder to adapt practice in response to families' views and identify areas where the service can further meet their needs **(see area for improvement one)**.

Self-evaluation processes have not yet begun. There were no systems in place to assess the quality of the service or identify areas for development. We suggested to the childminder to review the new framework; 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' to support the progress and development of their service **(see area for improvement one)**.

Appropriate checks had not been completed by the childminder for all adult members of the household that were over the age of 16. We asked the childminder to notify the Care Inspectorate of any adults which were over the age of 16. The childminder responded appropriately and ensured the necessary notification was submitted **(see area for improvement two)**.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for children and families, the childminder should strengthen their approach to self-evaluation and improvement. Involving children and families will help shape a responsive and inclusive service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

2. To ensure children are effectively safeguarded, the childminder must ensure that robust checks have been completed for all adults aged 16 years and over at the registered address.

This is to ensure that children are safeguarded whilst at the service and is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

Children play and learn 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Playing, learning and developing

The childminder demonstrated warm and responsive interactions throughout the visit. Children were listened to and their contributions were acknowledged with enthusiasm. This supported children to feel valued, respected and confident in their environment.

The childminder used simple, repetitive language to extend children's communication skills during a matching card activity. Explanations and commentary were introduced to scaffold learning, ensuring the minded child was supported. This promoted children's early language development and strengthened their ability to communicate effectively. The childminder engaged at the child's level, joining them on the floor and contributing to their play in a way that maintained fun and interest. This approach fostered positive relationships and reinforced children's emotional security.

Children had access to some toys. However, the layout and organisation of the environment could be improved. Some resources were not easily accessible or presented in a way that encouraged children to make independent choices based on their interests. There was limited use of open ended, natural play resources to promote curiosity and enquiry indoors. This reduced opportunities to develop children's creative potential. The childminder should consider introducing more open-ended resources and ensure they are well presented to readily provoke interest and curiosity (**see area for improvement one**).

At the time of inspection, the garden area was not being used, which limited children's choice and opportunities for active play, exploration, and connection with nature. Regular access to safe and stimulating outdoor experiences is important for supporting children's wellbeing, physical development, and sense of achievement. It would be beneficial to review the barriers preventing use of the garden and identify practical solutions that would enable children to have choice in their play and access outdoor play more consistently.

The childminder supported the children to build links in their community through going for daily walks and weekly soft play sessions. This enhanced opportunities for play and learning through strong connections to the children's own and wider communities.

Planning approaches were informal and based on children's interests and curiosities. The childminder used photographs to share children's experiences with families, promoting positive parental engagement. While planning was responsive and child-centred, there were limited systems in place to evaluate children's progress and plan meaningful next steps. To further enhance this approach, we discussed the value of strengthening observation and recording practices to support the childminder to effectively identify and respond to children's learning needs (**see area for improvement two**).

Areas for improvement

1.

To support children's learning and development, the childminder should ensure children have access to open ended resources and toys appropriate for their age and stage of development. These should provide challenge as well as opportunities for children to develop their natural curiosity. Additionally, maintaining a well organised environment will help children access resources more easily, promote purposeful play, and support them to engage more confidently within the space.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I chose and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27)

2. To improve outcomes for children, the childminder should develop appropriate systems to record and review children's learning and development. The childminder should use this knowledge to support children's next steps and extend their experiences.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which states that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

Children are supported to achieve 3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

We evaluated this quality indicator as satisfactory/adequate where strengths just outweighed the weaknesses.

Nurturing care and support

The childminder provided warm and nurturing care to the minded child. They were responsive to their needs and interacted with them on their level. This supported the child to feel safe and comfortable in the childminder's home. The child was confident to seek support and reassurance when they needed it. This nurturing approach promoted positive relationships and emotional wellbeing.

The childminder spoke knowledgeably about children's preferences, routines and personalities, and appeared to know the child well. However, effective records were not in place to ensure the childminder had clear information about children's changing and evolving needs (**see area for improvement one**).

Children enjoyed a relaxed lunchtime, with food served from their lunch boxes onto plates which created a homely atmosphere. However, children did not wash their hands before eating, increasing the risk of infection. In addition, the television remained on throughout the meal, limiting the quality of the mealtime experience. The childminder should improve hand hygiene practices and reduce distractions to promote more positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had developed positive and trusting relationships with families. They knew children and their families well, which created a warm and welcoming environment. Regular communication took place through informal daily updates and sharing of photographs and messages, which helped families feel involved in their child's experiences. Families reported feeling welcomed into the childminder's home and valued the home from home approach. One parent commented, 'We like the home from home environment that you get with a childminder as opposed to a large nursery'.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children are supported to reach their full potential, the service should have a consistent approach to reviewing, recording and updating personal plans.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'As child, my personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

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	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Leadership and management of staff and resources	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Playing, learning and developing	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children are supported to achieve	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Nurturing care and support	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate

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