

Millar, Caroline Child Minding

Kilmarnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 March 2026

Service provided by:
Caroline Millar

Service provider number:
SP2003901818

Service no:
CS2003003528

About the service

This childminding service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

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

The service is provided from the childminder's home in a residential area of Kilmarnock. Children are cared for on the ground floor of the home, and have access to an open plan kitchen and family area, which leads directly to a large, enclosed garden with areas for different types of play, which enhances children's fun and learning.

The childminder states that she aims to offer each child in her care a happy, safe, warm and comfortable environment that enables them to reach their full potential, through fun and play activities suitable for their age and stage of development.

A full statement of aims and objectives can be obtained from the childminder.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 February 2026. Feedback was shared with the service by telephone on 4 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 since the last inspection.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with children using the service
- received four 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 was passionate, professional and was committed to her own professional development. This ensured the childminder continued to build knowledge and understanding of children's learning and development.
- Children experienced strong relationships with the childminder who demonstrated a warm, kind and compassionate approach.
- Families were actively involved through daily discussions, updates and feedback opportunities. This helped to keep families involved in their child's care.
- The childminder had established strong relationships with families, which contributed to positive outcomes.
- Children were encouraged and supported to learn and explore the wider world, through accessing a range of play opportunities in and out with the community.

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

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

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 vision to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment, and to work collaboratively with parents, was evident in practice. This was consistently demonstrated through their actions and responses to children's care. This led to children being safe, secure and valued, which supported their confidence and wellbeing.

Communication was a key strength of the service. A range of effective strategies promoted positive relationships. Parents commented, "Caroline is amazing at communicating with us, and give us updates throughout the day of what our child has been doing and how much fun he's having. This is so lovely to see these little moments, and also super reassuring for us to see the safe and fun environment he's in." Another shared, "At drop off and pick up Caroline always connects with me asking about my child, how his weekend has been, and any updates she should be made aware of. This communication is so helpful, and I really appreciate this time with Caroline." Parents also reported that the childminder actively sought feedback, shared observations and encouraged contributions from home, which enhanced partnership working and positive outcomes for children.

Policies were in place and had recently been reviewed, with many reflecting current legislation and best practice. These were shared with families, so they knew what to expect. The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to her role.

The childminder welcomed the inspection process and feedback showing a proactive approach to enhancing the service. There was a commitment to ongoing professional learning and reflection in networks, such as the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) and other childminders. Current verbal self-evaluation and improvement processes were well established, and the childminder is in the process of updating questionnaires to parents, asking their views. One parent commented, "Caroline is such a lovely and caring person. She creates a welcoming, safe environment where my child feels completely at home. My child loves going to her house, and always looks forward to the fun activities and the kindness Caroline shows everyday." This approach to continuous learning and improvement had a positive impact on children's wellbeing, play and learning.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

Quality Indicator: Play, 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.

Positive interactions were observed during the inspection. The childminder demonstrated that children were valued by engaging at their level and showing genuine interest in their play.

Each child had a 'memory book' that the childminder regularly updated with photographs and children's voices written. This effectively captured the experiences they were involved in, and during inspection the children could retell these experiences, and also could tell us about the children in the photographs who were at school. There was a wide range of stage appropriate experiences throughout the inspection, and it was clear that the children were thriving, whilst having fun together. As a result, children's interests were meaningfully documented and celebrated.

Children had access to very good indoor and outdoor spaces, that were safe and well-maintained. Resources were accessible, promoting independence. Children engaged confidently in stories and imaginative play, and the childminder provided a wide range of experiences, including messy play and baking to enrich their learning. As a result, children benefited from an environment that supported their learning.

Planning approaches were well-established and child led, supported by a 'floor book' that captured planning, children's photos and their voices. Observations of children's play and development effectively informed experiences that reflected their interests. One parent told us, "My child gets to enjoy a wide range of fun experiences that support their development, and meet their individual needs. They regularly go to soft play, toddler groups, parks and love exploring the woods, which keeps them active, curious and happy," another parent told us, "I get daily updates and photos of my child's opportunities and experiences, which I'm so grateful for. Each time he is at Caroline's he is interacting with others, building confidence in other environments, but most of all having the best time, everyday." We encouraged the childminder to continue to build on this practice, this meant planning was responsive and meaningfully supported children's engagement and ongoing development.

The childminder knew the children very well, and made very good use of observations of children at play and floor books, to inform children's learning and development, resulting in well-planned, responsive experiences. We encouraged the childminder to continue to build on this approach. This ensured children benefited from experiences that support them to achieve.

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 were happy, safe and confident within a secure and nurturing environment. The childminder was consistently responsive to their needs and engaged at their level. This ensured children experienced sensitive, responsive care, that supported their emotional security and wellbeing.

Families were welcomed warmly into the service and received communication through daily conversation, interactions and an online platform. Regular discussion with families were meaningful in order that they could share their views. One parent told us, "I am so happy that I chose to send my child to Caroline - hit the jackpot with Caroline as a childminder! I drop the child off and don't worry about him/her at all when I'm at work, as I know he/she loves being with Caroline and is so well looked after." As a result, families experienced strong, trusting partnerships, that supported continuity for children.

Snack was at a pace that was right for children, as they sat together and enjoyed interactions with each other and had lots of fun, whilst also learning about healthy food choices. The childminder had completed 'Setting the Table' learning to support the delivery of nutritional and balanced snacks. She used this knowledge to offer the children nutritious snacks and water. Parents provided lunch for the children daily and this resulted in a relaxed, social mealtime that promoted healthy eating and wellbeing, with food that they children enjoyed.

We found care plans in place for the children. These held relevant information to support the childminder to provide care, play and learning that supported children's overall health, welfare and safety needs. The format used considered best practice guidelines and was linked to the Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included, (SHANARRI) framework, and used the wellbeing indicators to support in assessing and planning for children's overall wellbeing. We saw lots of examples of childminder asking parents how they wanted their child supported with their personal care. All children received an approach which suited individual personalities. One parent told us, "Caroline is absolutely amazing, nothing is ever an issue, and you can tell she deeply cares for each child under her care." This approach ensured families were included in the care of their child.

At the time of inspection, no children required medication. We were satisfied that appropriate procedures were in place to safely administer, record, store and share information with families when it was needed. This meant children's health needs were being managed effectively and safely.

Connections with the local community were well established, and enabled children to develop a strong sense of belonging and broaden their understanding of the world around them. As a result, children benefited from meaningful community engagement, that enriched their learning and wellbeing.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	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

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.