

A & S Childcare Child Minding

Beith

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 March 2026

Service provided by:
Anne Moncrieff & Sybil Kennedy

Service provider number:
SP2009976262

Service no:
CS2009234623

About the service

Anne Moncrieff and Sybil Kennedy trading as A&S Childcare, work in partnership to provide a childminding service in the town of Beith, North Ayrshire. Eric Moncrieff is employed as an assistant. The service is provided from the home of Anne and Eric Moncrieff and is located close to local schools, parks and shops. Children have access to a lounge, designated play area, dining room, downstairs toilet and a large enclosed garden.

When the childminders work together, or a childminder and the named assistant are working together, they can care for up to 12 children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom a maximum of six are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than two are under 12 months.

When one childminder works alone, they can care for up to six children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom a maximum of six will be under 12 years and no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

At the time of inspection, 23 children were registered with the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 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 information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with six children using the service
- reviewed electronic feedback from five families
- spoke with both childminders and their assistant
- observed practice and daily life for children
- reviewed documents
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment.

As part of this inspection, we assessed 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, improvements were identified relating to core assurances. We have reported where improvement is necessary within the heading Leadership.

Key messages

- * Children experienced warm, nurturing relationships supporting them to feel safe and settled in the childminder's care.
- * Children enjoyed a variety of indoor and outdoor play that supported their interests, choices and enjoyment.
- * Self-evaluation and quality assurance processes should be introduced to support service improvements.
- * Childminders and their assistant should undertake professional learning with priority given to child protection and first aid.
- * Families and children where appropriate, should be further involved in the development and review of children's personal plans.

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	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

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 outweigh weaknesses.

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminders had a mission statement outlining their ethos as "Your peace of mind is our business." This had not been reviewed or updated for some time. We encouraged the childminders to review this and to develop clear vision, values and aims for the service to ensure it reflects the aspirations of children, families and staff. This would help create a shared understanding of the service's purpose and priorities and support continuous improvement across the setting.

The views of children and families were gathered informally through daily conversations at drop off and pick up times. Parents confirmed that consultation processes were informal, stating, "communication is through informal discussions at drop-off and pick-up each day. Any questions I have are always answered at that point." The childminders advised that more formal feedback had previously been sought through the use of questionnaires. We encouraged them to reintroduce these, as formal methods can provide more structured feedback, support continuous improvement, and offer clear evidence of how the views of children and families are considered and used to develop the service. This would also ensure families felt listened to and understood that their views were valued and acted upon.

We received mixed responses from parents about their involvement in helping to develop the service and self-evaluation processes had not been embedded to support continuous improvement. We encouraged the childminders to introduce a planned approach to self-evaluation using The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland (2025) guidance, "A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding." This would support reflective practice and help ensure the service continues to develop in response to the views and needs of children and families, leading to improved outcomes (area for improvement 1).

A welcome leaflet and key policies were shared with families at the point of enrolment. While some information had been updated, this was not consistent. For example, the enrolment booklet was last updated in 2018, which meant key details, including agency contact numbers, were inaccurate. We encouraged the childminders to implement a clear system to regularly review and update all information provided to families. This would help ensure families have access to accurate, relevant and up to date information, supporting transparency and confidence in the service.

Quality Indicator: Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment

The childminders knew children well and ensured their care needs were supported. They had defined roles and responsibilities which suited their skills. For example, one childminder prepared lunch whilst the other sat with children as they ate their food, and one childminder escorted children to school whilst the other, with support from the named assistant, supported younger children's play at home. As a result, children experienced well organised care where their individual needs were met.

Whilst some professional learning had been completed by the childminders in previous years, this had not been maintained to reflect current practice. We discussed the importance of both the childminders and

their assistant undertaking relevant training or self directed learning to further develop their knowledge and understanding of early learning and childcare. This should include, but is not limited to, child protection and first aid training to help ensure children's safety. Ongoing professional learning would support practice to remain safe, informed and responsive to children's needs (area for improvement 2).

The daily diary recorded that the childminders completed a daily check for potential risks prior to children's arrival, including consideration of risks associated with school drop-offs. We highlighted that risk assessments should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any current or emerging risks and the control measures in place. This would help ensure children's safety is consistently maintained. Parents who returned our questionnaire confirmed they felt the childminders provided a safe environment. Comments included, "A&S create a very safe and calming environment to be in" and "I have never had any doubts about the safety of my child. The house is always well maintained and spotlessly clean."

At the time of inspection, the childminders were not registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). We discussed the requirement for the childminders to register to ensure compliance with data protection legislation when storing and sharing personal information. This registration helps safeguard children's and families' information and supports good information governance practice. We received confirmation that the childminders completed this registration prior to the completion of this report.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for children and families, the childminders should strengthen how they reflect on the quality of their service. This should include, but not be limited to: regularly seeking feedback from children and families, keeping a record of what is working well and what could be improved and using this information to make positive changes.

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

2. To support positive outcomes for children and families, the childminders should improve and develop their knowledge and understanding of current early learning and childcare practices. This should include, but is not limited to, both childminders and the named assistant accessing child protection and first aid training. Recording professional learning and reflecting on how this has impacted on practice and improved experiences for children would help demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), 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).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

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.

Quality Indicator: Play learning and developing

Children were cared for in a warm, welcoming and homely environment that was furnished to a high standard and well maintained. Children had access to a designated playroom, which was the sun room and

provided plenty of natural light, with direct access to the garden. The sun room contained comfortable sofas and cushions, enabling children to rest and relax when they wished, supporting their emotional wellbeing. It also provided ample space for children to play on the floor and move around freely, accessing toys and resources that reflected their interests and supported children's self-directed play. As a result, children felt comfortable, settled and confident to explore.

Children experienced a range of play and learning opportunities that were tailored to their stage of development. They were able to make choices from a selection of appropriate resources, including cause and effect toys, construction materials and books. One child showed us where the toys were stored when not in use and told us that he loved playing with the cars and garage. The opportunities available supported children's curiosity, problem-solving and imaginative play. As a result, children were engaged, motivated and having fun.

Outdoor play was a priority within the setting, contributing positively to children's wellbeing and learning. On the first day of our inspection, children visited a local park. Regular access to the childminder's large well-resourced garden, along with community parks and green spaces, supported children's physical development and opportunities for exploration. All parents who responded to our questionnaire agreed that their child had frequent access to outdoor play. Parents commented positively, stating, "My child enjoys walks, parks and outdoor play in a large garden area, weather dependent" and "A&S have great outdoor space for the kids to experience during nicer weather." As a result, children benefited from regular, meaningful outdoor experiences that supported their wellbeing, confidence and enjoyment.

School-aged children had access to a separate space to relax and play, away from babies and younger children. This cosy and comfortable area enabled them to select their own games and books and follow their individual interests. Having their own space supported children's independence, choice and social development, while also providing them with opportunities to relax and engage in age-appropriate activities that met their needs.

Planning was mostly responsive to children's ideas and interests, with the childminder using their knowledge of each child to provide appropriate play materials and plan activities. A wide range of play and learning resources were available that reflected seasonal topics and children's interests. Younger children's play and learning experiences were documented in daily diaries and shared with families. All parents who returned our questionnaire agreed that their child was involved in a range of fun experiences that met their individual needs and supported their development. We discussed how the introduction of more structured planning documentation, including individual observations of children, could more clearly evidence when experiences were planned in direct response to children's interests or developmental progress. This would strengthen the clarity of planning processes and better demonstrate how responsive practice supports children's learning and development.

Children are supported to achieve **4 - Good**

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.

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

All parents who responded to our questionnaire strongly agreed that they had a positive relationship with the childminders, describing them as friendly, approachable and welcoming. The childminders positioned themselves at children's level, and interactions were consistently kind, caring and respectful, ensuring that

children's rights were upheld. They knew children's routines, needs and personalities well, which helped to create a nurturing environment where children felt safe and secure. One parent told us, "Anne and Sybil are two lovely ladies who work so well together and with the kids," while another said, "I have full confidence in the care provided by Anne and Sybil." As a result of responsive and attuned interactions, children were supported to build positive relationships and develop confidence, self esteem and a strong sense of belonging, while parents felt reassured and confident in the quality of care provided.

Communication with families was effective and well established, with regular contact maintained both face to face and by phone. Parents valued regular informal discussions at drop off and collection, alongside more structured communication, including written diaries and daily verbal handovers that shared information about children's experiences and achievements. One parent told us, "We always have a verbal handover every day," while another said, "I never feel rushed during drop off or pick up and I know anything I am passing on is well listened to." As a result, parents felt well informed, involved and confident in the care provided, which supported continuity of care and positive outcomes for children.

Personal plans were in place for all children sampled. Some plans contained clear next steps and support strategies; however, this was not consistent across all plans. Although plans had been reviewed on a six monthly basis, it was not always clear how parents had been involved in this process. One parent told us, "I am involved in my child's care, but not their personal plan." We discussed that strengthening the consistency of next steps and clearly recording parental involvement in reviews would improve the quality and effectiveness of personal planning and ensure plans fully reflect children's needs and family views.

At the time of our inspection, no children required medication. The childminders had obtained general parental consent to administer medications such as Calpol if required. We discussed that parental permission should be sought for each individual episode of medication being administered, in line with the Care Inspectorate's 2024 guidance, 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services.' The childminders had appropriate documentation available to support this and agreed to implement this change. This will ensure parents are fully informed and strengthen safe and transparent medication practices.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 31 January 2025, to help keep children safe, the provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) Comply with the conditions set out on their certificate of registration.
- b) Keep accurate records of attendance, ensuring they are updated throughout the session to reflect the children present at all times.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "My needs are met by the right number of people" (HSCS 3.15).

This is in order to comply with Regulation 4 (1)(a) Welfare of users and Regulation 15(a) Staffing of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This requirement was made on 11 December 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service are maintaining accurate records of children's attendance which are updated throughout the session to ensure they accurately reflect how many children were present at any one time. The addition of an assistant had supported continuity of care for children and ensured compliance with conditions of their registration.

Met - within timescales

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
Staff skills, knowledge, values and deployment	3 - Satisfactory / Adequate
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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