

Castillo, Colleen Child Minding

Aberdeen

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 March 2026

Service provided by:
Colleen Castillo

Service provider number:
SP2011981223

Service no:
CS2011299604

About the service

Colleen Castillo provides a childminding service from their property in a residential area of Garthdee, Aberdeen. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family and overnight care is not provided.

Children have access to the downstairs of the property, which includes a living room, kitchen and dining space, spare room, bathroom and a fully enclosed garden. The service is close to parks, shops, the local primary school and other amenities.

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

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 March 2026 between 12:55 and 16:35. 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 children using the service
- received four responses to our request for feedback from parents/carers through our online questionnaire
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances, including the physical environment
- observed practice and children's experiences
- 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

- Children experienced consistently warm and nurturing interactions.
- Children were at the heart of the service and were supported by a childminder who knew them very well.
- Play experiences reflected children's individual interests.
- Children benefitted from a wide variety of experiences, both within and beyond the setting.
- Effective ongoing communication promoted continuity of care.
- Children and families' input was valued and helped shape the service.
- Meaningful self evaluation supported a continuous cycle of improvement.

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**.

Children and families benefitted from the childminder having a clear vision for the service. Children had recently been involved in reviewing the vision, values and aims to ensure these remained meaningful to them. The childminder advised they were considering how to display these in an engaging way, such as a poster. The childminder's approach to care and support consistently reflected the vision and supported families to understand what to expect from the service.

Ongoing communication supported children and families to stay well informed. The childminder had created clear, detailed policies which aligned with current best practice guidance to support parents' understanding of the service. Children and families were involved in shaping the service through regular face-to-face conversations and virtual questionnaires. Children's thoughts and ideas were welcomed and the childminder used these to plan daily experiences. Feedback was used to identify what was important to children and their families, and continue to plan for their needs. Parents commented, "I review [the childminder's] policies and if I have any concerns or suggestions I know [they are] open to receiving feedback anytime" and "I feel [my child] and I are both listened to."

Effective self evaluation and quality assurance processes led to meaningful improvements for children. The childminder regularly evaluated practice using the 'Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding', allowing them to target improvements and build on strengths. Recent changes, including reviewing the vision, values and aims with families, ensured children's views were heard and reflected in practice. As a result, children experienced a service that was inclusive and responsive to their needs. Improvement priorities were realistic and manageable, supporting sustained improvements that positively impacted children's experiences over time.

The childminder was committed to their professional development and embraced opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge. As a member of a national childminding organisation, they benefitted from dedicated time to undertake training and stay up-to-date with sector developments. Forming links with other childminders, such as regularly attending a 'chatty café', enabled them to feel well supported and share practice. Ongoing collaboration with other professionals and welcoming a multi-agency approach directly improved the quality of care for children. This shared learning supported tailored responses to individual needs and informed enhancements to the childminder's practice.

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 experienced fun, engaging play both indoors and outdoors. Accessible resources supported them to make independent choices, building confidence and promoting child-led play.

Children chose to spend time using their imagination with small world characters, making seasonal crafts and doing puzzles. Children shared that their favourite things to do with the childminder were "playing games" and "drawing." Parents valued the variety of experiences for children. They commented, "No two days are the same", "[My child] loves arts and crafts and [the childminder] always makes sure there is plenty of different activities," and "[The childminder] goes above and beyond for [my child] ensuring [they have] great daily learning opportunities, outdoor fun, messy play."

Children were actively engaged in purposeful play within a well organised, developmentally appropriate environment. The childminder was responsive to children's interests and cues, engaging with them at their level. Skilful interactions from the childminder extended children's thinking and enhanced their ideas. The use of open-ended questions promoted children's sense of curiosity and helped sustain their engagement. This supported children to reach their full potential.

Photographs and floor books showed children regularly engaging in a wide range of activities that reflected their interests. This included regular use of community spaces and the outdoors. The children were currently involved in an allotment project, where they were supported by the childminder to develop an outdoor space within the community. Children spoke confidently about this and enthusiastically shared the roles they had completed, such as raking and planting. The childminder had high aspirations for continuing to develop outdoor experiences, such as growing their own vegetables in the allotment and using these for snack and food related experiences. Parents commented positively on the range of outdoor experiences. Their comments included, "[My child] has been to farms and on castle walks."

Children's curiosity, creativity and problem solving skills were well supported. Books, singing and different mark-making opportunities supported children's early language development. Problem solving games such as filling coloured tubes with matching coloured objects challenged children's thinking and encouraged exploration. Daily routines supported the development of practical life skills, including learning about road safety during walks and developing independence through preparing snacks. The childminder's strong knowledge of child development, including training in early science and technology concepts, supported the delivery of high quality experiences that helped children develop key skills for learning.

Planning and assessment were effective in supporting children's progress. Observations were well written and focused clearly on children's skills and achievements. These informed relevant next steps, many of which had already been followed up in practice and were evidenced within children's individual learning books. Children took pride in their achievements, with one child enthusiastically showing us their book, explaining the experiences and learning that had taken place. Parents were encouraged to contribute, helping to build a fuller picture of children's development. Tools such as developmental overviews were used to track progress, and support the childminder planning further experiences to support children's development. As a result, children experienced a responsive, inclusive and stimulating learning environment that supported them to progress well, develop confidence and enjoy their learning.

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 and their families experienced a warm and welcoming environment.

Children appeared comfortable and relaxed in the childminder's care, with families commenting positively on the ethos of the setting. They shared, "[My child] is welcomed with love, kindness and treated with the utmost care and respect" and "It is a home from home and my child feels part of [the childminder's] family." Positive and trusting relationships were evident, with children confidently seeking comfort and reassurance when needed. The childminder responded sensitively at the children's level, supporting them to feel secure. This meant that strong, trusting relationships supported continuity of care between the childminder and children and their families.

Daily routines were consistent and predictable, helping children feel secure and confident throughout the day. These routines were flexibly adapted to meet individual needs, such as maintaining familiar arrangements for community walks. Tailored preparation and reassurance supported children's emotional wellbeing, ensuring they felt respected and understood. The childminder's kind and compassionate approach promoted children's dignity, while strong partnership working with families ensured consistency between home and the setting. A flexible induction process allowed children to settle at their own pace, and proactive support for transitions to other settings helped promote children's overall wellbeing.

Snack times were relaxed and unhurried. The childminder was responsive to children's suggestions and catered to their preferences. Children sat at the table with the childminder, which promoted a calm and sociable experience. Children had opportunities to be independent through spreading onto their toast and preparing fruit, where suitable. Children shared they had been involved in regular food related experiences, such as baking. This supported children's confidence and development of life skills.

Children's wellbeing was supported through the childminder's strong understanding of their individual needs. Clear personal plans captured key information about each child's health, preferences and routines, and were regularly reviewed in partnership with families through a digital app. The childminder used wellbeing indicators to build a holistic picture of each child and identify meaningful next steps, including clear strategies to support speech and language development. This meant that planning was responsive, ensuring children's individual needs were consistently met.

The childminder showed a genuine interest in children's experiences and wellbeing. Training was applied effectively to keep children safe and to support those with additional needs, working closely with families and other professionals. Inclusive experiences reflected children's individual diversity and needs, and children's views were consistently listened to and valued. This collaborative approach ensured children felt supported and strengthened family confidence in the service.

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

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
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