

Nicky's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Dunfermline

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 April 2026

Service provided by:
Nicola Belgrove

Service provider number:
SP2018990133

Service no:
CS2018369771

About the service

Nicola Belgrove provides a childminding service from their property in a quiet residential area of Dunfermline. 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 own children.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living room and kitchen/diner. The children also have access to a downstairs toilet and an enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 April 2026 between 10:00 and 12:45. 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:

- spoke with three children using the service
- received feedback from three families
- spoke with the childminder
- 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 consistently experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions which supported their overall wellbeing.
- Children benefited from routines which were tailored to their individual needs, interests and preferences.
- Children experienced unhurried and relaxed mealtimes. They had opportunities to develop life skills and independence.
- Children had fun and enjoyed a range of interesting and exciting play experiences. Their interests and stages of development were thoughtfully considered by the childminder.
- The childminder reflected on practice which supported positive outcomes for children. There was scope to further develop self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.

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

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.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

Children and families benefited from a childminder who had a clear vision for the service. They demonstrated the importance of recognising each child as an individual and considered how to best meet their needs through thoughtful interactions, spaces and experiences. The values and aims of the service were used to inform daily practice and as a result, children experienced a warm, loving and safe environment. There was scope for the childminder to review these with children and families, to ensure they reflect their aspirations.

Children and families' views were valued by the childminder. All families agreed and strongly agreed that they were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. They had a range of opportunities to share their ideas, comments and suggestions. The childminder used their feedback to inform changes and make improvements to support positive outcomes for children.

The childminder reflected on practice and had identified improvements to enable them to develop their service. There was scope to further develop their approach to self-evaluation and quality assurance. For example, we discussed using 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' to support them to continue to reflect on practice, to sustain high-quality experiences for children.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

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.

Playing, learning and developing

Children had fun and enjoyed playing in the childminder's home and garden. They engaged in a range of interesting and exciting experiences, such as sensory and messy play. As a result, they had opportunities to practice new skills and develop their thinking in ways which were meaningful to them. Children and families were positive about the play and learning experiences. One child told us, "She is my favourite and has taught me new things. I am always happy when I'm at Nicky's." One family commented, "My childminder provides enriching activities that promote my child's development. She also provides themed activities based on their current interests."

Children experienced interactions which were positive, responsive and caring. They were given time, space and support to be meaningfully and actively involved in making choices about their play. As a result, they were fully engaged and enabled to explore their interests. The childminder had a very good understanding of how children develop and learn. They effectively used this knowledge to plan experiences which were exciting, playful and relevant to children's stages of development. Younger children had opportunities to explore and learn through repeated patterns of play, such as scooping and pouring when gardening. Older children engaged in experiences such as cooking which enabled them to develop independence.

As a result, children were developing a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills for life. The childminder used developmentally appropriate approaches, such as commenting and explaining. This helped children to develop language and communication skills, build vocabulary and created a sense of wonder about the world.

Careful observations of children's progress and development enabled the childminder to identify and plan for individualised next steps. This supported children to make progress at their own pace. Children's achievements were shared and celebrated with families. Families told us, "I am regularly given my child's folder home to check their progress, as well as passing on verbal information at drop off and pick up" and "We have open communication with Nicky and often discuss [my child's] developments."

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

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.

Nurturing care and support

Children consistently experienced warm, caring and nurturing interactions which supported their overall wellbeing. The childminder was responsive to their individual needs and cues. For example, children were sensitively supported to settle to sleep, which provided them with a sense of safety and security. Families were positive about the care their children experienced. They told us, "She really cares about the children" and "Nicky gets to know all the children she cares for, and I can tell that she is passionate about her work."

Children benefited from routines which were tailored to their individual needs, interests and preferences. The childminder knew children very well and effectively used information in children's personal plans to plan daily experiences. Transitions throughout the day were explained to children, which helped them to develop confidence and independence with their daily routines. Children experienced warm and relaxed interactions during nappy changing, which created a positive experience. The childminder had considered ways to support children's privacy and dignity. We discussed how they could strengthen their approach to ensure children's privacy was consistently promoted.

Children experienced unhurried and relaxed mealtimes, as they were able to eat at a pace which was right for them. They were offered a choice of nutritious foods which supported them to be healthy. The childminder's positive approach to mealtimes supported and encouraged children to try new foods. Children had opportunities to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden and were involved in preparing meals using the produce they had grown. This helped them to develop an understanding of important life skills and where food comes from.

Families were very positive about the connections they had developed with the childminder. They had regular opportunities to discuss their children's care, development and learning. One family told us, "Always greeted with a smile, she acknowledges my child by name, and makes a point of telling me what sort of activities they are going to be doing for the day. She works with me to help aid in my child's development and willing to support."

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 complete full written risk assessments on the home, garden, pets and outings. These should demonstrate the hazard and the control measures. These should be reviewed annually, or sooner if there is any new risk identified or any changes to the environment. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "My environment is secure and safe." (HSCS 5.17).

This area for improvement was made on 30 August 2019.

Action taken since then

Risk assessments had been developed, including measures in place to minimise risks to children. The childminder supported children to stay safe throughout the day, for example, by reviewing the resources available to ensure they were appropriate for children's stages of development. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should be proactive in accessing relevant training and development opportunities, including familiarisation with the range of best practice documents available. This would enhance her knowledge and understanding of best practice and support her in promoting positive outcomes for children. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "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).

This area for improvement was made on 30 August 2019.

Action taken since then

Children benefited from the childminder engaging in training and professional development. For example, they had identified ways to offer more nutritious food choices in line with current guidance, which supported children's health and wellbeing. As a result, children experienced positive outcomes. This area for improvement has been met.

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

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