

Clare McFarlane Childminding Child Minding

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 April 2026

Service provided by:
Clare McFarlane

Service provider number:
SP2017989000

Service no:
CS2017356052

About the service

Clare McFarlane operates a childminding service from their family home in Milngavie, East Dunbartonshire.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children aged up to 16. Numbers are inclusive of members of the childminder's family.

Children have the use of the living room, hall, kitchen and bathroom. The home is a first floor flat. The childminder does not use the communal gardens.

The service is close to parks, local amenities and public transport.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 1 April 2026 between 16:00 and 18:25. Feedback was given to the childminder by phone on 3 April 2026. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. There were five children attending the service plus the childminder's own child. The childminder had seven children on her roll.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- spoke/spent time with the children using the service and spoke with two parents
- received feedback from two parents who returned our questionnaires
- spoke with the childminder
- assessed core assurances including the physical environment
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The children were relaxed and happy and had fun as they played.
- The childminder provided a good range of toys and activities that were easily accessible to the children. This encouraged child-led play and gave the children freedom to make choices. It helped build their confidence and nurtured their curiosity.
- The childminder, children and their parents had formed very good relationships.
- The childminder had created a warm, homely, cosy environment where children could play, relax and have fun.
- The childminder had undertaken a range of training which linked to the needs of the children as well as their own personal learning and development.
- To keep their knowledge up-to-date, the childminder should download or view the updated information on infection prevention and control from the Public Health Scotland website.

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 shared their vision, aims and values with parents during the settling-in process. This outlined how the service would operate and how parents and children could be involved in shaping the service. For example, one of their aims was: "With an attachment-informed style of care, I strive to ensure all children feel safe, valued, and happy in a warm, home-from-home environment. Building secure, trusting relationships is central to my practice, as I recognise that strong attachments support children's emotional wellbeing, confidence, and ability to learn."

The childminder had built strong, positive relationships with families from the start. They used feedback from parents and children to plan how to meet the children's ongoing needs, wishes, and choices. We found that the childminder was experienced and confident in their role. They cared deeply about children and families and put them at the heart of the service.

A parent shared with us:

"Clare is an exceptional childminder. She goes above and beyond. Unique, calm, and just so lucky to have my children go to her."

The childminder encouraged an ethos of learning through play. We saw that the children were happy, relaxed and joyful. They were fully engaged and had fun as they played in the warm, bright, homely living room. The childminder nurtured and cared for them with kind, gentle care.

The childminder took part in a range of training as part of their ongoing learning. This included child protection in a childminding setting, emergency paediatric first aid, and Think STEM - Autism, ADHD and the Senses. Their childcare experience and continued learning strengthened their skills and knowledge. This approach helped them build positive relationships, support children's wellbeing and improve children's experiences and outcomes.

The childminder valued parents' views and kept regular contact with them. They used both formal and informal communication to share information. This approach allowed parents to influence the care their children received and ensured that their feedback shaped their children's experiences.

The childminder understood the importance of evaluating their service to support ongoing improvement. They had begun to put formal and informal processes in place and acknowledged that this was a work in progress.

The childminder supported children's ongoing learning and development by listening to them and observing what they enjoyed and were interested in. We saw that the childminder sought children's ideas and thoughts about the service. They used this feedback to plan activities and outings. The childminder had built strong, positive relationships with children and their families. This approach helped children feel confident and supported in their play and learning.

Overall, we found that the childminder had created a loving, caring and responsive service in which children had fun and thrived. They had reflected on their practice. The improvements they had identified focused on meeting children's individual needs and helped them continue to improve the service.

A parent told us:

"Clare is approachable and open. She adapts to my child's personality and needs. She is always responsive and collaborative when discussing my [child] and has become a loved and trusted care provider."

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.

The childminder provided a service which put the children at the centre of what they did. The easily accessible toys and activities were linked to children's current interests.

All the children were relaxed and happy. They played very well together and had lots of fun. The children could choose from a wide range of toys, games and musical instruments, all clearly displayed and easily accessible. This allowed the children to make independent choices. The children confidently selected toys and games that interested and challenged them and used their imagination during play. For example, the youngest children were busy building with magnetic shapes and caring for a doll. One of the children commented: "The baby's crying, I'm going to take them to the hospital." The older children chose to play Scrabble. They decided where to sit so they would be comfortable, selected cushions, and carefully positioned the board. They read the instructions and worked out how to play the game together. They remained fully engaged throughout the activity and clearly enjoyed themselves, laughing, chatting, praising and encouraging one another. The children told us they really liked coming to the childminder and enjoyed "making pepperoni pizza", "playdough", "playing guitar" and "going to the park."

The children were fully involved in deciding what they wanted to do. They received praise, warmth and encouragement from the childminder.

Parents told us:

"Both children love to go there."

"With Clare my [child] has flourished! Clare has allowed them to express themselves in art, music and any way they want. Clare is encouraging and caring."

The childminder knew the children very well and understood what they enjoyed doing. They encouraged the children's independence through a range of interesting activities. The childminder spoke to them warmly and praised them. The children really enjoyed their play. The activities were chosen and led by the children. This included quiet sitting activities and active play. These actions demonstrated a lovely bond between the childminder and children and showed that the childminder genuinely cared for them.

The childminder did not use the communal garden but the children had plenty of opportunities to play outdoors, have fun and take part in physical activities. This gave them lots of opportunities for fresh air. They went regularly to the park and other places of interest. This showed us that they had interesting experiences within the home and community. A parent shared:

"Clare takes [child] on outings to museums, parks, farms, library and more!"

The childminder regularly shared children's achievements with families. Feedback from parents and children helped them plan activities and experiences to support the next steps in the children's learning and development journey. The childminder was developing evaluation and quality assurance documents that link to the children's play and learning. These approaches underpinned the child-centred care and support the childminder provided to the children.

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.

We found that the childminder had good processes in place which helped them get to know the families and children, as well as their individual needs and routines.

The children were very happy and relaxed and had fun as they played. We saw they were engaged in a range of interesting activities and really enjoyed being with the childminder. The childminder had a good understanding of child development and ensured that their approach promoted the children's independence, supported their emotions and helped develop their social skills. They were nurturing, loving, caring and kind towards the children. They praised and encouraged them, listened to and chatted with them, and played with them. The childminder understood the individual needs of the children in their care and responded to them positively. A parent told us:

"Clare has used her skill and talents in other areas of her life to bring out the best in my [child]. For example, Clare is a talented musician and yoga instructor. This has allowed my [child] to broaden their horizons by playing musical instruments with Clare and practising mindfulness ... This is extremely generous, and we have thoroughly enjoyed it! Thank you, Clare!"

The childminder kept parents involved in their child's care and daily activities by building warm, positive relationships, chatting with them at drop-off and pick-up and using WhatsApp to send regular updates. This helped parents feel connected to celebrate their child's progress and achievements.

"Clare puts everything into her job. She is thoughtful, calm, quietly spoken, articulate and just great at what she does."

The children were relaxed and happy as they sat at the table, eating their snacks and drinking water or milk. They took their time and enjoyed bananas, apples, grapes, crackers and breadsticks. They chatted with each other and the childminder. The childminder had completed paediatric first aid and food hygiene training. This helped keep children safe and prevent them from choking while eating. A parent shared:

"Lots of fresh fruit, veg, etc., and Clare bakes healthy treats with [child] to teach them about food. Clare also regularly checks in with me to see what [child's] likes and dislikes, and eating habits are."

The childminder had a medication procedure in place which helped ensure they stored and administered medication safely for the children in her care.

Each child had a written personal plan. This helped the childminder support the children and take account of their needs, routines, wishes and choices. Parents were involved in reviewing and updating their child's plan. The childminder and parents regularly shared information, and this helped keep the children's individual needs up-to-date.

The childminder understood the importance of sleep and rest for children's development and wellbeing. Regular discussions with parents about their child's sleep or rest supported each child's needs and respected the family's wishes.

The childminder respected each child's privacy and dignity when giving personal care. Good handwashing procedures were in place. And the childminder had appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). These approaches helped to support good infection prevention and control practices. To keep their knowledge up-to-date, the childminder should download or view the updated information on infection prevention and control from the Public Health Scotland website - Health protection in children and young people settings, including education: <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/health-protection-in-children-and-young-people-settings-including-education>

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
Dundee
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