

# Childminding Service - Emily Hutchison

## Child Minding

Burntisland

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
5 June 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Emily Hutchison

**Service provider number:**  
SP2018990166

**Service no:**  
CS2018370109

## About the service

Childminding Service - Emily Hutchison operates from her home in Aberdour. The service is close to local schools, a nursery, parks and amenities. The property is on one floor and children have access to a spacious kitchen, lounge and toilet. The childminder would only use the front garden for children, but uses the grounds at the local school for outdoor play as she only has children for a short time.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 6 children at any one time under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 may be of an age not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 may be less than 12 months.

Numbers are inclusive of the children of the childminder's family. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons not named on the registration certificate. Overnight care will not be provided.

As part of this inspection, we undertook a focus area. We have gathered specific information to help us understand more about how services support children's safety, wellbeing and engagement in their play and learning. This included reviewing the following aspects:

- staff deployment
- safety of the physical environment, indoors and outdoors
- the quality of personal plans and how well children's needs are being met
- children's engagement with the experiences provided in their setting.

This information will be anonymised and analysed to help inform our future work with services.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 5 June 2025 between 14:00 and 16:00. 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 two children using the service and received one response to our electronic questionnaire from parents
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and how children were supported with their routines, play and learning
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Children benefited from the childminder's calm interactions. They were kind, nurturing, respectful and supportive.
- Families benefited from the information the childminder shared about children.
- The childminder knew children well and supported their individual needs.
- Personal plans should continue to be developed and formally reviewed at least six monthly. Quality assurance should be further developed to support improvement.
- The childminder should continue to identify learning for their professional development.

## 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

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

All interactions with children were caring, nurturing and kind and had led to strong bonds being developed. The childminder understood the needs of children and supported them in what they were doing. As a result, children knew they mattered and felt confident and safe in the care of the childminder. They shared information about their day as they knew their views were respected. One parent shared the childminder was "Very caring, trust completely, always happy to help and let me know of any changes."

Communication with families meant that the childminder worked in partnership with parents. Information was shared about children on a daily basis. This meant parents felt included and enabled the childminder to respond to changes which met children's needs.

Relevant information was gathered about children which helped meet their individual health and wellbeing needs. We saw how information was used to support children to develop and have positive outcomes. For example, permission was in place to enable children to walk to school unsupervised. While children followed the plans in place to do this safely, personal plans could be further developed to include this information. We asked the childminder to include risk assessments that outline how children were supported to develop their independence. This would enable children and parents to formally agree the process. Plans should be reviewed at least once in every six months and would allow the effectiveness of plans to be evaluated. This would enable children's progress to be recorded and next steps agreed (see area for improvement 1).

### Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children benefited from a child-centred approach. Activities and experiences were available that supported their interests, development and wellbeing. Due to the short time children were cared for, play was mainly outdoors when they were collected from school. Children benefited from playing in the natural environment. They learned about risk as they played in the woods and used their imagination. One child said: "I'm making a potion." The childminder's balanced approach enabled children to develop their games as they wanted. She used questions well to ask about their activities and support their play.

The childminder understood the needs of children and empowered them to make individual choices. If they were indoors, a range of games and activities was available which supported children's differing ages, interests and development. As a result, children used their ideas and imagination to develop games with their friends.

Children mainly used community resources for outdoor play. The childminder could enhance children's play experiences. Professional documents that would support this include Our Creative Journey, My World Outdoors and Loose Parts Play. These documents can be found within the HUB section of our website and will support risky play, creative and challenging experiences.

## Areas for improvement

1. To support children's development and progress, the childminder should further develop the use of personal plans. They could:

- contain risk assessments to support children to develop independence
- be a tool for outlining strategies to support children to learn life skills
- contain formal reviews with parents and children, where appropriate, to discuss progress and identify next steps.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: "My personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15).

## How good is our setting?

**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children.

### Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder's home was a homely and comfortable environment for children. Areas used for childminding were spacious which enabled children to move around and engage in their chosen activities. This promoted children's independence as they could choose where they wanted to play.

The childminder demonstrated an understanding of appropriate practices to follow to prevent the spread of infection. For example, handwashing routines. She explained to children why hand hygiene was important so they understood why they did this. Daily checks helped ensure areas were safe for children.

The childminder advised she did not use the garden area and mainly cared for children in the school playground. This offered them opportunities to play with their friends and benefit from being outdoors. Established systems were in place which enabled children to have positive experiences. Agreed boundaries meant they could choose where to play, with the childminder knowing and seeing where they were. Children were developing a sense of responsibility and independence as they followed the plans in place.

Safe storage of children's personal information and the childminder's understanding of confidentiality promoted family's privacy and dignity.

## How good is our leadership?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where there were some strengths which just outweighed weaknesses.

### **Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well.**

The childminder's values were evident in the warm, sensitive interactions observed throughout the inspection. This enabled children to share their views and feel listened to. As a result, they influenced how they spent their time at the service.

Communication supported information sharing. Families felt involved as they could share their views which informed the care provided. This enabled a flexible approach which met their needs. Parents were kept up-to-date every day about their children and progress they were making.

The childminder had informally reflected on some aspects of the service. For example, reviewing the mission statement and some policies and procedures. We discussed evaluation systems with the childminder and advised they become familiar with the best practice document - A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare. This document is aimed at helping services evaluate their work. It will help identify what is going well and areas for development. In addition, using guidance such as Realising the Ambition would support this work. The bitesize information on the Care Inspectorate hub about quality assurance may also be useful. This will help improve outcomes for children (see area for improvement 1.)

### **Areas for improvement**

1. To support improvement and positive outcomes for children, the childminder should formalise evaluation and improvement methods. This should include effective use of professional guidance and the development of action plans to support the monitoring and assessment of identified improvements.

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

**How good is our staff team?****3 - Adequate**

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where there were some strengths which just outweighed weaknesses.

**Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values**

Children's rights were promoted by the childminder's kind, caring and respectful approach. Responsive care was evident as the childminder had a good understanding of children's personalities and knew what they liked to do. As a result, children's wellbeing was supported through positive interactions.

The childminder was skilled at building relationships with families. They recognised and valued working in partnership with parents. Their approachable manner enabled information to be shared on a daily basis.

The childminder was not fully up-to-date with current best practice documents. To develop their skills and knowledge, they should identify learning that would support their professional development. They should record learning and show how it has been used to develop the service. We signposted them to relevant documents that could enable this (see area for improvement 1).

**Areas for improvement**

1. To improve outcomes for children, the childminder should develop a training plan to support their learning and professional development. This should include, but not be limited to, child protection and first aid training. This plan should be based on self-evaluation and the needs of children and the service as a whole. Learning should be evaluated to show how it has been used in practice.

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

**Complaints**

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	4 - Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	4 - Good
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate



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