

Shona Wilson Childminding Child Minding

Largs

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 June 2025

Service provided by:
Shona Wilson

Service provider number:
SP2016988160

Service no:
CS2016348235

About the service

Shona Wilson Childminding is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 7 children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than 6 are under the age of 12 and no more than 3 children are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family.

At the time of our inspection, 12 children were registered with the service; three children aged 0-3 attended the service during the inspection.

The service is situated in a quiet residential area of Largs, North Ayrshire. The children have access to the playroom, kitchen, downstairs toilet and an enclosed rear garden. The childminder's home is near local amenities, including schools, nurseries, shops and parks.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 2 June 2025 between 11:15 and 13:45. 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke to three children using the service
- spoke to two parents using the service
- received five completed Microsoft Forms questionnaires
- spoke to the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children experienced nurturing care and support, which made them feel safe and loved.
- Children were at the heart of the service and cared for by a childminder who knew them very well and was responsive to their individual needs and interests.
- A warm and inviting setting had been developed where children could access and enjoy a range of quality indoor and outdoor experiences.
- The childminder made good use of the local area, which helped children become familiar with and included in their community.
- The childminder used reflective practice and family feedback to improve the service, demonstrating a strong commitment to quality and positive outcomes for children.
- The childminder's continued professional development and nurturing values ensured high-quality care.

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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our care, play and learning?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

The childminder was kind, caring, and nurturing, which helped children feel emotionally safe and secure. Children were confident, happy, and settled and had formed close attachments with the childminder and their peers.

Personal plans were in place for all children and included information needed to meet their health and wellbeing needs. The childminder developed these with input from their families. One parent commented, "The care plan provided is brilliant I can't believe everything they are achieving and it's amazing to hear it from the childminder as well. We talk about their care plan and make a plan together going forward". Another said, "The childminder provides us with regular updates on our child's care plan and their attainment of milestones. We have every opportunity to make specific input to, and comment on their care plan". This ensured consistency in care and supported children's progression.

Positive relationships had been formed between the childminder, children and their families. Families had the option to enter the service at drop-off and collection times. One parent commented, "The childminder's door has always been open to us, and any discussions are carried out in a friendly and professional manner, and information is shared daily". Another said, "The childminder has an open door policy, and I am welcomed into their house at drop off and pick up times. This is often when they share information about my children's day". This helped families become familiar with the childminding setting and discuss important information about their child's care and support.

The childminder was registered as a food business with the local authority. Children had the option of a packed lunch from home or nutritious foods provided by the childminder that met their specific allergies, preferences, and dietary needs. Mealtimes were calm and organised and were a positive experience for the children. Children sat at a low-level table, and the childminder supervised them while they ate. This supported meaningful interactions and fostered quality engagement and children's safety. Children chose what foods and coloured plates they liked and fed themselves. Further self-help skills could be considered, such as food preparation and the responsibility of clearing their dishes and food waste when finished. This approach would encourage them to be self-sufficient and develop a sense of responsibility.

At the time of the inspection, children did not need medication administered in the setting. The childminder had medication forms and effective systems, and we were confident that this would be appropriately managed to ensure the health and safety of children when needed.

Children were supported to independently undertake personal care tasks such as handwashing and accessing the toilet. This helped them develop life skills and their self-esteem. The childminder was aware of nappy changing guidance and had appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). They shared the nappy-changing procedures, and we observed them supporting children who used the toilet. This was done with sensitivity, safeguarded children's privacy and dignity, ensured their sense of security and confidence, and fostered positive relationships.

There were comfortable sofas for children who wanted to relax or rest. One parent commented, "The childminder has a comfy area with a couch and cushions for the children to relax when needed". Another said, "My child loves sitting in their living room with the special cosy blanket and have a wee chill". While we did not observe sleep routines during the inspection, the childminder explained their sleep policy and the products used. We concluded that these arrangements supported children's emotional security, safety, and wellbeing.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

The playroom layout allowed children to move freely indoors and outdoors, which supported their right to play. One parent commented, "The childminder has a fantastic garden which leads right off their playroom, so the children have free choice when they wish to go outside". Another said, "The childminder has everything covered; wet suits are always available. The garden is adapted to all weather. There is a covered area that they can go outside to when it's wet so they don't get soaked but can still play with their favourite toys". During the inspection, children spent most of their time outdoors, playing on the physical apparatus and in the playhouse. They played well together and used their imagination when they pretended to be superheroes. This supported children's physical and emotional health.

Indoor toys were suitable for children's interests, age-appropriate, and easily accessible. Children brought toys from inside to outside to extend their play and learning experiences. This included water toys, which they used to create patterns on the windows and fences, leading to lots of fun and laughter as they sprayed one another. It was clear that children felt comfortable, familiar, and settled in the setting.

The childminder was skilled at engaging with children's conversations and play situations to enhance their understanding and support their learning. They also knew when to step back and let children discover things on their own. For instance, when a child mentioned that their water spray wasn't functioning, the childminder explained that it was due to the angle at which they held it. This guidance helped the child develop their problem-solving skills as they played.

Observations tracked children's progression through responsive planning that met their interests and needs. Assessment forms were shared with families, which helped them be involved in their children's play and learning experiences. One parent commented, "The childminder has regular conversations regarding my children's development and progress. I know they also work in partnership with the EYC that my children attend to work on joint targets and any personal needs for my children". Another said, "My child has attended the childminders for over 6 years from baby, nursery and now after school. Through every stage they have kept us informed of our child's progress/plan". The partnership approach identified children's learning styles and provided meaningful support and next steps tailored to future learning experiences.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

Children attended a welcoming and comfortable setting that was furnished to a high standard, clean, well-maintained, comfortable and well-ventilated. One parent commented, "The childminder's house is an extremely safe environment I never have any concerns about this. The procedure of drop off and pick up is like a well oiled machine and it's really reassuring to be in a controlled environment". Another said, "The childminder's home is clean, safe and secure. The playroom is great as the set up also allows for outdoor play. The childminder is full of fun, caring and loving with the kids which in itself makes the environment a nice place to be. My child is very comfortable there". This created a home-like atmosphere that supported children's independence and inclusion.

Toys and materials in the playroom were appropriate for children's age and development stages and were positioned at the children's level. This made children feel valued, empowered them to choose their activities, and enhanced their learning experiences. Resources included books and story stones to support early literacy skills and dressing-up clothes and props that fostered imagination and social development. One parent commented, "The childminder has a mixture of experiences on offer including role play, books, mark making, play dough and loose parts". Another said, "Both children experience indoor and outdoor activities that are based on the world around them, cultural events and their personal interests". This developed children's creativity, exploration, and freedom in open-ended play and related learning experiences to real-life situations.

The childminder had good links within the local community, and children frequently visited local parks and toddler groups. One child shared, "The childminder has lots of cool toys and they take us to toddlers and the park. They are super kind and help me when I get hurt". One parent commented, "The childminder often takes the children out into the community to widen their experiences which the children enjoy". This enabled children to build relationships and develop knowledge of their local and wider community.

Boundary fencing and gates ensured the safety of children. Infection prevention and control procedures, including cleaning, toileting, and changing routines for nappies, minimised cross-contamination and reduced the potential risk of spreading infections.

Risk assessments were completed for the setting and outings, which kept children safe. The childminder could also involve children in the planning process. This would allow children to manage risks and make informed decisions about their safety.

Accidents were completed and shared with children's families, and appropriate first aid was administered when needed. This identified patterns, assessed risks, and prevented future incidents.

How good is our leadership?**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Before children were enrolled, families were provided important information about the childminder, their family, and the service offered, including its vision, values, aims, and policies. This information helped families choose a service that aligned with their needs and supported the aims and objectives of the service, which focused on building positive relationships based on respect and trust. For example, during the inspection visit, one child visited the childminders for a short time and had previous visits. This helped them become familiar with the setting and meet other children.

The childminder had developed a range of policies and procedures which supported the service and reflected current best practices. They were kept informed through regular updates from the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), local authority and the Care Inspectorate. The policies were reviewed regularly, aligned with current legislation, and supported the continued delivery of high-quality care.

Children's and families' views were genuinely valued by the childminder, who understood their input as key to building positive relationships and making improvements. The childminder actively gathered feedback through informal and formal communication, including daily chats, WhatsApp messages and questionnaires. Families agreed they and their children were involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service. One parent commented, "The childminder often asks myself and my children for our views on their setting and if there are any changes we think would benefit the service". The open approach allowed families to share suggestions and ideas in various ways and feel respected and involved in the service's continuous development.

Self-evaluation processes such as the Care Inspectorate's "A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare" helped the childminder highlight what worked well and what improvements were needed. This maintained the quality of service provision.

The childminder was motivated about their role and had developed an improvement plan with highlighted priorities. Progress was evident, including a new outdoor shelter that allowed children to play outside in all weather conditions. Additionally, the childminder invested in a suitably sized vehicle that enabled all children to explore more areas within the community. These improvements supported positive outcomes for children, particularly regarding their right to play.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

As a member of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), the childminder used the resources and templates to ensure safety standards were met and children's care and support were maintained. The childminder benefitted from a supportive network with opportunities to share experiences and best practices with other professionals. This meant they consistently offered a safe, nurturing environment, which led to positive outcomes for children.

The childminder showed a warm and professional approach to their role. They recognised the importance of fun in children's play. They were enthusiastic and dedicated to providing high-quality care, play and learning experiences with children at the heart of the service. As a result, children thrived in a nurturing environment shaped by a kind and consistent approach that ensured they felt safe, valued, and loved.

Parents spoke highly of the care and support provided, with one who shared, "The childminder has been reliable, flexible and communicates well. We have formed a good bond and trust over the years". Another said, "The childminder has taken time to build positive relationships with myself and my children. They are very welcoming and provide lots of information at pick up regarding what my children have done that day and any other relevant information". The approach meant children and families benefited from the childminder's very good knowledge of each family and the respectful, trusting relationships they had built.

Children's care, development and wellbeing benefited from the childminder's engagement and commitment to continued professional learning. They completed a wide range of training, including child protection, safer sleep, connecting with families, and outdoor learning. The childminder kept a record and ensured training remained current, which improved their professional development and benefited the children they cared for. They discussed training they had planned, such as the Peep Learning Together programme, and how this would be shared with families in the service and at the weekly toddler group over a period of time. This should help parents develop their existing skills and support positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had a very good understanding of their responsibilities in safeguarding and protecting children. They knew who to contact for advice or support when needed. They had completed safeguarding training to strengthen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, children were protected and kept safe from harm.

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

How good is our care, play and learning?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good
1.3 Play and learning	5 - Very Good

How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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