

Happy Angels Childminding Child Minding

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
5 June 2025

Service provided by:
Valeriya Ichshenko

Service provider number:
SP2023000937

Service no:
CS2024000053

About the service

Happy Angels Childminding provides a childminding service from their home in the Leith area of the city of Edinburgh.

The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 3 children at any one time up to 16 years of age. At the time of our inspection two children were registered with the service.

The service is close to local primary schools, shops, parks and local transport links. The children are cared for in the large living room, bedroom and have access to the bathroom and kitchen.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 5 June 2025. 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 children using the service
- reviewed electronic questionnaires returned from families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life.

Key messages

- Nurturing relationships had been built with children and families.
- Children were connected with the local and wider community through outings.
- Parents were fully involved in their child's care.
- The childminder was professional and reflective.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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 and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1 Nurturing care and support.

Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care in a calm and welcoming environment. The childminder had built strong, trusting relationships with the children in her care and knew them very well. They understood children's individual interests, routines and non-verbal cues, enabling them to respond sensitively and effectively to their needs. Their approach created a secure and emotionally supportive atmosphere where children felt valued and loved.

Interactions between the childminder and children were consistently respectful and positive. They spent quality time singing, reading and engaging in conversation, which promoted language development and strengthened attachment. During the visit, they were observed sitting with three children cuddled up beside them as they read a story, creating a comforting and nurturing experience.

The childminder had developed strong relationships with families. They shared that children who had moved on still visited, reflecting the positive bonds established with both children and their families. Parental feedback was very positive and highlighted the childminder's warm, supportive approach and attentiveness to their child's needs.

Children's wellbeing was supported by clear routines that were consistent and responsive. For example, the childminder described how they supported children waking from naps in a calm, gentle manner. They adapted routines to meet individual preferences, such as allowing a child to finish their nap in a buggy as this helped them to settle and rest, based on parental preferences. It was discussed that this should be reviewed with parents, as sleeping in buggies is not best practice.

Children brought their own packed lunches and the childminder provided healthy snacks, offering milk, fruit and rice cakes. Children were supported to wash their hands before and after eating, encouraging independence and promoting good hygiene practices.

Information about children's care routines, preferences, and needs was gathered at the start of placement through a detailed "All About Me" form. This included details on food, drink, sleep, toileting, medical needs, allergies and permissions. The childminder reviewed this information with parents regularly and was aware of the requirement to update this at least every six months. This ensured children experienced care that was relevant to their needs.

Daily reports were shared with families through an online platform and included detailed information about children's overall wellbeing, routines, meals, sleep and learning. For example, when a parent was concerned about speech development, the childminder noted and shared progress, such as when new words were pronounced. A parent told us "We keep in touch constantly about things our baby is learning, and she notices tiny things about our child's development, like when they learn new words or songs." Photos were also sent to parents throughout the day via WhatsApp, which kept families connected and informed throughout the day.

The childminder provided nurturing, individualised care that supported children's wellbeing, learning, and development. They should continue to build on this good practice.

Quality indicator 1.3 : Play and learning

A range of stimulating experiences supported children's learning and development. Activities included trips to parks, playgroup visits, outings to Dynamic Earth and soft play. Children also engaged in baking, using safe knives to chop fruit, helping to develop fine motor skills, learn about healthy eating and build confidence through real-life, hands-on experiences.

Individual interests were recognised and used to support development. For example, one child enjoyed playing peekaboo and transferring objects into and out of containers. The childminder extended this interest by making a toy using a sieve and paper to encourage fine motor development. Another child was supported in their home language, as the childminder also spoke the same language and used it to communicate when appropriate. Parents confirmed this telling us "Val takes the children in her care to a wide variety of play groups, play grounds and children's events. In her own home, she provides many activities, including creative, educational, explorative, and play based."

Detailed observations evidenced that the childminder knew where the children were in their learning and development and what they did to support them. Parents confirmed this telling us, "Val runs everything by us, and lets us know what play or educational activities she is doing with the kids" and "She pays close attention to our child and teaches them new things every day."

After the inspection, we sent the childminder information about Schemas, schemas refer to repeated patterns of behaviour that children exhibit during play, helping them explore and understand the world. This would enable the childminder to further understand and support children's learning and development.

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Children experienced care in a warm, welcoming and safe home environment that supported their play, learning and independence. The childminder made effective use of the large living room, which was well organised and equipped with a wide range of toys and resources for children to choose from. These included books, dolls, a tent for imaginative play, art materials and sensory items such as balls for younger children. Activities such as playdough, painting, drawing and baking were regularly offered and tailored to suit the developmental needs and interests of the children attending.

Resources were rotated to maintain interest and ensure that activities were age-appropriate. This supported children's engagement and encouraged exploration and creativity. Activities were planned in advance to meet the individual needs of children. For example, an art activity involving drawing emotions supported children's understanding of feelings while also promoting fine motor development.

Outdoor play was a regular feature of the daily routine. Children had frequent opportunities to engage in outdoor learning, which supported their physical development, wellbeing and connection to nature.

Photos were shared with families throughout the day, allowing them to see their child actively involved in stimulating and varied experiences.

The childminder had taken a proactive approach to safety within the home. While written risk assessments were not yet in place, the environment had been adapted to ensure it was safe and suitable for young children. Safety measures included corner covers, door stoppers to prevent fingers being caught, window locks and safety catches when windows were open. The childminder was able to clearly explain the steps taken to reduce risk and promote safety.

Hygiene practices were embedded within the daily routine. The bathroom was clean and child-friendly, with individual hand towels labelled with names and pictures to support independence and good hygiene. Children used steps to reach the sink and tap attachments were used to help them wash their hands effectively with support. These practices encouraged independence and good hygiene habits from an early age.

Overall, the childminder provided a clean, well-maintained environment that supported children's safety, learning and wellbeing. They should now introduce written risk assessments to complement the existing safety measures.

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

The childminder demonstrated a clear commitment to providing a high-quality service through ongoing reflection and a desire to continuously improve. Aims and objectives were written at the time the service registered, setting out a clear vision for supporting children's care, wellbeing and development. The objectives of the service incorporated the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators, evidencing that the childminder was aware of best practice guidance.

Policies were available online, ensuring transparency and easy access for families. The childminder regularly engaged with parents informally to seek feedback and took their views into account when making decisions about the care and learning provided. For example, where parents had specific requests regarding their child's speech and sleep routines, these were taken seriously and acted upon. This responsive approach promoted a strong sense of trust and partnership with families.

The childminder remained open to feedback and used informal conversations as a valuable source of improvement information. They demonstrated a reflective attitude, adjusting their practice when appropriate, such as increasing language-rich interactions to support children's speech development. Parents confirmed this, telling us "We give feedback when needed, and she responds to our child's needs every time." We suggested that going forward they offered formal opportunities for parents to give feedback about the service.

Successes and achievements were shared with families through daily reports and discussions at drop off and pick up. These provided information on children's day, activities, progress and developmental milestones.

Parents told us how they felt included and valued "Whenever we stay for longer chatting about our child she doesn't seem rushed. It's almost as if she likes explaining us things about their development. She gave us advice on potty training to give an example, and has helped us with their naps" and "Every drop off and pickup Val takes the time to chat about my child's day, or enquires about the previous night." This ongoing communication ensured parents remained well-informed and celebrated their child's learning and achievements.

The childminder demonstrated high aspirations for the children in her care. They had a strong understanding of each child's developmental stage and was confident in how to scaffold their learning through play and everyday experiences. Their daily focus was on ensuring children were safe, nurtured and making progress.

While there was not a formal written improvement plan in place, improvement was evident through the childminder's regular reflection on their practice and the personalised approach they took to supporting children's development. They made small, meaningful changes to enhance their service, based on children's needs and feedback from families.

The childminder should further strengthen their practice by introducing a simple, ongoing record of improvement actions and outcomes. This would support them to clearly track and celebrate the positive impact of changes made over time.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality Indicator 4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children experienced warm, consistent and responsive care from the childminder who demonstrated a calm, kind and compassionate approach. The childminder built strong, nurturing relationships with children and was highly attuned to their verbal and non-verbal cues. They responded with sensitivity, offering cuddles, reading and singing which contributed to children feeling secure and valued.

The childminder had a strong understanding of child development and used this knowledge effectively to support children's learning and inform discussions with families. They demonstrated an enabling attitude and held high aspirations for children, recognising where each child was in their learning journey and providing appropriate support to help them progress.

The childminder had attended relevant training to maintain and enhance their skills and knowledge. This included completing a 6-hour, in-person Paediatric Emergency First Aid course and a Food Hygiene and Safety course. They also kept up-to-date with current guidance and good practice through regular engagement with online sources.

The service's aims and objectives were clearly linked to the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators, reflecting a commitment to supporting children's holistic development. Policies were aligned with the Health and Social Care Standards, promoting consistency in delivering safe, respectful and person-centred care.

The childminder demonstrated reflective practice and professional values in all aspects of their role. They were committed to ongoing learning and showed a strong sense of responsibility in ensuring children experienced high-quality care and positive outcomes.

The childminder should continue to engage in professional development to maintain and build on these strengths.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the service was registered. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at 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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	4 - Good

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