

Kerry's Childminding Service

Child Minding

Larbert

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

5 June 2025

Service provided by:

Kerry Martin trading as Kerry's
Childminding Servi Kerry Martin
trading as Kerry's Childminding Servi

Service provider number:

SP2010977762

Service no:

CS2010247178

About the service

Kerry's Childminding Service operates from their family home in Larbert, Falkirk. They are registered to provide care to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 12, of whom, no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom, no more than one is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

Children have access to a designated playroom, toilet facilities and a large enclosed garden. The service is close to a school and nursery, green spaces, local amenities and can be reached by public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 5 June between 09:45 and 12:45. Feedback was given following the inspection later the same day. 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 and received feedback from six families via an electronic link
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with other professionals.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from kind and nurturing approaches that supported their wellbeing and sense of security.
- Play experiences were tailored to meet children's stages of development and preferences.
- Children and families benefitted from the childminders commitment to their role in delivering a high quality service tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Positive partnership working with families and professionals supported children to reach their potential.
- Children experienced a breadth of play and learning opportunities in the wider community that promoted their wellbeing and connection with nature.
- The childminder demonstrated a commitment to professional learning and development that supported positive outcomes for children.

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

Children experienced warm, kind and caring interactions from the childminder who knew their individual needs and wishes. Children said the childminder is "kind" and "looks after us well." Nurturing approaches fostered positive attachments that reassured children and supported their emotional wellbeing.

The childminder worked closely with families to ensure they supported children's routines and preferences. They offered short term community placements, flexible childcare and worked in partnership with the local authority. Their approach to delivering a high quality service that met the needs of children and families promoted positive partnership working. One family commented "Kerry is very approachable and supportive." As a result, families strongly agreed that they had a good relationship with the childminder.

Children's health and wellbeing was promoted through the mealtime routine. They were asked if they were ready to eat, meaning play was not disrupted. The childminder had a very good awareness of best practice guidance to support the routine that ensured children's safety and wellbeing. They followed choking guidance and food choices were healthy and presented to engage children to try different foods. Children sat at the table supported by the childminder and safety chairs were used for younger children meaning they were involved in the routine.

The childminder sat with children and used the opportunity to engage in rich conversation, talking about healthy food choices. Independence was promoted for all children as they were able to feed themselves, peeling fruits and drinking independently. Families agreed that there was always a range of healthy food choices. As a result, mealtimes were relaxed, unhurried and sociable.

The childminder had a very good understanding of safer sleep guidance linked to the service policy. Appropriate resources were available if children needed to sleep to support their routine. Personal plans were in place and detailed important information regarding children's healthcare needs, routines, likes and wishes. Plans had been carefully considered and recorded what mattered to the child. Regular reviews took place with families in line with guidance. Families told us they were fully involved in reviewing information. As a result, children were supported to thrive and flourish.

The childminder worked closely with other professionals in the community as part of the community childminding programme. They were clear about their role in ensuring children reached their full potential. We spoke with other agencies who described the childminder as "exceptional" and "goes above and beyond to support children and families."

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Children were able to make independent choices from a wide selection of resources to support their interests and stages of play. Resources were changed between sessions as children accessed the service at different times of the day. The childminder was attuned to what each child liked.

They ensured children were able to choose from a wide variety of play experiences that included loose parts, books, blocks and craft materials. New resources were purchased to extend learning. For example, one child enjoyed exploring how magnetic shapes connected together and spend time engaged in this activity. Families told us children were involved in a range of opportunities and fun experiences to meet their individual needs that supported development. As a result, children thrived and flourished through the breadth of experiences offered.

The childminder ensured children had daily opportunities to learn outdoors and in their wider community. They visited local attractions, the country park, green spaces, libraries and shops. Families commented "Kerry often takes them to parks or into the garden with a climbing frame." As a result, children developed appreciation for nature and their sense of belonging within their community.

Planning for children's experiences were a balance of spontaneous and intentional promotion. The childminder observed children and listened to their ideas and wishes. They used this to plan and extend learning. This meant they took part in activities that they enjoyed and were meaningful to them.

Families were kept informed of the activities their children had taken part in during their time in the service. The childminder recorded observations and photos of children's learning and development on the daily connect app and spent time at drop off and pick ups talking with families. As a result, families felt included in their child's experience.

Children were supported to reach their full potential as the childminder recorded their achievements and tracked progress through the wellbeing rainbow. This was shared with families who were able to contribute to the record of achievements and work closely with the childminder on next steps. Older children were able to re-visit learning that was documented in the floor books. As a result, they were able to talk about and share learning with family and friends.

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 experienced a setting that was well furnished and maintained to a high standard. Families strongly agreed that their child was cared for in a safe and secure environment, giving a strong message that children mattered. As a result, children played in stimulating spaces.

The play space benefitted from natural light and ventilation. Children had access to a designated playroom near the entrance to the house, toilet facilities, kitchen area and enclosed garden to the rear of the house. The playroom had a safety gate that ensured young children were safe and secure in the space.

The childminder had structured the playroom, taking account of children's stages of development. For example, younger children were able to move around low level units and play with resources on the floor, making it easy for them to access. Older children also had space at a tabletop to create their ideas using small resources. Their creations were displayed on the shelves and achievements celebrated. The childminder was very aware of the risk small resources had to younger children and changed loose parts to minimise any potential risks, promoting safety.

Detailed policies and procedures were in place that supported the childminder to deliver a high-quality service that met the needs of children and families. Policies were reflective of current guidance and best practice. The childminder reviewed these regularly and shared them with families. This meant they were fully aware of the service being offered.

Children's safety and wellbeing was prioritised. The childminder had detailed risk assessments in place for areas in the setting, the experiences offered to children, and learning in the wider community. Daily checks of spaces indoors and outdoors were carried out which meant children were safe as they played and explored.

The childminder had a very good understanding of robust infection, prevention and control measures. Effective hand hygiene routines were embedded at key times and personal protective equipment (PPE) was used to carry out personal care routines to promote children's dignity. Resources were cleaned regularly as the childminder was aware that young children learn through their senses. This minimised potential risks and promoted children's health and wellbeing. One family commented "Environment is always clean, tidy and well maintained with lots of age appropriate toys visible." As a result, children's safety and wellbeing was prioritised.

Children and families information was securely stored. The childminder was registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and understood their role in keeping information secure.

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 improvements are led well

Children and families experienced a warm, welcoming and inclusive ethos in the setting. The childminder promoted their vision for children to have fun in a high quality service. They demonstrated a commitment to their role, providing a safe, friendly, stimulating and homely environment where children felt safe and nurtured.

Children and families' views were gathered to support self-evaluation and continuous improvement. The childminder used a variety of ways to support consultation. This included using questionnaires, discussions and recording ideas in the floor book. Families told us "Kerry asks for feedback on her care and is open to suggestions." This meant children and families were meaningfully involved in developing the service.

The childminder made very good use of the Care Inspectorate guidance 'A quality framework for day-care of children, childminding and school aged childcare', to evaluate the service. They worked in partnership with the local authority to provide funded places for children. As part of this they engaged in regular evaluation, identifying strengths and areas they would like to further develop. To minimise duplication of evidence, we suggested they use one format to record the cycle of improvement. As a result, children and families benefitted from a service that was reflective to ensure children thrived and flourished through high quality experiences.

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 & values

Children experienced warm, kind, and compassionate care from the childminder who demonstrated a professional love for children. They were attuned to children's likes and wishes and knew what was important to each child. We could see attachments had been formed as children received cuddles, smiles and reassurance as they played.

Children and families benefitted from a very good service as the childminder had an enabling attitude, with a clear passion and commitment to the role. It was evident they enjoyed working with children. Families told us "I feel Kerry really enjoys her job and you can tell" As a result, children had a high quality experience in a fun, loving and nurturing service.

Families' had trust in the care and support children received. Comments included "Our children love spending time with Kerry, she supports their developmental progress and always has fun engaging activities planned for them" and "Kerry is an excellent childminder who is wonderful with our children." This meant families had trust and confidence in the childminder to deliver a high quality service to meet their child's needs.

The childminder was registered with the 'Scottish Child-minding Association' (SCMA). They worked closely to offer short term places as part of the community childminding project. The childminder made positive connections with families and tailored the service to meet their individual needs. As a result, children made progress at a pace that was right for them.

The childminder was committed to professional development and learning to further support their role. Training included using floor books, first aid, child protection, food hygiene and understanding children's emotions. They were able to reflect on learning, put this into practice and talk about the impact this had on children's experiences. This meant children received care from a childminder who was dedicated to their role.

The childminder had a very good knowledge and understanding of best practice guidance and how these supported outcomes for children. For example, they used the Wellbeing indicators to support and track children's learning, experiences and progress. This sound knowledge supported them to sign post families to other services when required.

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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