

Brockie, Gillian Child Minding

Glenrothes

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 June 2025

Service provided by:
Gillian Brockie

Service provider number:
SP2003904477

Service no:
CS2003007511

About the service

Brockie, Gillian provides a childminding service from their home in a residential area in Glenrothes, close to local amenities such as schools, nurseries, shops and parks.

The service is registered to provide care for a maximum of 8 children at any one time up to 16 years of age of whom no more than 6 are under 12 years; of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight care will not be provided. Minded children cannot be cared for by persons other than those named on the certificate.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 25 June 2025 between 11:00 and 13:40 and between 14:00 and 14:50. Feedback was given on 27 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 information gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spent time with one minded child and two children from the childminder's own family
- observed practice and children's experiences and how they were supported with their care, play and routines
- reviewed feedback from three families using MS forms
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefitted from kind, nurturing and responsive interactions. These made the children feel safe, loved and valued.
- The childminder knew children well and could discuss the children's routines, preferences and needs. The care plans needed to be further developed to ensure they remained relevant and supported the childminder in meeting the children's needs in a sensitive and timely manner.
- Children were encouraged to lead their learning and enjoyed fun and exciting outdoor activities, connecting with nature and learning how to keep safe while exploring risky play opportunities.
- Children benefitted from language, literacy and numeracy opportunities which were naturally woven into the activities and well supported by a rich environment.
- The service was delivered from a wooden cabin next to the main house, which was an inviting, well-furnished and cosy space. We asked the childminder to review the layout and organisation of the environment to ensure children's play is not disrupted and that personal care routines are carried out in a way that ensures privacy at all times.
- The childminder had identified the priorities they wanted to work on from their improvement plan and as a result, they had extended the covered outdoor space the children could play in.
- Children would benefit from the childminder developing their approach to continuous professional development further to support improvements in practice.

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?	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 performance impacted positively on children's outcomes and this outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children were settled and happy in the childminder's care. The childminder used kindness, praise and encouragement effectively to make the children feel safe, valued and loved. Children were confident in approaching the childminder to seek support with their play activities or when they needed comfort, which showed the strong bond they had developed.

Parents all strongly agreed they had a positive relationship with the childminder: "My [child] has been attending [the childminder's service] from 13 months old and throughout that time our relationship has bloomed. She is very honest, and we have an amazing bond. I fully trust her to treat my children as she would treat her own".

Children received good support with their personal care. The childminder had in place a toileting routine which was embedded in the daily activities and aimed at preserving dignity. The children were supported to be independent for toilet visits, but discreetly offered help if necessary.

We discussed with the childminder how the location of the toilet within the house, out with the playroom cabin, could potentially compromise the children's privacy. We asked the childminder to think of ways to minimise the potential impact of this and ensure personal care routines are carried out safely and privately at all times. The childminder was responsive to this and shared with us that they will review the changing and toileting arrangements to provide additional privacy.

Lunch was a sociable and relaxed experience. Children ate at their own pace, at an appropriately sized table, while chatting to the childminder. This maintained relationships and supported children's communication skills. Water was available throughout the day. This meant children kept hydrated, which supported their overall wellbeing.

The childminder valued the importance of sleep and rest for children's overall development. We recommended they provide a flat surface for children's sleep when they are not out and about. To this effect, we signposted the childminder to the 'Safer sleep' guidance document, published by the Scottish Government, which highlights best practice.

Daily communication with parents and updates through an electronic platform ensured parents felt part of their children's day and knew what activities the children enjoyed on a daily basis. The childminder showed us some examples of how the children's achievements were celebrated both at the service and in the home setting. This promoted consistency and continuity of care and helped the children to develop a positive sense of self.

The childminder knew children well and could discuss the children's routines, preferences and needs. Some basic information was included in the care plans. We asked the childminder to develop the care plans further to ensure they effectively identify children's needs. Regularly and meaningfully reviewing the information recorded in the personal plans would ensure children receive the right support at the right time (see area for improvement 1).

A policy and procedure were in place to support children's health should they require medication. This kept the children safe. We discussed with the childminder reviewing their medication policy and procedure to contribute to supporting children's health and wellbeing further. To this effect, we signposted the childminder to the 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' published by the Care Inspectorate in December 2024 to support with the development of their policy.

While there had been no accidents and incidents recently, forms were in place and the childminder understood the importance of recording relevant information and share it with the parents.

The childminder was aware of their role and responsibilities to keep children safe and knew how to record and share any concerns appropriately. They had worked with other agencies to support children's wellbeing in the recent past and discussed with us the strategies they put in place.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

There were good opportunities for children to lead their learning in the service. Children shared with us what they enjoyed playing with and were able to play both independently and in a group, taking it in turns to use the wide range of resources and engaging well in imaginative play.

Resources were arranged so that children could independently access most of them. This allowed them to follow their interests and promoted their choice and independence. The playroom cabin offered a covered outdoors area which the children enjoyed playing in as it felt cosy and fun.

Children benefitted from both spontaneous and planned learning opportunities. Planned activities were based on the children's interests and preferences such as baking, planting fruit, vegetables and flowers, feeding the ducks, and walking through nature trails. The childminder valued the outdoors as a rich opportunity for the children to explore nature and their own limits in a safe way. For example, they had planned a road safety activity for the day after the inspection with the children riding their bikes and scooters at the local cycle track.

The childminder was aware of the need to provide challenge and excitement, encouraging children to take calculated risks that were appropriate for their age and stage of development. This included climbing trees and try different play park equipment. This enhanced the children's experience and as a result, children were thriving in the childminder's care.

Since the last inspection, the childminder had introduced a floorbook which documented the fun and varied activities the children took part in. We discussed ways to enrich this further by adding children's drawings and recording children's voices. This would give children a sense of ownership and would allow them to revisit their learning, making them feel valued and listened to.

Children benefitted from language, literacy and numeracy opportunities which were naturally woven into the activities and well supported by a rich environment. These included helping to write shopping lists, sorting and counting items in a basket or on the nature trail, board games, exploring books and letters, mark making and engaging in imaginative play at the pretend tool bench and kitchen.

The children's sense of belonging was enhanced by being out in the community on a daily basis. Children enjoyed regular visits to the local parks, shops, woodland and waterfall area and nearby visitors' attractions. These experiences had a positive impact on children's wellbeing and development.

The childminder had started to record some goals and next steps for the children to support their progression. This included things such as recognising their own name, exploring numbers or increasing independence through skills such as dressing or accessing the toilet independently. We discussed with the childminder the importance of capturing significant learning that takes place by recording observations of the children at play. The childminder should continue to develop this area until it is consistently identifying children's development and recognising all children's achievements, while regularly planning for their progression (see area for Improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should further develop children's personal plans to ensure that their development needs are well planned, reviewed and met.

To achieve this, personal plans should include but not be limited to:

- Details of any specific need along with identified strategies for support.
- Details of 'how' the child's needs will be met (such as next steps).
- Reviews that indicate if the child's needs have been met.

In addition, all personal plan information should be reviewed with families at least once every six months or sooner if there is a significant change to the child's health, welfare or safety.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care 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).

2. To contribute to children's learning needs being met, the childminder should ensure progress is recorded, evaluated and next steps are identified. This should include, but is not limited to:

- a) recording observations of children's learning to capture progress and achievements
- b) plan appropriate next steps to support progression in children's learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and 'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31).

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where performance impacted positively on children's outcomes and this outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 2.2: Children experience high quality facilities

The childminder delivered their service from a wooden cabin located next to the main house.

The cabin offered a cosy space for children to experience an inviting, fun and stimulating environment, which was well furnished, comfortable, and homely.

We discussed with the childminder the need to ensure there is enough space for the children to move around. The childminder explained how they rearrange the table and furniture depending on how many children will be in attendance on any given day. They had also begun to work on extending the space available by opening up the cabin doors and creating a covered area for the children to engage in play in all weathers.

Toilet and hand washing facilities were located in the bathroom on the ground floor of the family home, accessible through the back door via the kitchen. During and after the inspection, we had discussions with the childminder regarding the potential lack of privacy for children during toileting and personal care routines and the possible interruption of play when one child might need the toilet. We also discussed the need to ensure the cabin is appropriately heated in winter, protected from the elements such as rain and ventilated throughout the year. The childminder agreed to look at ways to mitigate any potential impact on the children in order to support improved experiences and outcomes (see area for improvement 1).

For example, they were exploring the possibility to create a nappy changing area in the covered space next to the wooden cabin and an outdoor handwashing facility. To support the childminder further, we signposted them to 'Space to grow and thrive', which offers guidance on designing indoors and outdoors high-quality spaces that support children's holistic development. The document was published by the Care Inspectorate and is available from 'The Hub'.

The childminder had put risk assessments in place. We asked that these are reviewed more regularly, include children's views and highlight the benefits of the activities, not only the risks. The childminder should continue working on their risk assessments to ensure they are reflective of the service that is being provided from the wooden cabin.

The childminder understood the importance of supporting children to understand how they could keep themselves and others safe in the community. They had organised several activities in which the children led the risk assessment. This contributed to the children respecting safe limits and being responsible, while enjoying risky play.

Indoors, there was a good number of resources, which were developmentally appropriate, interesting and well-maintained. They were positioned at the child's level and the childminder routinely rotated them to offer a variety of learning opportunities to all age groups. This sent a strong message to children that they mattered and belonged to the setting.

We asked the childminder to consider adding more open-ended resources and natural materials to the play range available. This would further enhance the play opportunities. To promote curiosity and critical thinking, we signposted the childminder to the 'Loose parts play' toolkit available from the 'Inspiring Scotland' website.

The outdoor space was tidy and well maintained with pots and plants and a covered area next to the wooden cabin. We discussed with the childminder how this space could be developed to offer further play opportunities. The childminder had already identified how to enhance these in their improvement plan. For example, one of the improvement priorities detailed how they planned to add an outside sensory board with natural materials to support numeracy, literacy and problem-solving skills.

There were good measures in place to prevent the spread of infection. The cabin was clutter-free and clean, and a good handwashing routine was embedded. This contributed to the children being healthy and safe. We asked the childminder to consider ways in which handwashing could be effectively ensured without the need to go back into the house.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children's experiences are well supported by the organisation and layout of the environment and facilities, the childminder should explore feasible options to accommodate nappy changing, toileting and handwashing needs in ways that ensure children's safety, privacy and dignity while minimising disruption to children's play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I can use an appropriate mix of private and communal areas, including accessible outdoor space, because the premises have been designed or adapted for high quality care and support' (HSCS 5.1);

and 'The premises have been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS 5.18).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where performance impacted positively on children's outcomes and this outweighed areas for improvement.

Quality indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Children experienced a setting that was reflective of the aims of the service. The childminder demonstrated their passion to providing positive outcomes for children and their families and shared their vision for the service with the families when they enrolled their child. The service vision had informed the childminder's practice around emotional wellbeing, which was to 'ensure every child feels that they are enough'.

Children and families feedback was gathered through daily conversations and discussions and technology. This helped to build positive relationships and exchange relevant information. As a result, children's needs were effectively supported and met. We discussed ways of using technology to further enhance family's involvement in developing the service.

Children benefitted from the childminder's commitment to improve their service. The childminder had been working on both their improvement plan and their self-evaluation. They were able to identify what was going well in the service and what needed further work. We discussed with the childminder the importance of setting realistic targets, prioritising actions and giving themselves time to embed any change they decided to implement.

The childminder was developing their quality assurance systems. Further implementing these would have a direct impact on the quality of the service. For example, setting regular reminders of when care plans needed to be reviewed, risk assessments needed to be updated, and observations should be recorded.

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We found that improvements need to be made by building on identified strengths to promote positive outcomes for children. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as adequate.

Quality indicator 4.1: Staff skills, knowledge and values

Children and families experienced warmth and kindness from a childminder who was responsive to their needs and wishes. Families described the childminder as loving, nurturing and flexible. They added: "[childminder's name] helped my children to come out of their shell and be a lot more confident". Another parent echoed: "[my children] both have an amazing bond with [childminder's name], they feel safe at her house, and they are provided with amazing outdoor activities which support their learning and development needs".

There was a welcoming atmosphere in the setting, which promoted a warm and inclusive ethos that clearly valued the importance of children learning through play. As a result, children were achieving while having fun and enriching play opportunities. We asked the childminder to continue implementing skilful questioning and sensitive listening to promote curiosity, independence and confidence.

The childminder had made use of some professional development opportunities such as attending a course on neurodivergence in the recent past and accessing the 'Bitesize videos' on improvement work available from the Care inspectorate website.

Children would benefit from the childminder developing their approach to continuous professional development further to support improvements in practice. We also asked the childminder to maintain clear records of the impact of their learning on children's experiences and outcomes (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The childminder should be proactive in sourcing appropriate learning and development. This should include, but not be limited to, refreshing training in child protection and first aid. This will allow them to develop as a professional and make changes to meet the needs of the children in their care. A reflective log of learning and development should be developed and maintained to support continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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?	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?	3 - Adequate
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	3 - Adequate

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Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

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