

# Watson, Isabel Child Minding

Bathgate

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
24 June 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Isabel Watson

**Service provider number:**  
SP2007966206

**Service no:**  
CS2007158416

## About the service

Isabel Watson provides a childminding service from the family home in the small town of Whitburn, West Lothian. The service is close to local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery and school and local shops and centres. The service is delivered from the ground floor of the family home and children have access to the dining kitchen, downstairs bathroom and playroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden. The service was registered to provide care to a maximum of six children under 16 years of age of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and no more than one child is under 12 months old. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's own family.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 23 June 2025 between 9:50 and 12:20 and from 13:15 to 14:00. Feedback was given on 24 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 two children
- observed practice and children's experiences and how they were supported with their care, play and routines
- reviewed feedback from four families using MS forms
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- The children were happy, settled and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminder was attuned to their individual needs and this contributed to make the children feel safe, secure and loved.
- Children learnt and developed through play in the childminder's care and were supported to lead their learning and have fun. They benefitted from spaces that were clean, inviting and stimulating.
- Children enjoyed a wide range of opportunities to be active and connect with their community and local environment such as walks in the woods and trips to nearby farms and other attractions.
- Personal plans were in place to ensure that children's wellbeing was supported. We asked the childminder to ensure these were regularly and meaningfully reviewed with children and their families.
- Children had built positive relationships with the childminder who was regarded as kind, caring and trustworthy by all the families using the service.
- The childminder used some feedback from last inspection to develop and improve practice. They should now identify their learning and development needs and maintain records of the impact of their own learning on children's experiences and outcomes.

## 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 several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

### Quality indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Children experienced genuinely kind and warm interactions. As a result, children were happy, settled and relaxed in the childminder's care. The childminder was attuned to their individual needs and cues and responded to them effectively. For example, when children sought comfort and reassurance, the childminder understood the importance of offering cuddles and a calm tone of voice. This contributed to make the children feel safe, secure and loved.

The childminder supported children with their personal care routine in a respectful manner, promoting their independence and preserving their dignity and privacy.

Children enjoyed the relaxed, unhurried and positive atmosphere during mealtimes. They could choose what to eat and were able to eat at a pace that was right for them. We discussed with the childminder ways in which the children's independence and life skills could be further promoted by supporting children to serve themselves and cut their own food. Children would benefit from more opportunities to help select, prepare and tidy away snack, to further build confidence and a shared sense of responsibility. A member of the childminder's family joined in at lunch time, which enhanced the chances for the children to engage in spontaneous conversations about their day. The children were encouraged to sit upright in appropriate booster seats and were practising good manners by saying 'please and thank you'. Parents confirmed this: "The manners and good behaviour [my child] has learned from [childminder's name] is second to none". The childminder put in place measures to prevent choking hazards and consistently reminded the children not to walk away with food in their mouth. Fresh water was available throughout the day and children accessed it routinely. This ensured they remained hydrated.

The childminder understood the importance of supporting children with their sleep and rest routine in agreement with families. A parent shared with us: "There's sufficient space to cuddle up with a blanket and relax". This promoted continuity and consistency of care and enhanced children's emotional and physical wellbeing.

Personal plans were in place to ensure that children's wellbeing was supported. The childminder had gathered information about children's preferences and interests from parents and as a result, knew the children well. They used this information to plan daily activities and to ensure that children were happy and having fun.

We found that the care plans were not regularly reviewed and updated. We asked the childminder to ensure these are meaningfully reviewed with children and their families (see area for improvement 1).

The childminder had recently worked on their medication system. This ensured consent was sought from parents and a record of administration containing significant information was in place. We signposted the childminder to the Care Inspectorate 'Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services' guidance, published in December 2024, which contains further examples of good practice principles.

Accidents and incidents were appropriately recorded, and relevant information was shared with parents. As a result, children were safe.

The childminder had a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities for keeping children safe and protected. There was a written procedure for protecting children which had been recently updated and was available for parents. The childminder should ensure they refresh their knowledge on child protection further (see area for improvement under quality indicator 4.1).

### **Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning**

Children learnt and developed through play in the childminder's care and were supported to lead their learning. There was a balance of planned and unstructured play and learning opportunities and we discussed with the childminder how recording children's ideas about what they want to learn will help them to feel that their ideas are valued and acted upon.

The childminder understood the importance of extending children's interests such as imaginative play with dolls, playing sport games outside, dressing up and exploring art and craft. This encouraged children to make choices in their play and helped them to develop a sense of independence.

The childminder rotated the toys and activities that were made available on a regular basis. We discussed ways in which children could be more involved in these decisions. This would further ensure that children's interests and needs are at the centre of their play and learning.

The childminder had begun to use a floorbook to document the activities and learning opportunities the children engaged in. We asked the childminder to consider adding children's voices and drawings to the floorbook. This would enable them to tell a story about how learning and play unfold in their service and would help the children to feel a sense of ownership over the floorbook.

We also discussed the need to further develop the childminder's observations of children at play in order to track children's learning progress and identify clear next steps to support them in their development (see area for improvement 2).

Children were supported by the childminder to share and take turns, which helped them to develop social skills and build friendships. The development of language and numeracy skills was supported by the childminder through games, talking and role modelling. As a result, children were making good progress in these areas while having fun.

Children benefitted from regular visits to a nearby woodland where they had opportunities to explore, investigate and learn about nature, such as spotting tadpoles and understand the life cycle of frogs.

The childminder made good use of the local community for further play and learning opportunities. For example, the children regularly attended toddler groups, visited local parks and used the service bus to visit nearby towns and visitor attractions. This meant that children were developing a positive sense of belonging to their community and environment. Photos and memories from these outings were displayed in the floorbook and shared electronically with parents.

## 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:

- Development targets/observations which are of significance to that child as an individual.
- 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 several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

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

The setting was well furnished, comfortable, and homely, offering space, light and ventilation. The use of French doors gave children direct access to the large, safely enclosed garden. The kitchen table was used for craft and drawing activities while free play took place in the lounge area. The secure garden to the rear of the house provided opportunities for energetic play, group games and sports as well as riding scooters safely with a helmet. A play kitchen, a toy tool bench and other play equipment were located in the shed for further free play opportunities. This provided children with spaces that were inviting and stimulating. We asked the childminder to consider moving the wooden play kitchen outdoors on a dry sunny day to enrich the learning experience.

Children experienced regular fresh air and exercise which supported them to be healthy. They made use of the park near the childminder's home for active and physical play. The childminder's garden was ample, safe and well maintained. Children enjoyed spending time planting seeds and observing the plants growing in the childminder's raised beds. Parents told us: "[childminder's name] has a fantastic, clean and tidy garden that the kids love to play in. In the summer, the older kids get to play in the paddling pool".

Indoors, toys and other play resources were safe and well maintained and stored away when not in use. We discussed with the childminder the benefits of introducing a wider range of natural, open-ended resources. These resources, referred to as loose parts, would help to develop children's creativity and imagination, and support child-led learning. We signposted the childminder to the 'Loose parts play' toolkit available from the 'Inspiring Scotland' website. The childminder was responsive to our suggestions and started using the toolkit to inform changes to the environment before the end of the inspection.

Risk assessments had been undertaken. We suggested that children could be involved in creating and reviewing the risk assessments for the activities and outings they experience. This would highlight the benefits of such activities and support the children to develop their awareness of managing risk, keeping themselves and others safe.

Children were supported in a safe environment, as the childminder had appropriate infection prevention and control procedures in place. Parents told us that they strongly agreed with the statement. Handwashing was well embedded in the daily routines.

## 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 their passion and commitment to providing positive outcomes for children and their families. The childminder told us that making children feel part of their family was important. A child shared with us: "[childminder's name] is the most kindest, loveliest person and she makes me feel like part of the family".

The childminder's vision was clearly reflected in their service and shared with families. The main aim was to provide 'a warm, welcoming, homely and friendly environment where children can play and interact through play, outings and activities'. Parents commented on how kind, considerate and trustworthy they found the childminder to be and added: "have used [childminder's name] for years, trust her completely with my child, she is kind & understanding".

Children and families feedback was gathered through daily conversation 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.

The childminder had identified some improvement priorities since the last inspection and had worked to improve their systems and quality assurance tools regarding risk assessments, medication and care plans. Good progress had been made on these priorities. More time was needed to effectively embed the changes through a consistent approach to quality assurance. We asked the childminder to continue develop their quality assurance processes to effectively monitor and review all relevant aspects of their practice, such as care plans and children's learning progress.

The childminder was in the process of developing their self-evaluation process to evaluate the overall quality of the service and identify the progress made on the previous priorities as well as the next areas they wanted to focus on. We discussed the importance of identifying realistic and achievable targets against the Quality framework.

## How good is our staff team?

## 3 - Adequate

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

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

Children had built positive relationships with the childminder. Families all strongly agreed they were happy with the care and support their child received. One family told us: "[childminder's name] is like Mary Poppins. She is kind, caring patient and teaches the kids to be kind, caring, respectful and responsible".

The childminder had many years of childcare experience, and children in their care clearly benefitted from a kind, caring and consistent approach. The childminder recognised the benefits of social play experiences, whilst also giving children time to rest and relax after school. As a result, children were happy and confident and told us they enjoyed coming to the childminder's.

The childminder was responsive to the different stages of development of children and adapted their interactions to support children on an individual basis. For example, while enabling a pretend play activity chosen by the children they adapted and tailored the level of support to suit the two children's different ages. This meant that children were receiving nurturing and individualised support when it was needed, which helped them to build their confidence and develop a positive sense of self.

Some feedback from the last inspection was used constructively to develop and improve practice. For example, the childminder had introduced changes to their risk assessments and records of play and learning opportunities.

The childminder made some use of professional development opportunities by attending a webinar on the Quality framework offered by the Care Inspectorate. The childminder told us this helped them to work on their improvement plan priorities.

The childminder should now identify their learning and development needs and maintain records of the impact of their own learning on children's experiences. This would also help them reflect on whether and how the training they attended had improved their practice. We discussed how this could help identify future training needs, support improvement and provide positive outcomes for children (see area for improvement 1).



To enhance understanding of how children develop and learn, we signposted the childminder to some online resources such as the Froebel trust.

We also asked the childminder to continue to implement and develop skilled questioning and sensitive responsive interactions to promote curiosity, independence and confidence.

### 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. 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).

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 11 June 2024, the provider must ensure that they are operating within the terms of their registration certificate in regard to the number and ages of children to be care for at any one time. In addition a register of attendance must be held which clearly details start and finish times of all children for each day attended.

This is to evidence that the ratios are maintained and evidence compliance with the conditions of registration.

This is in order to comply with Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210 - Regulation 4 Welfare of users (1)(a).

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

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

Also, 'Records childminding service must keep and guidance on notification reporting'; available on the Care inspectorate website.

This requirement was made on 2 May 2025.

## Action taken on previous requirement

The childminder created an attendance register and has consistently worked within the conditions of registration.

**Met - within timescales**

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

## Areas for improvement

### Previous area 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:

- Development targets/observations which are of significance to that child as an individual.
- 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 (HSCS) which state:

'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).

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder had made some progress on this area for improvement by gathering relevant information about children's needs, interests and preferences. However, we found that the care plans were not reviewed regularly and meaningfully. Therefore, this area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

### Previous area for improvement 2

The childminder should maintain a record of all medication received into the service. Where medication is administered to a child, the date and time that is administered must be recorded and the record must be signed by the childminder and the child's parent/carer. This is to ensure accurate administration of all medication.

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

'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder updated their medication forms in line with best practice guidance. Therefore, this area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 3

The childminder should ensure that written risk assessments are revised and updated to capture all identified risks and actions to reduce possible harm. This includes ensuring that risk assessment is carried out for the artificial turf and the pool. This is to maintain a safe environment for children at all times.

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

'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder had developed risk assessments which highlighted potential hazards and measures put in place to mitigate the impact on children's experiences and outcomes. Therefore, this area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 4

The childminder should develop and formalise quality assurance processes within the service to enhance positive outcomes for children. This should include but not be limited to;

- creating an improvement/action plan to identify priorities and support change
- becoming familiar with and making use of the new 'Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School-aged Childcare' alongside the Health and Social Care Standards.

Reference should also be made to the 'Self-evaluation toolkit for childminders' available on our website. This would provide evidence of progress and support action planning for future improvements.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder spoke confidently about their improvement priorities and had started using the self-evaluation toolkit to support their continuous improvement journey. Therefore, this area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 5

The childminder should provide regular and formal opportunities for children and families to provide their views across all aspects of provision. These should be captured and used to identify and address areas for improvement. Children and families should be kept informed about improvements made, to enable them to feel included and that their opinions are valued.

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

'I can be meaningfully involved in how the organisations that support and care for me work and develop' (HSCS 4.6), and 'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership' (HSCS 4.7).

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder understood the importance of consulting with children and their families through an honest and open communication. They had begun to share with parents the main priorities of the service's improvement plan as well as the progress made. Therefore, this area for improvement has been met.

## Previous area for improvement 6

The childminder should be proactive in sourcing appropriate learning and development. This should include, but not be limited to refreshing training in child protection. 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 (HSCS) which state:

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

**This area for improvement was made on 2 May 2024.**

## Action taken since then

The childminder had made some progress on this area for improvement as they attended a webinar offered by the Care Inspectorate to enhance their understanding of the self-evaluation framework. Further development is needed to ensure the childminder is up to date with best practice and guidance and that their training needs are effectively identified and met. The impact of the childminder's learning on the children's experiences and outcomes should also be clearly evidenced. Therefore, this area for improvement has not been met and remains in place.

## 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?	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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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

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