

Kellie Tots Child Minding

Bathgate

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 June 2025

Service provided by:
Kellie Smith

Service provider number:
SP2013984883

Service no:
CS2013317275

About the service

Kellie Tots is operated by Kellie Smith who provides a childminding service from their family home within a rural area of Bathgate in West Lothian. The service operates from a home on farmland and a short drive away from local amenities including green spaces, the local nursery and primary schools and local shops. The service is delivered mainly from the 'cabin' in the grounds of the home and the main home. The 'cabin' is single level and children have access to an open plan living/dining/kitchen area and family bathroom. Within the main home children have access to a large open plan living/dining/kitchen area and downstairs bathroom. Children also have access to an enclosed rear garden and supervised play in the play area to the front of the cabin.

The service was registered to provide care for a maximum of 7 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 include the children of the childminder's family/household.

From 17 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 (or before if a child leaves the service) (as identified in the variation request dated 11 July 2024), on a Tuesday between the hours of 08:00 and 15:00 and a Friday between the hours of 08:30 and 12:00 the childminder may care for a maximum of 7 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 4 are not yet attending primary school and; of whom no more than 1 is under 12 months. Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

Minded children can only be cared for by persons named on the certificate. No overnight care will be provided. The childminder must supervise the children while playing outdoors on the childminder's land.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 16 June 2025 between 13:30 and 17:50 hours. 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;

- Registration information
- Information submitted by the service
- Intelligence gathered since registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we;

- Spoke with two children using the service
- Spoke with the childminder
- Requested feedback via questionnaire from parent/carers
- Observed a mealtime
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children benefit from a beautiful child friendly environment and lots of access to the countryside, including a working farm.
- Children are achieving, happy and comfortable as a result of the childminder's skilled interactions.
- The childminder demonstrated a strong commitment to their role, professional learning and to achieving positive outcomes for all minded children.
- A completion certificate for the completed building of the home should be submitted.

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?	4 - 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 minded children were confident and comfortable with the childminder and happily approached her for cuddles ensuring they felt nurtured. Children were praised for their efforts throughout the inspection. This regular recognition of children's successes strengthened children's self esteem, built their confidence, and enabled positive relationships.

Information held on children was detailed and kept under regular review ensuring that children's needs were met and supporting continuity of care. Where children had any identified need this was clearly recorded and reviewed with parents. This ensured that individual needs were supported enabling children to feel included.

Children's health and wellbeing was supported as the childminder ensured systems were in place to manage medication and accidents. This meant information was quickly shared with families ensuring continuity of care. We reminded the childminder to revise medication forms to ensure that parents are signing to confirm having given the first dose of any non emergency medication.

Provision of nutritiously balanced snacks and meals was enabling children to make positive eating choices supporting them to remain healthy. Children were involved in reviewing menu planning using a 'traffic lights' approach to enable them to make informed decisions. Mealtime experiences were closely supervised, comfortable and sociable, contributing to children developing positive relationships with food.

Children were supported to regulate their emotions because the childminder had created a calm and nurturing environment and encouraged sharing, turn taking and respect for each other. The childminder promoted emotional wellbeing through a range of resources such as books, posters and toys and had developed a calm corner with these resources. This approach meant children's self-esteem was maintained and they were learning how to recognise and deal with their emotions.

Quality indicator 1.3: Play and learning

Floor books demonstrated the rich range of play and learning experiences children enjoyed. Children were able to draw on real experiences around them to enhance their own play and learning. For example, children used the real plans from the childminder's new build home to support them in designing their own plans for their outdoor area whilst watching the house being built. They were able to fully lead this development which was documented in a floor book in which parents were also invited to add their suggestions. This provided children with a real sense of ownership.

Children were building intergenerational links with visits to a dementia care unit and to the childminder's own elderly family members. These opportunities enabled children to appreciate aging and develop compassion for others. In addition, they participated in collecting and donating to the local foodbank, building their sense of civic responsibility and compassion for others.

Outings in the local and wider community provided children with variety to their day and helped build their sense of identity. Forest play allowed for opportunities to build dens and develop an understanding of risk. Local walks and visits to parks and activity groups in the area were regularly enjoyed. One child was enthusiastic in sharing a photograph album of these outings and recalling the experiences. These provided further creative play opportunities along with social connections and promotion of physical wellbeing.

The childminder's skilled interactions and understanding of child development and learning promoted children's learning. A focus on reading stories daily built children's love of books and supported their language development. Games and resources were skilfully provided to promote children's numeracy and literacy in fun ways. The childminder's interactions empowered children to problem solve and develop their understanding.

Planning for children's learning was responsive alongside consultative planning to support and challenge children. Children enjoyed fun, meaningful, and real-life play experiences tailored to their needs, rights, and choices. Experiences were planned that extended children's learning and additional resources sought to add to their enjoyment. For example, sourcing minibeast identification cards from a friend who was a macro photographer for a child interested in spiders. This approach encouraged children's curiosity and supported them to achieve.

Children's learning was recorded within journals which documented their experiences and learning and supported identification of meaningful next steps. This enabled the childminder to tailor experiences to meet children's needs.

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 enjoyed the freedom to lead their own play using space within the open plan living room and dining kitchen within the 'cabin.' Supervised access was needed for the outdoor play area and children were able to make requests for this which were responded to. Children made decisions on when and where to play and could easily access a large range of appropriate toys and games suitable for their age and stage of learning. This empowered children and enabled their independence and choice, contributing to their level of enjoyment.

Resources were in very good condition and varied. A range of natural and inviting loose parts play materials indoors supported children's curiosity. The play space outside provided a large and inviting range of loose parts along with other provision which enabled children's creative play and physical activity.

The 'cabin' and the home were clean, tidy, well ventilated and hygienic. Children were encouraged to develop good hygiene routines that helped them to begin to understand how they could keep themselves healthy. For example, by being supported to wash their hands properly before eating and after nappy changes. These measures helped keep children safe and healthy by reducing the likelihood of germs being passed on.

The childminder evidenced that they had a good understanding of confidentiality issues when collecting and sharing information with parents. This ensured that each child's personal circumstances and information was kept private. A policy was in place and shared with families regarding the use of video cameras around the property. This would ensure they were fully aware of the proportional use of images. We asked the childminder to make some further slight amendments to the this policy and reshare with families.

Children's safety was increased because the childminder carried out daily visual checks. This was supported by robust written risk assessments for the 'cabin', outings and outdoor play. We asked the childminder to ensure risk assessments clearly define both the cabin and the house. We reminded the childminder to re-establish fire drills and to practice this from both the cabin and the house. We also asked the childminder to consider adding child safety locks to the cupboards where chemicals are held to reduce the potential of children accessing these (**see area for improvement 1**).

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's safety and wellbeing, the provider should review and revise written risk assessments for the cabin and the home to identify and address all potential risks.

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

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

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 was reflective and made use of best practice documents to support their practice. This contributed to ongoing improvement. Identified areas for improvement were recorded within an improvement plan for the year ahead. For example, they had identified a focus on promoting positive mealtimes experiences and supporting children to self serve. As a result they had already swapped highchairs for a low table and chairs. This plan enabled the childminder to identify and monitor their progress in making improvements.

A strong set of policies supported safe and effective care of children. Policies were kept under review and were in line with current guidance and legislation. We asked the childminder to make slight amendments to their complaints policy.

Children and families participated in developing the service through regular formal opportunities to give their views. This included using 'two stars and a wish' questions which had led to feedback from children about missing their friends who had left. The childminder therefore took action to arrange a meet up between current children and leavers.

Questionnaires issued were well structured in asking open ended questions related to the quality framework. This led to receipt of full feedback which the childminder used to make changes or provide individualised support. Lots of mind mapping opportunities with children enabled them to share their views

on various aspects of the service. For example, they fed back on the quality of the setting as being 'good because it's a farm.' This ongoing feedback from children enabled the childminder to amend provision to support children's continued enjoyment.

Self evaluation was previously being evidenced through the use of a quality assurance floor book. This had made clear links to quality assurance documents to help develop the service. We asked the childminder to resume this to support them in identifying their strengths and areas for improvement.

The childminder worked in partnership with the local authority for funded status. They spoke positively about how they reflect on feedback received during visits from their development officer.

The service continues to mostly operate from the registered 'cabin' in the grounds of the newly built home. We had not yet received a building completion certificate for this and asked the childminder to submit this to us. The main house should therefore not be used for childminding purposes until this has been received (see requirement 1).

Requirements

1. By 7 September 2025, the provider must confirm the safety and suitability of the home by submitting the building completion certificate to the Care Inspectorate.

This is to comply with Regulation 10(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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

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

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.

Children enjoyed positive and fun interactions with the childminder as the childminder was responsive to their cues and gentle in their approach. This enabled children to feel secure, loved and have their needs met.

The childminder took a proactive approach to training and development enabling them to remain abreast of current best practice and use this to support them in meeting children's needs. They spoke about completing training on a range of subjects. This included learning about autism and ADHD, along with online webinars and participating in the Froebel conference. Completion of longer courses of training such as the curiosity approach had led to review of the environment to encourage children to explore, discover and learn. The childminder was also able to communicate how they matched training to meet the needs of children attending. They shared an example of where they completed learning on management of diabetes prior to a new child starting. This supported positive outcomes for children. In addition to this they maintained an online reflective record of training and learning which demonstrated the impact of their learning on practice.

The childminder linked with other local childminders to further enable discussions and learning about early learning and childcare practices, supporting reflection on their own practice. They spoke about how these conversations led to reviewing the use of highchairs for young children. This contributed to positive experiences for children.

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?	4 - Good
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good

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

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.