

Kidzonecare Child Minding

Helensburgh

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
11 June 2025

Service provided by:
Alison Kane trading as Kidzonecare

Service provider number:
SP2011982556

Service no:
CS2011297952

About the service

The service is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children under the age of 16 years, of whom no more than 3 are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than 1 child is under the age of 12 months. The numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family. At the time of inspection, four children were registered to use the service before or after school on a part-time basis.

The childminder is approved to provide community childminding placements for children. The placements are organised through Argyll and Bute Council. At the time of inspection, the childminder was not providing any community childminding placements.

The service is based in Rosneath on the peninsula adjoining Helensburgh. The service is within walking distance of the local primary school and is accessible on foot and by car and bus.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on Thursday 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 one child using the service and three families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Children were well-supported to have a positive experience within the setting.
- The childminder had developed trusting relationships with children and their families.
- Children experienced care in a warm, safe and homely environment.
- The childminder respected the views of children and families and used their views to improve the service. We discussed the need for a more formal approach to quality assurance moving forward.
- The childminder was skilled, experienced and well-trained for her role.

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?	4 - 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.

Only one child was present at the inspection. The child chatted confidently about their time at the service, telling us about the positive relationships that they had developed with the childminder and her family. In our questionnaires, children told us about the activities that they enjoyed and how the childminder supported their choices to engage in these, and commented:

"It is fun to come here."

"Alison is kind and caring and is very good at looking after me."

"Playing football with Alison's children and Alison is kind to me."

From our discussions with the childminder, we found that children experienced warm, caring and nurturing approaches to their care and learning needs. The childminder demonstrated how children's care was tailored to reflect their personal preferences and promote independence. Families were very positive about their children's care and commented:

"Although my child is only with Alison for a short period each week, Alison keeps us informed on how they are getting on and what they have been doing."

"Alison always keeps good communication about anything to do with my child and their education while in Alison's care."

The childminder collaborated with families to develop a personal plan for each child. This ensured effective arrangements were in place to support children's health, safety and overall wellbeing needs. A system was in place to ensure that these plans were reviewed regularly which enabled the childminder to respond in a timely manner, sensitively and compassionately to changes in children's lives. We confirmed that all personal plans contained relevant information and most had been subject to regular review.

The childminder advised that some families chose to drop off and collect their children at the front door of her home while others came indoors. We discussed the benefits to both children and their families of being invited into the childminding home. Families were happy with these arrangements and commented:

"Alison is very welcoming about any concerns I may have or anything I feel my child could benefit from."

"As my child has only been with Alison for a short period of time I have only visited the home for an initial visit but I was made welcome and Alison has stated me and my partner are always welcome to discuss anything."

The childminder discussed the individual needs of the children with families on a regular basis and sent photos and messages to include them in their children's day. Often children asked for specific photos to be sent. The positive relationships that had been developed between the childminder and families facilitated effective communication, consistency and continuity of care. Families valued this communication with the childminder and commented:

"Myself and Alison have a very good relationship it is never a bother if I text or call to ask about my child or if I have a general worry about anything. I'm very lucky to have Alison."

"Childminder is good at passing information from nursery, provides a familiar environment for my child and welcoming atmosphere."

"Alison is very good at communicating with myself and my partner about our child."

The childminder provided snacks and families provided packed lunches for their children. The childminder was aware of the best practice guidance document Setting the Table which highlighted the importance of healthy and well-balanced meals. The childminder had registered the food provision aspect of the business with the local authority to ensure that safe food handling, preparation and storage practices were followed. During our visit, the child enjoyed a healthy snack of fruit at the table in the lounge. Families were happy with the snacks their children received and commented:

"All snacks provided are well balanced."

"Alison has a range of healthy snacks on offer."

The childminder had a good understanding of the health and dietary needs of the children in her care. The childminder had not been required to administer medication to any of the children in her care, but appropriate paperwork was in place for parents to give written consent to administer medication should this be required. We advised that the best practice guidance had recently been reviewed and suggested the childminder obtained a copy of this guidance document for her records and to ensure that families could be reassured that her procedures were in line with best practice -

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/news/7870-new-guidance-on-management-of-medication-in-daycare-of-children-and-childminding-services>

The minded child was very happy, settled and confident within the childminder's home. They were treated with warmth and care. During our visit, they enjoyed playing Uno and playing on the trampoline in the garden.

The childminder's approach to play and activities was child-centred and responsive to the children's interests, wishes and level of skill. Children enjoyed opportunities for crafting, painting and drawing, demonstrating that the childminder valued their creativity. Children had regular opportunities to be active and access fresh air in the garden and within the local community.

The childminder set monthly targets for children to address their specific needs. These plans demonstrated how the childminder supported children to reach individual targets and goals based on their individual needs. We found these targets to be sensitive and child-centred.

Children learned about road safety, keeping themselves safe and a range of topics based on their interests. Their individual folders contained photos and captions linked to best practice guidance to highlight their progress.

Families were very happy with the progress their children were making and appreciated the variety of learning opportunities offered.

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.

The home was in good repair, clean and a good standard of health and safety was observed throughout. Appropriate arrangements were in place for cleaning the home and resources. The back garden was a safe place for fresh air and outdoor play.

An extension to the home had been built and was in the process of being fitted out and decorated. The childminder planned to have a dedicated playroom within this extension which would give children more space to play and more ownership of this space.

The childminder provided a variety of activities, materials and experiences for the children, both indoors and outdoors. These reflected the interests, development and learning stages of the children in her care. Children had daily opportunities to play outdoors and get fresh air. The childminder had developed her outdoor space through the addition of loose parts resources to support children to be creative and resources to support literacy and numeracy. Families valued the time children had to spend outdoors in the garden and within the local community.

The childminder was confident about her responsibilities to keep children safe and had developed simple risk assessments for her home, garden and outings which recorded all identified hazards and control measures needed to keep children safe. The childminder reviewed these regularly to ensure they remained up-to-date.

The childminder had developed a comprehensive policy detailing her approach to controlling and preventing the spread of infection within her home. There were good arrangements in place to prevent and control the spread of infection within the service to protect children, including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when needed. We discussed the arrangements for handwashing and highlighted the benefits of ensuring children had individual towels to limit the potential to prevent the spread of infection.

Effective arrangements for monitoring, maintenance and repair of the setting, equipment and vehicles were consistently implemented. We confirmed that appropriate insurance policies were in place.

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.

We found that the childminder used daily discussion to ensure that children and their families could be consulted on the day-to-day running of her service. The childminder ensured that parents were involved from the outset and through the settling in period. She shared policies and procedures at enrolment and was willing to respond to ideas and routines highlighted by parents. This was particularly relevant where the childminder and families needed to develop a consistent approach to children's care routines.

Through regular communication with the parents and children, the childminder was able to provide a service that met the needs and interests of the children she was caring for. The childminder regularly shared the children's experiences with their parents. This approach helped parents feel they were included in their child's day.

The childminder respected the views of children and parents and used their views to improve the service, where possible. We were told that most feedback came from informal discussions with children and their families and the use of questionnaires. The childminder used verbal feedback from the parents and children to reflect on the type of experiences they were having. This helped her develop informal plans and reflect on the care and activities she provided to the children and families. Families strongly agreed that they were involved in helping to develop the service and commented: "We are always involved to help develop the service."

The childminder was aware that there was a need for a more formal approach to self-evaluation to enable her to assess the quality of her service against the Care Inspectorate document, A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare (this document will be changed in September 2025). Using this document to identify and record strengths and areas highlighted to improve outcomes for children and families, would have formed a good evidence base for a service improvement plan. Information on self-evaluation can be found at: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/quality-improvement-programmes-and-topics/early-learning-and-childcare-improvement-programme/>

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.

The childminding service had been operating for 13 years. Over this time, the childminder had become skilled and experienced with well-developed procedures and processes in place. The childminder's paperwork was comprehensive, well-developed and organised to ensure positive outcomes for children and families. The childminder had a measured, informed approach to our questions during the inspection, demonstrating that she knew the children and the families very well. The childminder had a good understanding of child development and could provide appropriate support and interventions to help children to reach their potential.

The childminder had a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the skills and qualities required to provide an effective childcare service. Since the last inspection, the childminder had attained a formal childcare qualification to underpin her skills, knowledge and practice. She was able to discuss the positive impact this had on her practice and outcomes for children. The childminder reflected regularly on her skills, experience and practice and participated in training to support her continuous professional development including most recently.

- Autism Awareness
- Food Hygiene Level 2
- Baby and Child First Aid
- Adverse Childhood Experiences and Early Trauma
- Infection Prevention and Control
- STEM: Exploring Maths and Numeracy through Science
- Child Protection.

We highlighted the Care Inspectorate Hub as a good source of information and practice guidance. We suggested that the childminder accessed this resource, where possible, to enhance her approach to continuous professional development - <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/>

The childminder told us that she kept up-to-date with best practice guidance and changes to legislation through accessing online resources. The childminder also had membership with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) which was a good source of information and advice.

The childminder was sensitive, kind, caring and consistent in her approach to children which helped them feel safe and secure. She was committed to ensuring high quality outcomes for children and families. The childminder had developed very positive relationships with families which was reflected in their comments to us and resulted in a warm and welcoming ethos within the service. Families were very happy with the quality of the service and told us the most positive aspects of their child's experiences in the childminding service were:

"My child is treated like part of the family and loves going to Alison's house to see her they have a very good relationship."

"Opportunity to interact with other children, opportunity to play outdoors etc."

"My child enjoys being with the childminder and her family. Alison ensures my child is safe and engages them in different things to broaden their interests."

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 continue to develop her risk assessments for indoors to ensure that she has identified any hazards and detail how these will be addressed.

National Care Standards early education and childcare up to the age of 16 years. Standard 2: A safe environment.

This area for improvement was made on 17 April 2018.

Action taken since then

Appropriate risk assessments were in place and found to be satisfactory.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	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?	5 - Very Good
4.1 Staff skills, knowledge and values	5 - Very Good

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