

Theresa Docherty Child Minding

Coatbridge

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
16 July 2026

Service provided by:
Theresa Docherty

Service provider number:
SP2004933326

Service no:
CS2004078144

About the service

Theresa Docherty childminding service is provided from the childminder's home in a quiet residential area within Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire. The childminder is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of six children at any one time under the age of 16, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school; and of whom no more than one is under 12 months. At the time of inspection five children were registered to the service.

The service is close to local primary schools, woodlands and other amenities. Childminding takes place within the ground floor of the property, with children having access to the living room, kitchen, upstairs toilet facilities and a secure back garden

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 16 July 2026 between 13:30 and 15:45. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. A team manager was also present at the inspection as part of the Care Inspectorate's quality assurance processes. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with children using the service
- observed children play experiences
- spoke with the childminder
- looked around the home and garden
- reviewed service documents and records
- reviewed electronic feedback from one parent and one child.

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well-maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Positive relationships had been established with children and families.
- The childminder had begun to use self-evaluation tools to identify strengths and where improvements may be needed.
- The childminder should access further training to support their skills and knowledge.
- Children benefited from regular outdoor play, which supported them to remain active, healthy and engaged with the natural world.
- Toys and materials indoors and outdoors should be further developed to support play opportunities.
- Children experienced warm and caring interactions, supporting them to feel loved, safe and secure.
- Personal plans could be developed to record achievable goals and strategies of support 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

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Leadership and management of staff and resources

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

The childminder had developed a vision in partnership with parents, that supported positive outcomes for children. This included the provision of a safe, homely and nurturing environment, where children felt comfortable, happy and relaxed. This was reflected in their everyday life and helped to inform their practice. These were shared with parents before their child joined the service, giving them an understanding of the care and experiences their child would receive.

Self-evaluation for improvement was at an early stage of development. The childminder had begun using self-evaluation tools to reflect on the quality of the service provided. They were able to identify what was working well and were developing their confidence in using reflection to support improvement. The childminder could further develop this by evidencing the actions of identified areas for development. We discussed focusing on a smaller number of priorities over time to ensure the process remained manageable and clearly demonstrated progression. This could further strengthen self-evaluation and enhance positive outcomes and experiences for children.

We signposted the childminder to the best practice guidance, 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' (Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, 2025). This could support the childminder to structure their evaluations more effectively and help ensure improvements were well-informed and aligned with national expectations.

The childminder had developed their approaches to ensure families were involved and could contribute towards change in the service. For example, through the use of questionnaires. One parent told us "I feel I am very involved and always kept updated." We encouraged the childminder to further develop ways to involve children and their families in improving the service and further strengthen self-evaluation. This would support the childminder to reflect on what is working well in the service and what could be improved.

Following the last inspection, an action plan was required to detail how the service would meet identified areas for improvement. However, we were unable to assess how improvements would be met to support positive outcomes for children as no action plan was submitted. We discussed the importance of any subsequent action plans being submitted. The childminder agreed.

Since the last inspection, the childminder had reviewed their policies and procedures. These were shared with parents when their child started at the service. This helped them to become familiar with the ethos, values and aims of the service. We discussed the benefits of updating their nappy changing policy to further enhance infection and prevention control measures already in place to keep children safe.

At the last inspection, we identified the childminder should access further training. The childminder had recently completed core training, including first aid and child protection. We discussed where the childminder would benefit from accessing further professional development opportunities and training courses to support them in their role. We signposted the childminder to further guidance information available on our website. The childminder agreed to action this.

The previous area for improvement made at the last inspection will be repeated (See section 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection' of this report).

Children play and learn 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Playing, learning and developing

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

The pace of the day was relaxed and responsive, which helped ensure children's needs were met. Children were comfortable leading their play and participating in activities of their choice. They responded positively to interactions from the childminder and sought more of these. This contributed to children feeling valued and strengthened positive relationships.

The childminder had a good understanding of how children play and learn, which meant experiences and play opportunities were based on children's development, and individual needs. Toys and materials were tailored to match children's age and stage of development. This included construction toys, magnetic tiles, cars, games and books. Resources were rotated and replenished in response to children's request and interest. As a result, children were independent and engaged in their play. We discussed where presenting toys and materials more thoughtfully could further support children's choice.

The childminder had started to introduce loose parts. These are natural materials that do not have a specific function or goal. They can be moved, taken apart and arranged, providing endless opportunities for children to develop their curiosity, imagination and problem solving abilities. We suggested they should continue to develop opportunities for loose parts play, both indoors and outdoors, to further enhance opportunities for children to explore their natural creativity. We signposted the childminder to the 'Loose Parts Toolkit.'

Children had some opportunities to engage in experiences that supported their literacy and numeracy development. The childminder modelled appropriate language and introduced vocabulary to support children's communication and language development. Numeracy skills were promoted by counting and identifying colours, numbers and shapes during play. For example, exploring colours and numbers through coloured shaped puzzles. Children were praised for trying new things and for their achievements, which helped build their confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder understood the importance of children having opportunities to play outdoors. In addition to playing in the garden, children had opportunities to visit interesting and fun places in the local and wider community. Outings to parks and other local places of interest helped children explore the natural environment, develop physical skills and learn about the wider world. Planned community groups, such as 'Bookbug', supported children's language and communication, as well as their social development. One parent told us "my child loves outdoor play, in the back garden and the park."

Although children experienced positive play and learning opportunities, approaches to recording and using observations were still developing. The childminder shared daily updates with families, which included photographs and a brief description of children's play and learning. However, whilst the childminder recognised children's interest and progression, this was not consistently recorded.

To further support children's learning and development the childminder should develop approaches to recording observations of children's progress and achievements. This could also help to inform next steps to support their development.

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

Quality Indicator: Nurturing care and support

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Children experienced warm, nurturing and responsive care from the childminder. Interactions were kind, respectful and reassuring, which helped children feel safe and valued. As a result, children were relaxed, happy and confident in the childminder's care. One child told us "I like [childminder] because [they] take good care of me while mummy is at work and I like to give [childminder] lots of hugs."

Children and families experienced well managed transitions from home to the childminder's setting. Settling-in processes were tailored to the individual needs of children and their families, which supported the childminder to build positive relationships and understand children's individual needs and routines. This meant children experienced consistent care between home and the setting, supporting their wellbeing and sense of security.

Personal plans were in place and contained key information. This included children's developmental stage, likes and dislikes. These were created in partnership with parents and were supporting the childminder to meet children's needs. We discussed the importance of ensuring 'all about me' information was updated every six months to reflect children's current needs, preferences and interest. To support children's progression and development personal plans could be further enhanced. This could include adding achievable goals and strategies of support.

Children could sleep and rest in response to their needs, which helped support their overall wellbeing. The childminder knew children's routines well and were responsive to their cues of tiredness. At the time of the inspection the childminder was using a travel cot and a buggy for children to sleep in. They had identified the use of buggies was not appropriate for young children, in line with safe sleep guidance, and had recently purchased sleep mats. We agreed these would be more appropriate to support safe sleep practice, whilst also helping to ensure children's comfort.

Nappy changing routines were carried out in response to children's needs. We discussed where some approaches to personal care needs could be further developed to support children's privacy, dignity and comfort. This should include using a wipeable changing mat at all times during nappy changing routines to help reduce the risk of cross infection. The childminder agreed to action this.

Positive relationships with parents had been developed and they commented positively on their child's care service. One parent told us "I am always kept well informed and updated with everything related to the service and my child's care." Parents were warmly welcomed into the service, helping to establish strong connections, this was further enhanced through effective communication, which supported continuity of care.

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

To ensure children experience consistently safe, high-quality care, play and learning experiences, the childminder should update their practice and procedures to align with best practice guidance. This should be used to, but not limited to, support approaches to assessing risk, self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14)

This area for improvement was made on 3 July 2025.

Action taken since then

The childminder had reviewed their approaches to quality assurance processes. This included reflecting on their practice through self-evaluation and developing their policies and procedures to align with current best practice guidance and legislation.

Whilst this was a positive start to support the continuous improvement of the service, we discussed where this could be streamlined to be meaningful and relevant to the services needs. We also discussed using 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' (Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, 2025) to support future self-evaluation approaches. The childminder agreed this would support them in implementing change to support positive outcomes for children.

The childminder had also developed their approaches to risk assessments, completing daily checks and developing risk assessments to identify potential risks and what measures could be implemented to mitigate risk.

This Area for Improvement has been Met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To continue to improve the service and outcomes for children, the childminder should access training to develop their knowledge and skills in order to ensure that children receive high quality care.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 3 July 2025.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection the childminder had completed child protection and first aid training. They had identified further training which included Autism training.

Whilst this was a positive start we discussed where additional training and professional opportunities would support the childminder to further develop their skills and knowledge within their role. This would include reading and reflecting on documents such as 'loose part toolkit', 'my active world' and 'my childminding experience' to support continuous development of their practice and contribute towards high quality care for children.

This Area for Improvement will be continued.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.scot.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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