

Dawn Connah Childminding Child Minding

Peterhead

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 August 2026

Service provided by:
Dawn Connah

Service provider number:
SP2014985801

Service no:
CS2014324918

About the service

Dawn Connah Childminding operate from their property situated in a residential housing development in Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire.

The childminder may care for a maximum of six children at any one time up to 16 years of age:

- of whom no more than six are under 12 years
- of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school
- of whom no more than one is under 12 months.

Numbers include the children of the childminder's family/household.

At the time of the inspection, 10 children were registered with the service and attended on different days. During the inspection, two children were present.

The service is close to the local park and shops. The children are cared for in the living room and kitchen with access to a downstairs toilet. Children have access to a large enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 August 2026 between 08:25 and 11:45. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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:

- interacted with two children using the service,
- reviewed one completed questionnaire from families,
- spoke with the childminder,
- observed practice and children's experiences,
- reviewed documents.

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

- Children's wellbeing was promoted as the childminder knew them well.
- The childminder should continue to build on progress made with self-evaluation and evaluate the impact of improvements on children.
- Children had regular opportunities to explore their community through trips to park, beach and library.
- Children had fun as they engaged in a range of learning experiences both indoors and outdoors.

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.

A statement of the childminder's Vision, Values and Aims was in place and shared with families. This supported them to know what to expect from the service. These were reflected in the childminder's practice. Children were "treated as individuals" and the childminder's home was "safe, homely and welcoming."

Parents who provided feedback agreed they and their children were involved in developing the service. The childminder gathered their views through informal discussions and surveys. This had led to change, for example children had asked for more art and craft resources and these had been supplied. The childminder should review the impact of any changes on children's experiences and outcomes. This will support the childminder's self-evaluation based on children's experiences and outcomes.

Following the last inspection the childminder was now using guidance documents such as the quality improvement framework to evaluate their service. This had highlighted some areas where improvements could be made. For example, the childminder had identified resources that needed updating in the garden through their engagement with the heading 'Children experience high-quality spaces.' The childminder should continue to develop this system. For example, adding an action plan which should include timescales and intended outcomes focused on children's experiences.

The childminder had systems and processes in place to support them in keeping children safe and promoting their health and wellbeing. This included risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor spaces and policies, around medication and child protection for example. We suggested that when reviewing these documents, the childminder record the date of review and add reference to relevant guidance. This will support them in ensuring that documents refer to the latest guidance or legislation and are regularly reviewed.

Ensuring that their core training such as child protection and first aid were up to date supported the childminder in keeping children safe. Resources, such as the Care Inspectorate website and Scottish Childminding Association membership, helped the childminder stay current with sector changes. Positive working relationships had been formed with childminders in the area. This supported the sharing of information, skills and experience. Keeping a record of their own learning outcomes will help the childminder plan and assess positive impacts on children's experiences.

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.

Children were well settled and confident in their play. They accessed a range of activities including, role play, sensory and physical play. These activities reflected children's current interests and therefore promoted their

engagement. Resources were stored to enable children to independently access them. This promoted children's choice and ability to lead or extend their play. For example, children were playing with magnetic figures and then accessed more natural resources of wood and pinecones to add to their play. Children's health was supported by regular access to the outdoors. This was mainly in the childminder's garden but was extended by use of local amenities such as parks and green spaces.

The childminder was responsive to children's verbal and nonverbal cues. They promoted a relaxed and happy atmosphere for children to enjoy. In response to children's questions or observed needs, they supplied additional resources to supplement their play. For example, filling plastic sauce bottles with water for mud kitchen play. Interactions were also used to support children's play and encourage their thinking. For example, responding to a child whose doll was hungry by asking if the child was going to get the dolls snack and wash their hands. On another occasion the childminder responded to a game of aeroplanes asking the child where they were going. This then led into a discussion about a recent holiday, bringing learning to life by making links with real experiences.

Children were given encouragement and praise to promote independence in self-care tasks. For example, a child was supported to put on their own shoes then climb down the ladder from the trampoline. There were opportunities for children to explore literacy and numeracy through routine and real-life experiences. Children practised counting down before jumping on the trampoline. The childminder modelled language which supported speech development. Children were encouraged to interact with each-other respectfully, developing social skills.

The childminder had a recognised qualification in childcare which supported them in understanding different stages of children's play and learning. Children benefitted from this as activities and resources were age appropriate and engaging. Children's learning was recorded and the childminder used developmental trackers to note achievements and milestones. This information was shared with parents, supporting them to feel involved in their child's learning and celebrate successes. Parents told us that they loved the weekly updates of their child's learning. Going forward the childminder should use their observations of children's learning and achievements to identify achievement goals. This will enable them to support children's progression in a planned way.

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 benefitted from nurturing relationships with a childminder who was respectful and relaxed in their interactions. Children were confident and happy in the childminder's care. They confidently played together on their own or invited the childminder into their play. Children were supported to be respectful and considerate of each other, encouraged to take turns or share resources. This promoted positive peer relationships and social skills. A parent commented that the childminder had a "loving environment where children were welcomed."

The childminder had not had any new children start with the service recently, however they shared with us how they would support transition to best meet the needs of the child and family. A parent told us, the childminder had a "good, established relationship with the local nursery" which supports transition to the nursery. Daily routines were well established, children knew to wash their hands before and after eating, to

take their shoes off before using the trampoline and checking to see if they were going to the park today. This promoted children's feelings of security and confidence.

Children's snack was nutritious, with them being offered fruit and vegetables. Children were able to develop their independence through cutting their own fruit, this supported them in building life-skills. Mealtime was calm and unhurried. The childminder sat with the children ensuring supervision and modelling positive social interactions. Infection prevention and control measures, such as handwashing at appropriate times promoted children's health.

Information was gathered to form personal plans, most of which were regularly reviewed with parents. This included any medical needs, dietary restrictions, interests and preferences. Details of home routines such as sleeping and eating were also recorded, which the childminder reflected where possible. This supported a continuity of care. The childminder knew children very well and this knowledge enabled them to identify and meet children's individual needs. However, the plans did not reflect this knowledge. We advised that the plans would benefit from further development to accurately reflect children's current needs and any agreed strategies of support.

A record of significant events in children's minds, also known as a chronology, was kept. Some of the entries in these were not dated, the childminder agreed to ensure that accurate dates were added. These should then be effective in supporting the childminder to identify where extra support may be needed.

The childminder recognised the importance of working in partnership with parents. The childminder received positive feedback from parents. Parents told us they found the childminder approachable and flexible. There were opportunities for communication via digital platforms, informal discussions or telephone calls/emails. These supported parents to be involved and to share information with the childminder.

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 support improvement to the service and ensure positive outcomes for children, the childminder should develop quality assurance practices. This should include, but is not limited to:

- reviewing vision, values and aims in consultation with children and families
- gathering and using children and families' views to inform developments
- updating policies in line with best practice guidance
- implementing a self-evaluation process to support improvement, including the new Quality Framework for Childminding.

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

'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 22 January 2026.

Action taken since then

The childminder has consulted with children and families to review vision, values and aims.

The childminder continues to establish the most effective way to gain feedback from children and parents. They should build on this and ensure they let parents know the impact of their comments.

Policies reflected best practice guidance but should be dated to promote regular review and accuracy.

The childminder has engaged with the new Quality Framework for Childminding and has started to use self-evaluation to support continuous improvement. They should continue to build on this until it is having a consistently positive impact on their practice and children's experiences.

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.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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