

Jill's Childminding Child Minding

Banchory

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 June 2026

Service provided by:
Jill Lawrie

Service provider number:
SP2016987915

Service no:
CS2016346224

About the service

Jill's Childminding operates from their property situated in a residential housing development in Drumoak, Aberdeenshire.

The childminder may care for a maximum of eight children at any one time under the age of 16:

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

Numbers are inclusive of children of the childminder's family. Overnight care will not be provided.

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

The service is close to the local primary school, shop, play parks and other amenities. The children are cared for in the living area, playroom and kitchen with access to a downstairs toilet. Children have access to an enclosed rear garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 29 June 2026 between 08:15 and 12:45. 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
- spoke with one of their parents/carers
- reviewed three completed questionnaires from families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily 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 were confident, happy and having fun in the service.
- The childminder knew children well and provided care that was tailored to their individual needs, interests and routines.
- A proactive, reflective approach to improvement ensured meaningful changes, with children and families actively involved in shaping the service.
- Quality assurance systems were in place, with regular reviews of policies, training and practice to maintain high standards.
- Play and learning opportunities were varied and engaging, with regular outdoor experiences that promoted curiosity and creativity.

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	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good

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

Leadership 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children experienced care that reflected the service's vision, values and aims, which were shared with families prior to starting. These included providing a "home from home" atmosphere whilst making sure "children feel safe and secure." This was clearly demonstrated through the childminder's warm, responsive interactions, which promoted children's emotional security and sense of belonging. As the service continues to develop, involving families in reviewing the vision, values and aims will help ensure they remain meaningful and aligned with children's evolving needs.

The childminder actively sought and responded to the views of children and families. Children were routinely consulted, offered choices and encouraged to share their views about snacks, play and learning experiences and their environment. For example, older children said they had outgrown the child-sized furniture. In response, a larger table and benches were purchased. This helped children feel valued and meaningfully involved in decisions that affected their daily experiences.

Families were invited to complete questionnaires and feedback was positive, highlighting strong relationships, high quality outdoor experiences and the value of receiving photos and updates. A parent commented, "[The childminder's] handmade evaluation sheets show their commitment to continuous improvement and high standards." Another parent shared, "We are asked on a regular basis what we think of [the childminder's] service. [The childminder] hands out evaluation forms to get views, not just from me but also my children and other parents. We are so happy." This contributed to positive partnerships with families and supported open communication.

The childminder confidently described areas for development and the progress made. We observed improvements that had a positive impact on children's experiences, such as the introduction of more natural and open-ended resources to support curiosity and creativity and changes to the environment. We encouraged the childminder to record identified areas for improvement in a simple improvement plan. This would support the monitoring of progress and evaluate their effectiveness in providing positive outcomes for children.

A quality assurance system was in place to support the direction of the service. This included updating paperwork, reviewing documentation and identifying appropriate actions to support ongoing development. The childminder demonstrated a reflective approach and a strong commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring that their leadership contributed positively to the quality of care and learning provided.

The childminder demonstrated a strong knowledge of national guidance, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), and was actively using the challenge questions within 'A Quality Improvement Framework for the Early Learning and Childcare Sectors: Childminding' to reflect on and strengthen practice. This informed reflective practice and supported the continued development of high-quality experiences for children.

Children play and learn 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

The childminder demonstrated a very good understanding of how children develop and progress. They spoke confidently about how their qualification and training supported this knowledge and explained how they adapted experiences for different ages and stages. For example, younger children were offered sensory and play-based learning while older children were given more challenge and independence. During the inspection, children were engaged, curious and comfortable in their learning environment. The childminder used their knowledge of development effectively to support positive outcomes for children.

Children could make choices about their play and independently accessed a range of toys and resources. These were suited to their individual interests and stages of development. For example, they engaged in imaginative play with small world vehicles and explored water, filling and emptying containers. As a result, children were happy and engaged. A parent commented, "[The childminder's] home is a wonderful learning environment. It is well-stocked with everything, from messy play to figurines for imaginative play. The set up is ideal for balancing structured learning with creative, child-led exploration."

The childminder clearly enjoyed their role as they placed children's wellbeing, fun and development at the centre of practice. The childminder was attuned to children's verbal and non-verbal cues. This supported emotional regulation and encouraged children to engage confidently in play and learning. Interactions promoted language, social skills and independence. As a result, children benefited from a fun, happy and stimulating environment where strong connections supported them to achieve.

Planning for learning was responsive and informed by observation and discussion with children. Children benefited from a wide range of experiences which supported breadth and depth in their learning. Children's individual scrapbooks effectively captured children's voices, learning and achievements, with clear links to the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included) and children's rights. Families were involved in this process, helping them to feel included. Ongoing evaluation of experiences supported the development of future learning opportunities, ensuring children's play remained meaningful and engaging. One parent commented, "Our child enjoys an excellent range of activities and experiences from playing with other children, developing close friendships, art and craft and water and sand play. We love it!"

Numeracy and literacy were effectively embedded in everyday experiences. The childminder joined children in counting, recognising colours and describing what they observed. Songs were used naturally to enhance play. Praise and encouragement supported a positive environment where children felt confident and motivated to learn.

Children had regular opportunities to explore the garden and the local community. The childminder regularly visited local parks, woodlands and animals in the local area. These experiences supported curiosity about nature, encouraged caring attitudes towards animals, and helped children stay healthy and active. A parent commented, "Our child enjoys lots of outings. We are always given prior notice and risk assessment to review and sign. Whether it's garden play, visiting the pigs in Drum bar, a walk in the woods, a visit to the park, or even a bus trip to the cinema, we are kept updated via WhatsApp throughout the day. We have full confidence in our child's safety when they are out exploring with [the childminder]."

Children are supported to achieve 5 - Very Good

We found major strengths in this aspect of the setting's work and identified very few areas for improvement; therefore, we evaluated this quality indicator as very good.

Children were happy, confident and relaxed in the care of the childminder. Sensitive, nurturing and caring interactions ensured that children's needs were met, which meant they felt loved, safe and secure. Parents described the childminder as "fun, caring and respectful" and told us, "My child is thriving, this is the most wonderful care we have experienced and are truly blessed to have [the childminder] in our lives."

Children's personal care routines were delivered with sensitivity and respect, supporting their dignity and wellbeing. Warm interactions during nappy changing and sleep routines contributed to a calm and secure atmosphere. Positive sleep arrangements, including a darkened room and travel cot, helped children relax and rest well.

Children's personal plans contained information to support their health, wellbeing and care needs. Parents were central to this process and provided key information when children started at the service. Regular reviews and ongoing discussions with parents helped ensure the information was up-to-date and supported a continuity of care. As a result, children were provided with the individualised support they needed.

Children experienced positive snack and mealtime routines. They enjoyed food brought from home, which ensured their dietary needs and preferences were met. Children were encouraged to drink water during the day, helping to keep them hydrated and well. The childminder sat with the children, offering help when needed and encouraging relaxed conversation. These approaches created a calm, nurturing atmosphere where children were happy, well-supported, and kept safe.

The childminder had a clear settling-in policy, with flexible transition arrangements tailored to each child's needs. Parents were welcomed into the setting, shared information before starting, and routines were adapted to help children feel secure and settle smoothly.

Connections with families were a clear priority for the childminder. They warmly welcomed families into their home and used these interactions to share information about children and their day. One parent commented, "We have plenty discussions at each drop off and pick up. [The childminder] is always fully up to date with our child's life and is always very thorough in their handover." The childminder shared photos daily through an online platform to show families what children experienced. They also provided a detailed daily diary 'contact jotter' for each child, describing activities and experiences. This approach supported continuity and helped families feel informed, valued and confident in the care their child received.

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	5 - Very Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	5 - Very Good
Children play and learn	5 - Very Good
Playing, learning and developing	5 - Very Good
Children are supported to achieve	5 - Very Good
Nurturing care and support	5 - Very Good

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