



Childcare Inspection Report on

Alison Ingram

Cardiff



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Description of the service

Alison Ingram operates her child minding business from her home in the Thornhill area of Cardiff. The service has been registered since August 2015 to provide care for a maximum of 10 children aged from birth to 12 years of age. The child minders service operates between 7:45am and 5:15pm Monday to Friday. The main language of the setting is English with use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children attending are very happy, enthused and inspired by their play and learning experiences. They are cared for in a safe, stimulating environment with access to a wide variety of appropriate resources. They are cared for by a knowledgeable, nurturing and caring child minder who was dedicated to meeting the children's individual needs. Leadership is very strong as the child minder was proactive and was compliant with the regulations and national minimum standards.

2. Improvements

All recommendations for improvement identified in the previous CIW inspection report have been fully addressed.

The child minder had also:

- Involved parents and children in devising a nutritional menu with healthy eating options;
- further promoted independence during snack time by allowing children to help themselves to the snacks and drinks;
- enhanced knowledge and skills by attendance at various child care related training courses;
- has created a garden area where the children are enabled to be involved in learning about nature and wild life; and
- organised the environment to enable and encourage children's choices and interests.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no areas of regulatory non-compliance identified at this inspection and no recommendations to improve practice have been made.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning and interact in a highly positive manner. Children are very positively engaged in activities. They are confident in communicating their experiences and their choices and they are fully valued and secure. The children develop emotionally, physically, socially, creatively, linguistically and intellectually and thrive through their learning and play experiences.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are able to make choices and decisions and are provided with opportunities to express themselves. We saw children follow their own interests and choose what toys to play with. Activities were also planned to encourage particular areas of development, for example cooking sessions and learning about nature and birds. Children were happily engaged and stimulated in the activities they participated in which included: role play, construction play, moulding and cutting, imaginative play with small world animals, toy cars, puzzles, books, dressing up, dolls and board games. A child's choice was enhanced with access to favourite toys which were dinosaurs' figures. The child named them confidently and made dinosaur footprints in modelling clay. The child was excited when discussing with the child minder whether they were 'big' or 'small' footprints. Children chose the 'tap tap' box. They took turns to tap on the box and when opened smiled with delight as they selected an item of their choice. They then chose a song to sing which had some significance to the item. For example, a toy fish was selected, and they sang a song about counting fish. The children had great fun, whilst also learning actions and numbers. All children joined in enthusiastically with their hand gestures and saying new words for which the childminder gave lots of praise and cuddles.

Children at the service have a strong voice and are well consulted according to their age and stage of development.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children interact well with their peers. We saw that children played happily together or alongside each other. The children were very settled, relaxed and confident in each other's company. This deep engagement allowed the children to shape their play as they wished, and they had the time and freedom to do this. Children were able to make their needs known through gestures, sign language and speech all responded to by the child minder positively.

Children at the service gain a sense of security and belonging and are happy and valued.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children were polite and used good manners. Children were beginning to understand their feelings and emotions and were becoming sensitive to the emotions of others. They said 'please' and 'thank you' and were happy to share toys with each other. We saw that the children played closely with each other and were seen to be forming friendships. They shared toys with each other and negotiated turn taking in activities. For example, during role play and whilst playing with the toy dinosaurs. Children clearly understood right from wrong and were learning to manage their behaviour appropriately by saying 'please' and 'thank you' to each other. We saw that children were thoughtful and sensitive towards each other with respect for each other's feelings. We saw many children hugging each other. They cooperated with each other and displayed socially acceptable behaviour and manners. This was particularly noticed during tea time snack where they politely made conversation with each other.

Children interact in a highly positive manner. Interactions at the service are excellent and children play and learn happily together. Children are becoming sensitive to the needs of others.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children are engaged in an excellent variety of play and learning opportunities that promotes their wellbeing. We saw children were thoroughly enjoying their play. Children interact in a highly positive manner with various experiences which included structured and free play. They demonstrated their enjoyment with lots of smiles and laughter and cuddles with their peer group and the child minder. They sustained their interest for an appropriate amount of time. The child minder gave each child as much time as they needed to complete an activity and was wholeheartedly engaged with the children at their level in listening to what they said giving them praise at every given occasion. We saw children actively exploring their play and learning opportunities to their full potential.

Children gain an inspiring sense of achievement and value from their play and learning.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children are confident and motivated and are developing their independence through their involvement in activities and routines. Children were very confident in developing their play independently for example, when they role played with the kitchen utensils and improvised turning it into a café, pretending to make tea for the child minder. Their self-help skills showed confidence. For example, children went to the toilet independently, washed and wiped their hands and tried to put their coat and shoes on by themselves and ate their snacks independently.

Overall, children are provided with excellent opportunities to develop and become independent learners. Children flourish, develop and learn independence skills very well.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is very motivated, enthusiastic, caring and responsive towards the children. She is well qualified and has an in-depth understanding of the children's individual needs and works effectively to meet these needs. She is an excellent, positive role model for children and helps to create a warm, fun atmosphere that is conducive to learning whilst involving children in decision making, evaluating and planning on a variety of levels.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder implements a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in order to keep children safe and healthy. The child minder promotes healthy lifestyles through a varied menu providing healthy snacks and was aware of children's allergies, likes and dislikes. The child minder had registered as a food business with the local Environmental Health department. There was a clear safeguarding policy in place, which had been updated to include details of the 'Prevent Duty'. The child minder was able to tell us how she would implement the policy and was aware of her responsibilities regarding safeguarding and who to report any concerns to. The child minder had attended a child protection training course and was familiar with the 'Prevent Duty', which addresses the radicalisation of children. We saw records of accidents and incidents and these had been completely appropriately. The child minder had attended a first aid training course in July 2017. There was a timely procedure in place that ensured that training was re-booked prior to the expiry date. A daily register was kept of children attending. Regular fire drills were conducted with dates recorded. The child minder has in place a suitable system to record any medication that is administered to minded children.

The child minder uses effective clear and consistent systems and methods that keep children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder worked in line with her behaviour management policy in effectively managing interactions. The child minder was consistent in her approach and has regard for the children's individual stage of development and understanding when managing interactions. The behaviour of children was managed in a way that respected and promoted their welfare and development. The child minder said that should repeated unwanted behavioural issues arise with a child, she would endeavour to gain an understanding of the reasons behind the behaviours and would work in partnership with the child's parents and/or carers to resolve the issues. The child

minder had attended a training course 'Expectations of Behaviour' in 2019. The child minder led by example, being respectful to the children which they reciprocated. One child became a little upset, and we saw the child minder gently and calmly responding, asking what had upset the child, encouraging the child to express their feelings. This method clearly worked as the child accepted that it was good to share. The children were soon playing happily together. The children willingly helped to tidy up before getting other toys out and enjoyed helping the child minder prepare the table ready for snack, for which they received praise for their help and good work.

The child minder is excellent and effective at managing children's interactions and behaviour.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

The child minder understands children's individual needs and plans for their next steps in their play and learning. Children's needs are met through appropriate observations and a flexible activity planning system with emphasis on learning through free play opportunities. The child minder encourages children's imagination, creativity, exploration and engagement by understanding their individual needs, and age and stage of development. Observational notes are made by the child minder and shared with the child's parents daily. Each child also has a work book with photographs and comments of what the child has been engaged in and any progress made. These systems were used to tailor future planning and keep track of each child's developmental progress. Additional needs of children were quickly identified and discussed in partnership with parents. The child minder had attended training courses to develop her knowledge of meeting individual needs, including 'Supporting Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs', 'Raising Developmental Concerns with Parents' and 'Supporting Children's Emotional Well-Being'. The child minder told us that she encouraged children's ideas and suggestions which formed part of the planning of play, themes and activities. The child minder did not provide the 'active offer' in relation to the Welsh language. However, the child minder spoke Welsh to the children, sang Welsh songs to them and involved them in learning Welsh words and phrases.

The child minder is dedicated and very enthusiastic in promoting children's play, learning and development.

3. Environment

Summary

Children are cared for in a warm, comfortable, stimulating environment that is suitable for children's needs. The learning environment is rich, and the premises are safe, clean and well organised. There is an excellent selection of quality toys and resources, some of which reflect diversity.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

The child minder ensures that children are cared for in a safe, clean and child focused environment. Robust risk assessments were in place for both the indoor and outside areas and these were kept under review. The lounge was used for quiet time, whilst the conservatory was used for most play activities. The child minder promoted and practiced excellent hygiene procedures. The child minder encouraged children to learn about personal hygiene and practise these through their daily routine. For example, washing their hands before snack time and after toileting or messy play. Parents and carers can be reassured that their child is safe from strangers entering the premises as the front door, conservatory doors and side entrance to the child minders home were kept locked when children were present. A record of visitors is maintained. Records had been kept of when smoke alarms had been tested and fire drills carried out. Safety gates and a fire guard were in place where appropriate. Gas appliances have been tested, with all in order. Public Liability Insurance and car insurance were in date.

The child minder is very competent at ensuring the safety and suitability of the environment.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

Children's well-being is promoted by their environment because there is an excellent range of toys, resources and equipment provided that meets children's needs. Overall, the environment is one that encourages children to be confident, independent, develop their self-esteem and their sense of belonging. We saw that both indoor and outdoor areas were welcoming, friendly, stimulating, well-decorated and provided a rich and exciting environment for learning and play. Children are active, stimulated and positively occupied. Different areas for play had been set out in the conservatory to allow for space to relax and look at books, undertake messy play or crafts and eat snacks, as well as free play. The outdoor area had different zones, encouraging children to bug hunt, learn about birds, climb, balance, run and jump on the variety of play equipment, plant flowers and enjoy the natural environment. One child was

excited to tell us names of birds and as a bird flew over the conservatory he shouted with pride 'That's a magpie'. We saw that the children were very much at home and settled well on arrival, running off to play excitedly. Children were facilitated to make independent choices through the use of resources being accessible for all. Choices were enabled by resource boxes being labelled bilingually also with a picture of what toys were in each box. Children could choose to drink water throughout the day as their water bottles were accessible. Children were delighted that they could choose their own play and took the lead in it including the child minder in their play. The children also liked to dance along to music which they could choose by instructing 'Alexa' to play their favourite songs.

The child minder very effectively ensures the suitability of the environment.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

The child minder ensures that children have access to furniture, equipment, toys and materials that are appropriate and suitable to their needs age and stage of development. Resources are purposeful, wide ranging, clean and of excellent quality. The child minder had ensured that children of different ages had access to toys that were suited to their age and interests. The children enjoyed completing jigsaw puzzles, playing with construction toys and dolls, with particular favourites of role play and playing with small world toys and animals. Toys and materials promoted cultural awareness and equal opportunities with the celebration of cultural events. We saw that children knew where toys were kept and could ask or point to what they wanted to play with. We saw that the layout of toys, resources and equipment created a purposeful, wide ranging play environment for children that was safe and gave sufficient space.

The child minder ensures that there is an excellent selection of quality resources, toys and equipment available to the children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The leadership of the service is highly effective. The child minder reviews the service provision in partnership with parents and children. She is clear about her role and responsibilities. Information is shared effectively with parents. The child minder is committed to the on-going improvement of the service and was open about attending training to enhance her knowledge and skills.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has a clear vision for her service. Her practice reflects a positive ethos whereby children feel valued and supported. The child minder sets and strives to maintain high standards of care for the children. We examined information available and records, including CIW's last report, public liability insurance certificate, certificates of qualifications, a statement of purpose and accident/incident, existing injury records and records of any medication administered, and found them to be suitable and in good order. A register recorded the children's times of attendance. The child minder demonstrated a suitable understanding of her responsibilities to data protection under the Information Commissioner's Office and GDPR. Evidence also showed that the child minder was involved in the community, having set up a child minding group where other child minders meet up regularly to share information for so their children can play together. The child minder also took children to play groups and mother and toddler groups with the aim of children socialising holistically.

Parents can be confident the provision is well lead and managed.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder is reflective in her practice. She ensures that a review of the quality of care of the service is undertaken at least annually and involves parents and children in the process of evaluation. The child minder was well organised and had established a system that kept track of the feedback from parents and children by the use of questionnaires and open discussions. We spoke to one parent who said that they were very happy with the service that was provided and that the child minder was wonderful. The parent commented on how well her child had settled in and that they were making progress and learning new words. Questionnaires and feedback from parents were very complimentary and commented on how their child/children enjoyed their time with the child minder and flourished in her care. Children told us that they were listened to by the child minder. They said they enjoyed their time at the service,

and that they were happy, had fun and enjoyed playing games with their friends and the child minder.

There are effective systems in place to ensure that the service is subject to on-going self-evaluation and improvement.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

The child minder understands her role and responsibilities. The child minder was able to manage her time, plan for activities and record observations and relevant information of children in her care effectively and consistently. The child minder organises resources very responsibly. We saw that policies and procedures were well organised and contained the required information. A diary showed that the child to adult ratio met the national minimum standards. The child minders service was well planned and organised. Examples of this included, arranging planned and structured activities, snack times that involved the children and having resources organised so that they are readily accessible to children. There are contingency plans in place to deal with emergencies.

Management and leadership are very effective and efficient.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder works with parents and carers to identify each child's individual needs and to keep them informed about their child's progress and well-being. The child minder actively involved parents in making decisions about their child/children's care, understanding that they held responsibility about their well-being. The child minder had built trusting and effective partnerships with them. The child minder obtained detailed information about children's needs and preferences by agreeing contracts and completing child record forms, as well as keeping them informed on a daily basis. The child minder took time to give verbal feedback to parents and/or carers when they collected their child/children discussing what the child had achieved during the day, been involved in, including any significant events or changes in behaviour. When there was a proposal to change an aspect of a child's care, parents were fully involved in the decision making and in the review of these decisions, for example, when children were going to start school or nursery. All paper work was easily accessible and methodically kept. Information was shared with parents verbally, via text messaging, photographs, children's individual work and progress books and a daily diary. Evidence supported that the child minder was involved in the community having set up a child minding group whereby other child minders and children met up regularly. The child minder also took children to play groups and mother and toddler groups with the aim of children socialising holistically. Children experience warmth,

attachment and belonging. The child minder was seen to be genuinely affectionate and caring towards the children.

The child minder has established excellent partnerships with parents that are very accommodating and flexible so as to meet the needs of individual children.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

None

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken by one inspector. So as to ensure the child minder was home we telephoned. We spent approximately five hours with the child minder and the five children present. We:

- reviewed information held by CIW;
- observed the child minder and her interactions with children;
- examined a range of documentation, records, and children's files;
- considered the feedback given by parents and children; and
- undertook a visual inspection of the rooms used for child minding purpose and the outdoor garden area.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Alison Ingram
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0 – 12 years
Opening hours	7:45am – 5:15pm Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	08/09/16
Date of this inspection visit	13/03/2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early years education for three and four year olds provided at the service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	The child minder does not provide the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language. We recommended that the service user considers the Welsh Government's "More Than Just Words" strategic guidance for Welsh Language in Social Care.
Additional Information: None	