



Childcare Inspection Report on

Agnieszka Kowalska

Wrexham



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Description of the service

Angieszka Kowalska is registered to care for six children. Child minding takes place in the family home in the town of Gwersyllt. Hours of operation are flexible and include overnight and weekends. Facilities include the lower floor, the rear garden with toilet upstairs. The child minder can take and collect children from local schools and groups. She speaks Polish and English fluently.

The service does not implement the “Active Offer” in relation to the Welsh language, meaning parents and children are not able to access the service and its policies through the medium of Welsh without having to ask for it.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are at the heart of this service and experience warm, attentive care. Their well-being and self confidence is enhanced and independence encouraged. The enthusiastic and professional child minder provides a rich play environment and guides children sensitively and meets their every need. The environment is suitable with a variety of areas and resources. The child minder ensures the safety of children and attends training and accesses resources on line to extend her knowledge. Positive relationships with parents and others ensure good outcomes for the children.

2. Improvements

Not applicable as the child minder had only just started to care for children in addition to her own.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made one recommendation for the child minder to obtain parental permission from parents for their child to use the trampoline.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children's well-being and confidence is enhanced because they have a strong voice, are secure and valued as they experience nurture and respect. They are learning to interact well and enjoy the experiences provided. They are provided with activities to promote their all round development and independence.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children express themselves confidently and communicate their needs.

The child present made appropriate choices and decisions because they were aware of the options available to them. We saw the child moved around and explored freely within a well stocked play space. The child chose outdoor play and to practice racing with the child minder's own child. The child was confident to communicate because they knew their home language, Polish, was given due consideration. This was because the child minder is a fluent Polish speaker. They confidently asked for drinks and were offered a choice of fruit as snacks.

Children have a strong voice and they express themselves freely because their choices are respected.

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

Children feel safe and happy and know their feelings and wishes are taken into account.

The child present was settled and contented with the child minder and her own children. Strong bonds of friendship were clearly evident between the children. The child was happy and giggling and having fun with the child minder's own children. Children readily approached the child minder with requests or comments which were listened to and respected. For example when their ball went over the fence at the rear onto a path, the child minder immediately came to their aid.

Children feel safe and are happy in an atmosphere of acceptance which values and respects them as individuals.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact and co-operate very well with each other and the child minder.

It was a delight to observe children learning to negotiate amongst themselves how to play with large balls outside. They were beginning to share and take turns, for instance on the trampoline. Children co-operated well with the child minder, for example when asked to tidy toys away. The child was polite and considerate saying please and thank you.

Children experience very positive interactions with each other and there is an emphasis on friendship and co-operation.

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

Children are engaged and interested in their play.

Children sustained interest in activities for an appropriate amount of time. Children enjoyed playing with a home made play tent inside and with a bubble maker outside. The children were seen concentrating as they played in the sand and made a pretend cake. There was evidence in the weekly notes that the child had enjoyed a good variety of activities including outings and playing with garden toys.

Children enjoy their play and learning experiences.

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

Children have a good variety of experiences which promote their all-round development.

Children looked for signs of seeds growing which they had planted previously and then watered them. Their physical development was enhanced as they engaged in activities such as jumping on the trampoline and making their own racing games. They put on their shoes independently before going outside to play. Children were learning skills with support to help them be independent, such as putting on shoes, and going to the toilet independently.

Children are developing effectively and consistently as a result of having a choice of interesting activities and outings and are becoming independent.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder provides an effective quality of child care for children. She keeps them healthy and safe and manages behaviour positively. She promotes children's development through providing a wide range of play, outings and socialising opportunities. She meets their individual needs as she knows the children and their families well.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder implements policies and procedures which have children's well-being, health and safety at their centre.

There was an appropriate child protection policy in place and the child minder was clear about her responsibilities if she had a concern about a child and the contact numbers for the relevant agencies were readily available. The child minder knew about healthy eating principles and provided nutritious snacks and meals. Records showed a consistent approach to providing such meals, snacks and drinks. The child minder provided outdoor play and physical energetic play, for example on the trampoline. The child minder had a current First Aid certificate which meant that she would be able to deal with any injuries. There were no accident or medication records to examine as the child minder was only caring for one child for a limited time. Discussion and the evacuation plan showed that the child minder knows how to safely evacuate children from the building. The child minder knew the child's personal details such as any allergies through detailed records and permissions completed by parents.

The child minder efficiently keeps children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder uses positive behaviour management strategies to manage interactions.

The child minder managed interactions using positive strategies such as praise and encouragement. The child minder spoke gently and provided children with simple explanations. She was able to manage interactions well according to the principles reflected within the policy. For example, the child minder encouraged the children to share items such as buckets and books and they were learning to take turns. The child minder had a calm soothing way of speaking with the children and was a good role model. She gently explained consequences to the children and helped them to patiently wait for what they wanted to do.

The child minder manages interactions effectively.

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

The child minder provides a range of activities to promote children's development. She knows the children in her care well and meets their needs.

The child minder had provided a good range of experiences such as imaginative play in the dens and cooking which promoted the children's development. The variety of activities helped with all round development for example language and physical skills as they played in the sand, play dough and on the trampoline. They learnt about the world around them as they watered seeds, looked at books and used a bubble maker. Records showed children enjoyed outings to local places of interest such as ice cream farm and soft play areas and engaged with imaginative role play including a hospital. Photos showed the children having a wonderful time riding in special trucks being towed by a tractor. These photos evidenced an interesting range of activities and outings was provided.

The child minder meets children's needs effectively and promotes their play, learning and development well.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder ensures all areas of the premises are safe and well maintained. The child minder's home is suitable and well equipped for caring for young children. There is a wide range of toys and games for children to enjoy which are in good condition.

Our findings

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

The premises are safe and the child minder ensures children's safety.

The premises were secure with the main entrance locked and the outdoor area safely enclosed. There was a record of visitors and records showed that fire drills take place regularly. Written risk assessments had been recently reviewed and updated which demonstrated the child minder was aware of the hazards and how to manage them. For example, safety gates were used at the bottom of the stairs and only one child was allowed to play on the trampoline at a time.

The child minder keeps the premises safe and secure.

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

The child minder ensures there is sufficient space and facilities to meet children's needs.

The child minder ensured the environment was suitable to provide children with homely care. There was ample space for the children to play with their chosen toy or participate in the activities available to them. There were many areas where children could play including a lounge and dining area with a suitable table for children to enjoy meals. Outside we saw a grassed area with a slide, sand and a large trampoline. Toys and books were stored at children's height so that they could easily access them. The toilet had a step to enable children to use the facilities independently.

The child minder actively ensures the suitability of the environment.

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

The child minder provides children with clean, quality toys and equipment.

The child minder ensured there were enough toys, games and books to keep children profitably occupied. For example many books, dolls, construction and toddler toys. Outside we saw children playing in a sand pit, using a slide and trampoline, floor chalking and enjoying a bubble maker. The child minder had purchased electronic toys which made realistic noises such as a teapot which made a pouring noise. This helped children to play imaginatively. All toys and games were clean and in good condition.

The child minder ensures the resources and equipment are of good quality.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is motivated, and is keen to provide a quality service. She has informal systems in place for the ongoing review of her service and ensures improvements are made. The child minder's record keeping is well organised and she completes courses to update her knowledge of child care. The child minder has good relationships with parents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Leadership is successful and forward looking.

The child minder provided an up-to-date statement of purpose that reflected an accurate picture of the service provided. The practices that we saw were consistent with the information in the statement of purpose. Policies were recently reviewed and dated and a trampoline policy had been added. The child minder was competent and had ensured that legal requirements were met such as having a current DBS and public liability insurance. She had contacted the CIW to ensure we were aware of any changes and significant events. We recommended that she obtained parental permissions for playing on the trampoline.

Leadership is organised and motivated, producing good outcomes for children.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder has informal systems in place to assess the service provided.

The child minder was aware of the need to produce an annual review of the quality of care within a year of practicing. Whilst the child minder has made improvements to the paperwork, she has begun a formal review by giving a questionnaire to the parent using the service and the results have been documented.

Some self evaluation takes place and improvements made.

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

The child minder manages her service and is organised.

The child minder administered her service well with paper work well organised and easily accessed. She had used initiative in accessing some paper work and relevant information through contacting the Wrexham Family Information Service (FIS). The child minder takes her professional development seriously and ensures courses are completed regularly such as child protection, food hygiene and first aid. Disclosure and Barring Service checks for all in the household who are over 16 years of age were current. All records were up to date and in organised files.

The management of the service is very effective.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder has good working relationships with parents and other agencies.

The child minder had written information from parents about the care of their child which was up to date and included various permissions. Parents and the child minder exchanged information verbally daily (rather than in written form) as the child was of school age. Information about courses was gained by communication with other agencies such as the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years and Wrexham FIS. The returned questionnaire from the parent who has used the service evidenced the parent is very happy with the care their child has experienced. Parents also appreciate the regular photos they receive showing what their children have enjoyed that day.

The child minder understands the importance of working in partnership with parents and others to ensure that children's needs are met.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommend that the child minder obtains written consent from parents to their child using the trampoline.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. Half an hour's notice was given for the first visit to ensure the child minder's availability. The second visit was arranged to see records not seen during the first visit. One inspector visited the service on 23 August from 9.40 – 11.30 and 30 August 2018 from 14.10 – 14.50.

We:

- Inspected a sample of documents and policies;
- observed practices and completed observations to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided;
- spoke to the child being cared for;
- inspected the areas used and
- reported our findings to the child minder.

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	Agnieszka Kowalska
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	8 weeks to 12 years
Opening hours	Daily 8.00 – 20.00 and weekends and overnight care available.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	First inspection since being registered on 4 July 2016
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	23 and 30 August 2018
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?	No This service does not provide an 'Active offer' of the Welsh language. This is because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service.
Additional Information:	