



Childcare Inspection Report on

Amie Sheldon

Bridgend



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Description of the service

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registered Amie Sheldon as a child minder in November 2017 but she only began operating her service on 31 August 2018. The child minder lives with her partner and three sons at their well presented, semi detached home located near the centre of Sarn, Bridgend. The service is open Monday to Friday 08:00 – 17:30 and can provide care for six children from birth to 12 years of age.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy and are beginning to develop trusting relationships with the child minder. The child minder carefully manages her service and provides a clean and safe environment with opportunities for child initiated and adult led activities.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

No non-compliance was identified during the inspection. Some recommendations have been made and are detailed at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are encouraged to become independent and confident little people. They are learning to speak their own mind and make decisions for themselves.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children can make choices and express themselves freely.

Children chose the cutlery and plates they wished to use at lunch time, going through a selection of characters before deciding upon the one they wanted. Conversations flowed easily during lunch and play activities. Children approached the child minder confidently asking to go to toilet or to play with a particular toy. When a child wanted to continue a craft activity they told the child minder and they continued to paint Christmas decorations. Before car journeys children decided where they wanted to sit in the car and their decisions were heard and respected.

Children have a voice that is valued.

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

Children are beginning to form trusting relationships with the child minder and feel comfortable in her care.

Children were happy to see the child minder when collected from other services. They held her hand and knew the routine, standing by the wall to wait while the child minder locked the car and then walking to the house. The children ran into the house in front of the child minder shouting "I win", which the child minder explained is something that all the children do when they are together. Children from Welsh language homes showed a considerable interest when the child minder used basic Welsh language becoming more talkative and attentive indicating they felt recognised and valued.

Children generally feel safe, happy and valued.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning to manage their behaviour.

Children knew the routine and behavioural expectations upon them although did need reminding on occasions. They responded well to gentle encouragement, smiling and looking at the child minder for reinforcement. They sustained interest in activities for appropriate timescales, for example a child played with puzzles until they were all complete.

Children's interaction is appropriate.

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

Resources are easily accessible for children to choose from and promote their development. This enables them to engage in activities and use toys and equipment of particular interest to them. They initiate their own learning whilst having fun in a supportive environment, as the child minder is alongside them for help and assistance when needed.

We saw the children playing with puzzles, cars and dolls. They completed a Christmas craft activity, where they painted a tree decoration to take home. They enjoyed the activity and it sustained their interest for a good time period. The children selected toys and engaged in free extended periods of uninterrupted play. They sought out the child minder for assistance when needed. The children's sense of achievement and self-esteem was enhanced by the child minder's positive feedback

Children enjoy their play and learning at this service.

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

Children do things for themselves but understand they can ask for help when needed.

We observed children taking responsibility for their possessions; they took off their shoes and coats, hanging them in the hallway. Children use the toilet mostly independently, with the child minder supporting them with the more difficult tasks; turning the taps on and prompting them to dry their hands. Children helped tidy away the toys after using them and could feed themselves at lunch time. When a child could not open an item from their lunch box they asked the child minder for help.

Children are developing age appropriate skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is caring and is beginning to develop trusting relationships with children. Whilst she shows signs of knowing the children well, having more confidence to utilise skills, such as incidental Welsh, will help her meet children's individual needs.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder strives to put children's well-being first.

The child minder had a sound understanding of general safeguarding procedures including 'prevent duty', which helps protect children from extremism. She had sought permissions from parents for a range factors and knew the children's likes, dislikes and any allergies that they had. Required training had been undertaken in first aid, food hygiene and child protection. The child minder and her husband held valid Disclosure and Barring System certificates and she had a visitors book which people signed on entering and leaving her home. She completed daily checks of the premises and kept her home clean and tidy. Smoke alarms were regularly tested and evacuation procedures undertaken and recorded, so children knew what to expect in the event of a fire. There was little information for accident, incident or medication forms as the service has been running for such a short period but we noted they were available should they be needed.

The child minder keeps children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder models behaviour and is clear of her expectations for appropriate behaviour.

The child minder was kind and calm, she talked and behaved in a way that was appropriate for the child to understand. We observed her going down on the floor to play or sitting at the table, which made her more approachable to children. When a child began moving around at the dinner table, she asked her politely to "sit down" explaining further about appropriate behaviour at the dinner table. The child minder also sat at the table after making her own lunch, reinforcing the social expectations whilst eating food. The child minder included members of children's family in conversations; this encouraged the children to talk openly, as they were familiar topics of conversation.

The child minder manages interactions well.

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

The child minder identifies children's needs but needs to further her own knowledge to be able to fully support the specific needs of the children's in her care.

The child minder used her knowledge of the children and their home life to encourage children to engage and feel comfortable with her. She tried to utilise the children's first language, which visibly helped children to relax and immediately provided a more enthusiastic response from the child. The child minder completes general activity planning and understands the importance of assessing children's knowledge, understanding and development. Currently, she does not keep records of evaluations and assessments but is looking into developing a system to record this information.

The child minder generally meets children's play, learning and development and individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

The environment is safe and secure for children's care. It is very clean and well maintained, with a range of age appropriate toys and equipment.

Our findings

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

The child minder identifies and minimises risks to children.

The child minder had risk assessments which were reviewed annually or sooner where necessary. She also completed daily visual checks ensure that the premises and outdoor area are free from hazards to children. For example, ensuring that external doors were locked to prevent unauthorised access to and from the property, keeping blind cords out of children's reach and having safety gates located at the top and bottom of the stairs and on entry to the kitchen. The child minder had good infection control systems in place and ensured that cleaning fluids were stored away in suitably locked kitchen cabinets. Gas and electrical safety certificates are available for viewing; demonstrating that the child minder regularly completed maintenance checks. She also ensured that visitors signed a visitors' book on arrival and leaving.

The child minder ensures that the environment is safe and secure.

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

The child minder had systems in place to maximise the use of the environment and ensured the areas used by children were accessible and had appropriate resources and equipment and systems were in place to use the environment

Children felt comfortable exploring the toys and resources and could relax on the sofas or eat food and complete craft activities at the kitchen table. Younger children used a booster seat or high chair to sit with the other children. Children could choose to play with toys from a limited selection that were mostly stored in boxes at child height or laid out on the floor. With support, children put away resources after finishing playing with them, to make room for new activities. Children could play outside in most weather, should they wish to, as it was laid with artificial grass and paving. The downstairs toilet was easily accessible and a step provided for younger children to reach the toilet and sink.

The child minder generally provides a suitable environment for children's care.

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

The quality of the resources and equipment was excellent but the quantity of toys was only sufficient for the current number of children in attendance.

Resources and equipment were extremely well maintained and in excellent condition. All toys were in working order, jigsaws had all their pieces and the batteries were regularly replaced in the ride on bike, ensuring the sounds worked. Children could play with dolls, cars and trucks, a small selection of puzzles, doctors instruments, some baby shape sorters a limited amount of mega blocks and some craft activities as well as some outdoor resources. Although children played with most of the toys, they engaged more with the new toys provided. The resources were sufficient for children who attend once or twice a week however, as children begin to attend for longer periods and more frequently, the variety and number of toys requires extending. The car seats were very clean and appropriate harnesses available for the age of the child using them. A number of different size buggies were available to accommodate for the number of children.

The child minder ensures good quality resources and equipment.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Leadership is appropriate for the type of service provided and the duration of its operation. The child minder has not fully reviewed her service as she has been operating under a year.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has appropriate policies, procedures and records for managing her service.

The child minder has a Statement of Purpose that sets out the expectations upon her and those using her service. The child minder advises parents to view the service before placing their child, following this, there is a settling in period in line with the her policy. The policies and procedures relating to the operation of the service are provided for parents to read and they can request copies should they wish. A complaints procedure details how to raise any issues and the time frame in which they will be dealt. Care Inspectorate Wales' contact details are provided but need to be updated as they still refer to Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales. The child minder has current public liability insurance and is a member of a child care support organisation.

Leadership is suitable for the service.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

As the service is still in its infancy, the child minder has not completed an annual quality of care review.

The child minder is aware of the need to evaluate her service and currently keeps notes in her diary about issues that arise or she feels have worked well or need improving.

The child minder is developing her methods of self evaluation.

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

The child minder has appropriate procedures in place for meeting the necessary standards and to provide a reliable service to parents.

The child minder does not employ any staff. She has undertaken relevant training to update her skills and to enable her to carry out her role such as, courses run by the Local Authority and online courses. Parents are kept well informed of any planned holidays or absences, so that alternative child care arrangements can be made.

The child minder generally manages the service well.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder has prioritised partnerships with parents during the initial stages of her business.

The child minder works with parents to ensure children's routines are followed and that children attend playgroups in the local area. She provides a collection service to certain playgroups and schools. Currently, due to time constraints with collecting the children in her care, the child minder does not attend any stay and play groups, so children only interact with those in the child minder's care.

Partnerships with parents are well maintained.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

Several recommendations were made to help improve the service:

- Further own knowledge to meet individual needs
- Expand on the toys and resources currently available
- Consider ways to develop partnerships with the community
- Update documentation accurately referring to Care Inspectorate Wales
- Ensure there are records of activity evaluations and children's development.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector carried out an unannounced inspection of the service although a telephone call was made beforehand to ensure the service was operating.

We:

- spent approximately four and a half hours with the child minder;
- observed the child minder's practice and interactions;
- we spoke to the child minder and the children present about the service;
- we reviewed all information held by CIW;
- we examined a range of documentation including, policies, procedures, daily records, several children's files and other relevant records maintained as part of the service and
- we undertook a visual inspection of the areas used for minding.

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	Amie Sheldon
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	6 months – 12 years
Opening hours	Monday – Friday time arranged with individual parents
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	Not applicable
Dates of this inspection visit	20/11/2018
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?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service. <i>This may be 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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.</i>
Additional Information:	