



Childcare Inspection Report on

Natasha Matthews

Swansea



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Description of the service

Natasha Matthews registered in November 2017 and can care for up to 10 children at any one time. She provides care from her home in Loughor between 8.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. English is the main language used at the service. However, the child minder is able to converse in Welsh with children.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children enjoy a range of interesting activities. They are very happy, settled and confident. Children have strong bonds of affection with the child minder. The environment in which care is given is safe and the child minder stores toys and resources in an open cupboard. The child minder is committed to ongoing improvement and involves parents and children in discussions about ways to improve the service she offers. The child minder has good administrative skills and her documents and records are well organised.

2. Improvements

Since registering, the child minder has undertaken a course on the Foundation Phase.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations and these are detailed at the back of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are happy and settled at this service. They are able to make their own choices. They are confident in communicating their experiences and they feel valued and secure. Children are settled and are comfortable in the company of the child minder.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are listened to and are able to make choices. They are encouraged to speak and express themselves.

Children had a various choice of activities and they enjoyed moving freely from one activity to another. During our visit, we saw children play happily in the lounge and had a choice of activities. One child chose a book about birds and all children were fully engrossed as the child minder read the story. At lunch time, children had the opportunity to have ham with their beans on toast. Some children opted to have ham whilst others didn't.

Children at this service have a good voice.

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

Children feel safe and relaxed and have positive attachments with the child minder.

Children were familiar with the routine and felt safe and happy to attend as they were calm and settled. Children listened attentively to a story and a child then attempted to read to the child minder and happily said, "*story time*". Children confidently approached the child minder for cuddles and conversed confidently about different children attending the service. For example, one child said that they would be going to school in September and another said that a younger child would be starting playschool in September.

Children are well settled, happy and relaxed.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are caring towards each other and are learning to share. They have close bonds with each other.

Children enjoyed their play and played happily together. Whilst watching a short programme about an elephant meeting his friends, they turned to each other and said, "*friends*" whilst they gave each other high fives. On another occasion, children cuddled each other and said, "*best friends*". Whilst playing with animals, children took turns and shared the animals amongst them. On one occasion, a child wanted an animal that another was playing with but they were able to reach a compromise and the situation was resolved very quickly. Children said 'please' and 'thank you' when prompted. For example, a child

said, 'No' when they were offered more grapes and then, "*no thank you*", after being prompted. When a child was asked to pass the orange jigsaw piece, the child replied and said "I will".

Children interact positively at the service and comply well with rules of socially acceptable behaviour.

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

Children have a good range of play activities and experiences

Children thoroughly enjoyed themselves looking at a book about a day in the life of a cow and a very young child pointed to a cow's udder and said, "*Milk*" and proceeded to say that the baby drinks the milk. An older child said that the baby, "*Drinks out of the udder*".

Children also enjoyed talking about the food that cows eat. We saw photographs of children smiling and enjoying mark making sessions, painting stones, matching numbers and items and during visits to the Wetlands Centre and the park.

Children very much enjoy their play and learning.

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

Children are curious and enjoy learning. They are enthusiastic and express themselves well.

Children were able to concentrate for sustained lengths of time and took interest in the world around them. When asked, '*What bird is it?*' a young child replied, '*Red Kingfisher*' with a little help from the child minder. Children also counted all four birds on the relevant page of the book. We saw several example of children learning to make connections, for example, one young child saw a picture of a pair of wellingtons in a book that they were reading and said "Boots" and then went to the hall to see if she could find their wellington boots. During lunch time, children were given their food, cutlery and drink therefore did not have opportunities to develop their independence skills although all ate their food independently. A child saw an elephant cycling with one wheel in a short programme and the child said, "He's on a unicycle". A child identified a centipede and matched the centipede to a picture on a chart. Children identified different colours in Welsh, for example, when children were asked the colour of different items we heard children replying with "*coch*", "*gwyrdd*" and "*oren*". On another occasion when playing with toys insects, children counted eight legs on an octopus and also counted the legs of a scorpion and a spider.

Children are developing well.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is motivated and enthusiastic. She follows her policies and procedures to support children's development and to keep them safe and healthy. She has a good understanding of the children's individual needs and effectively meet their needs.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities in relation to child protection. Children are kept safe and healthy with regular physical activities.

The child minder had policies and procedures in place. The child protection policy included procedures and local contact numbers for making referrals. The child minder gave positive responses to given scenarios and was able to explain how she would deal with disclosures or recognise signs of abuse. The child minder undertook a child protection course over three years ago. The child minder allowed children to use the garden area and often visited local parks. Children were offered a variety of foods and the child minder told us it was usually child led, for example, on the day of the inspection the children chose beans on toast for lunch and they had yogurt for dessert. However, although children had water bottles, at lunch time most children drank squash. The child minder had a nappy changing policy in place and wiped the changing mat with anti-bacterial spray and disposed of nappies appropriately. The child minder had ensured that the vehicle used for child minding had valid MOT and tax.

The child minder is generally effective in keeping children safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder is a good role model. She interacts positively with the children and acknowledges good behaviour.

We saw that the child minder effectively promoted children's all round development and we saw her praising good behaviour, good manners and achievements, for example, "*Well done*" and "*good sharing*" when one of the children gave a guitar to another child. The child minder was calm and patient with children and used distraction methods which prevented the likelihood of any conflict. We saw numerous examples of the child minder conversing naturally with children and asking questions to sustain conversations. For example, at lunch time a child said, "*I've finished*" and the child minder engaged by saying, "*Did you enjoy?*" leading to a conversation about the different foods they liked.

The child minder manages behaviour consistently and effectively.

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

The child minder knows the children in her care well, understands and meets their needs.

We saw that the child minder understood and met individual needs. The child minder was able to tell us about the children's preferences because it was all included in the registration process and recorded in their individual files. The child minder had a good understanding of child development; for example, we saw her talk to the younger children in clear, simple language and at eye level. During play, the child minder was effective in using ordinary situations to further develop the children's thinking and learning, for example, whilst referring to a hedgehog the child minder said, "I wonder why he has spikes?" and a child replied, "*It's to protect him*". She had also started to keep a learning journal for each child. One parent noted in a questionnaire that she felt the child minder offered "a good mix of staying in the house or going out for activities".

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

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder provides a warm and child friendly environment and a suitable supply of age appropriate resources to children. The environment is safe, clean and secure. The garden is accessible from the kitchen and there is also a downstairs toilet.

Our findings

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

The child minder ensures that children are well cared for in a clean and well maintained environment.

We saw that the premises were secure; parents and visitors had to knock to gain entry as the door was kept locked and the side entrance was also secure. We were asked to sign a visitors' book on arrival. The gas boiler had been serviced in June 2018. Public Liability insurance was in place and valid until November 2018. The child minder held regular fire drills and kept a log. However, although the month was recorded the actual date was not recorded. The environment was well maintained and the child minder had basic risk assessments in place and also assessed the environment daily. Records also included a daily kitchen and bathroom cleaning schedule and the child minder kept a record of the fridge temperature. The child minder conducts regular maintenance checks, for example, she checks the smoke alarm on a weekly basis.

The child minder is effective at ensuring the safety of the environment.

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

The environment is welcoming and provides opportunities for children to develop their skills.

The child minder provided the sitting room for the children to play in, they used the kitchen for messy play and mealtimes whilst the lounge was used for nappy changing and sleeping. Resources were stored at children's level in the main. The child minder had organised the toys and resources in boxes and on shelves in an open cupboard and children generally helped themselves to the toys, although not all toys were easily accessible to all children. The child minder provided messy play opportunities for children in the kitchen. The outdoor area was spacious and also had a small selection of age appropriate resources.

The child minder ensures that the environment is suitable.

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

The child minder has a good selection of toys and equipment which are appropriate for the children's needs.

We saw that children had access to a wide selection of resources such as building blocks, slide, various balls, dolls and pushchairs, musical instruments, dressing up clothes, construction toys and board games. Resources were clean and age and developmentally appropriate for all children in the child minder's care.

The child minder has a good supply of suitable and age appropriate toys and resources.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder maintains the required records and documentation and has good organisational skills. She complies with regulations and national minimum standards. The child minder manages the service well and has a system in place to review the service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has policies and procedures in place.

The child minder's statement of purpose gave a relatively clear picture of the service although details about the aims and objectives were not in depth. The child minder ensured that policies and procedures were clear and focused on the needs of the children. However, the complaints policy needed amending slightly to include more details. Contracts and development records were kept securely and all records were well organised and had been completed diligently. However, the child minder recorded siblings present on the same line in the main. The child minder had registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and this is referenced in the confidentiality policy.

The child minder is mainly efficient in her management style.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder has started collating feedback about her service from parents and children. She values feedback from parents and children.

The child minder told us that she had started the process of self evaluation and had gathered feedback from parents and children about their views about the service. The child minder was aware of the requirement to forward a copy of the report to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) on an annual basis. The child minder had established some priorities for improving the service she offered, which included developing her Welsh language skills and further developing the outdoor area.

Self evaluation and planning for improvement is developing.

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

The child minder ensures that she completes the required paperwork and obtains the necessary checks.

The child minder had ensured that suitability checks, such as disclosure and barring service checks, had all been obtained for herself and other adult household members, and were up to date. We saw that the child minder had completed training for Paediatric First Aid in July

2017. The children's attendance records showed that the child minder worked within her conditions of registration by caring for no more than 10 children at any one time. The child minder is a member of a child minding organisation and also regularly meets up with other child minders and often discussed matters relating to good practice within those forums.

The child minder manages her business effectively to ensure good outcomes for children.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Parents are kept informed and updated.

The child minder gave parents a copy of the policies and parents had acknowledged that parents had received policies and a statement of purpose. All of the required child records and documents were in place as well as all of the required consents from parents. The child minder kept parents informed through a mixture of verbal feedback and texts. Parents were very positive; we received a parental questionnaire from one parent, which included very positive comments. The child minder encouraged the children to have an awareness of their community and feel a part of it by organising regular outings and visits to places in the locality.

The child minder has developed good partnerships.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

This was the first inspection after registration.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that the child minder:

- includes more details in the Statement of Purpose;
- clearly notes the presence of each child on the attendance register;
- refreshes her child protection training;
- further develops the children's independence skills;
- records the actual date on the fire drill log;
- ensures that younger children have easier access to resources; and
- further develops the outdoor area.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector carried out a visit to the service, arranged at short notice, lasting three and a half hours.

We:

- had discussions with the child minder about her service;
- observed the children and the care which they received;
- looked at a wide range of records and documents including children's registers, children's records, the child minder's policies, safety records, and the statement of purpose;
- inspected the premises; and
- gave verbal feedback to the child minder on our findings from the inspection.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Natasha Matthews
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Up to 12 years old
Opening hours	8.00am-6.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This was the first inspection after registration
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	16 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?	This is a service that is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Additional Information:	