



Childcare Inspection Report on

Amanda Regan

Chepstow

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This report is also available in Welsh



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Description of the service

The child minder operates from her home in the Bulwark area of Chepstow. She has been registered since February 2018 to provide home based child care for a maximum of 8 children up to the age of 12 years. The service operates Monday to Friday 7.15am to 5.30pm throughout the year. Children have access to the ground floor and bathroom to the first floor. The garden can be used for outdoor activities. The main language of the service is English with use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are cared for by a child minder who values them as individuals, and creates a nurturing environment for them to play. Children enjoy their play and learning and benefit from a wide range of stimulating resources. They are happy and very well settled and have obvious strong bonds of affection with the child minder. Outdoor play and outings in the local community and beyond are a daily feature. The premises is well laid out with different areas for children to play safely. There are good systems in place to record information and the service is reviewed regularly.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection since registration in February 2018

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no areas of non compliance identified during this inspection. Recommendations raised mainly relate to leadership and management are discussed in the body of the report and summarised towards the end.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are listened to in a setting where their ideas and opinions are valued. They are settled and happy in the care of the child minder, having formed positive relationships with her. They are developing sociably and learning to manage their own behaviour to support their interactions. There are good opportunities for children to play and develop, as a wide range of resources and activities are available to them. They are learning to be independent in their play and development.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children communicate their needs confidently. We saw the minded child approach the child minder to ask for help and to indicate when they needed things. For example, we saw the child express that they had enough to eat and were full. The child minder skilfully try to encourage the child to eat a bit more from the lunch box saying *'Why don't you try another sandwich, it looks really yummy and mummy will be pleased'*. When the child refused the child minder did not persist further but told the child *'you've done very well'*. Children are given the time to make choices and we saw the minded child help themselves to toys and activities that they wanted to use. They participated well in the planned activity making mother's day card. The child was encouraged to express their ideas about how the card would be decorated. The child reminded the child minder *'I want to stick hearts on my card for my mum, I think I'll choose red pink blue and green'* and the child minder agreed it would look splendid. We observed the child was freely able to express their opinions and contribute ideas because the child minder was responsive to the child and showed an interest in what they were doing and saying.

Children are listened to and supported to communicate their needs in an environment that nurtures their opinions.

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

Children are happy and relaxed in the care of the child minder. Initially the child present was shy when we asked them questions about their time there. However, they were happy when playing and chatting with the child minder, evidencing that they enjoy attending. They had their personal care needs attended to quickly, such as when toileting because the child minder provided responsive care enabling them to feel comfortable. The child had clearly formed secure attachments with the child minder, enabling them to feel safe when looked after by her. The child approach her for the toys that could not be see, such as asking the child minder about a particular the doll. The child appeared very relaxed, chatting with the child minder. We noted that the minded child confidently talked, telling her about their morning at the nursery

and who they played with and what they did. The reciprocal interest from the child minder enables them to feel valued during discussions and promote their self-esteem. Children have a sense of belonging because the environment is a welcoming and homely space for them to enjoy and relax.

Children feel happy and safe in a service where they are valued and appreciated.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are co-operative with the child minder and respond well to the boundaries she sets. They learn how to manage their own behaviour and socially play with their peers. The child minder told us that she gently guides them to play nicely together and share. She gave clear examples of how she intervenes when older children are around or when more than one child is present at any one time. For example, she told us, that she helps children to find alternatives toys when conflicts breaks out because they all want to play with a certain toys or do the same activity. She told us that gentle interventions provided a good distraction, enabling the children to continue play happily alongside one another. Children learn about safety within their play, because the child minder provided the children with frequent reminders when needed, such as playing more calmly when the child began to run around. Both the child minder and the child had clearly formed close relationships, as the child indicated when they wanted the child minder to join in. The minded child used polite manners independently and at other times, when prompted to do so. The child seemed to have learnt a clear sense of right from wrong.

Children are developing good social skills to help them to form positive relationships.

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

Children are motivated and engaged in their play and learning. Children are able to choose from a range of planned activities which sustain their interests and the child was seen to enjoy the resources on offer. A good variety of toys and equipment are accessible and setup for all age ranges, to enable children to choose what they would like to play with, promoting their all-round development. We saw that play is mostly child led and the child minder is available and alongside for help and support when needed. There are also planned trips out. This provides children with a variety of learning and play experiences in different contexts. Planned activities are also on offer, but optional according to the children's play preferences. On arrival from the nursery the minded child at first settled down to eat their lunch and then chose free play. On noting other children's art work in the kitchen the child asked the child minder '*Can I do some painting?*' The child minder replied '*yes you can, do you want to paint or make your mothers day card first?*' The child looked excited and agreed to make the card first. The child looked proud of their achievements and showed us how they used the spatula to spread the glue across the heart shaped card. The child carefully

selected the different coloured confetti hearts to stick on the card. The child enjoyed looking at photographs of themselves and other children that attend the child minders house. The pictures evidence a wide variety of trips out and play opportunities that the children receive, furthering their development and giving them the benefit of plenty of fresh air and exercise. These include visits to local parks, playgroups, rhyme time and welsh speaking at the local library as well as meeting up with other child minders. When time permits and particularly during the school holiday periods, the child minder takes the children on trips further afield, such as to Caldicot castle.

Children enjoy their play and learning as there is a good range of suitable opportunities provided to maintain their interests.

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

Children receive plenty of unstructured play, which encourages their natural curiosity. The child minder and the setup of the environment facilitate children's independence skills. They can access toys themselves and move between the areas according to their play preferences. They are encouraged to do things for themselves, such as to tidy away toys after themselves. According to their age and stage of development, they access the things that they need with age appropriate degrees of independence, such as eating their meals unaided.

Children are making good progress and gaining independence skills at an age appropriate pace.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Children are kept safe and healthy because of the good processes in place, underpinned by appropriate policies. The child minder supports their interactions, providing them with clear and consistent boundaries to help them to form positive relationships. Activities planned promote their all-round development. We made a recommendation with respect to children's assessment records.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is experienced in the role of childcare as she had been working as a teaching support assistant at a primary school. She told us this helped her have confidence in becoming a child minder. Appropriate procedures are in place for keeping children safe and healthy. The child minder has current training certificates for child protection, paediatric first aid and food hygiene. She has renewed Disclosure and Barring Service checks as necessary. The child minder does not provide meals for the children in attendance. She told us she wanted to concentrate on caring for the children than spend her spare time preparing meals. We noted that the food preparation areas were clean. Appropriate hygiene routines are in place to promote children's health and wellbeing, including good nappy changing procedures. We saw records such as fire drills logs, although some practise had taken place we noted there were long gaps in-between. We discussed this with the child minder who agreed that because there are different ages of children and mostly are looked after part time, it would be beneficial if these were undertaken more frequently. This would ensure all children could participate and become confident during evacuation. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that they are appropriately recorded and monitored.

The child minder promotes healthy lifestyles and keeps children safe.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder has a good understanding of child development and how to support children in their day to day interactions. She sets realistic guidelines for acceptable behaviour and intervenes when necessary, providing explanations and guidance for how to behave, as well as setting an example of kind manners. We heard her encourage the minded child to say please and thank you, wait for others before leaving the table after meals and use polite manners. The skilful approach of the child minder helps the children to play respectfully with one another and build friendships. Furthermore, the child minder offers consistent positive feedback, encouragement and praise, which in turn creates a calm atmosphere.

The child minder has an instinctive approach to supporting children to develop positively in their interactions.

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

The child minder plans and supplies a good range of activities that meet the children's individual needs. She demonstrates an awareness of the Foundation Phase, a statutory curriculum for all children aged three to seven years, as she assesses children's progress in line with this. When children start with her, 'Starting Points' sheets are completed, identifying children's baseline needs. The child minder continues to document their development in individual files that identify when they have made further achievements. However, next steps in learning are not identified.

The child minder also includes photograph in observations files and tracks the activities that the children participate in. The purpose of the file is a keepsake for parents and children documenting their time with the child minder. From discussions with the child minder and observations of her practice, she has a good understanding of how to support children to learn in natural and playful ways. For example, she supported the child to develop their language skills during discussions in play, reinforcing how to say words, identify names for objects. She also introduces basic Welsh language skills through visiting the Welsh language learning session at the local library for younger children.

The child minder is experienced and able to identify and care for children's individual needs, within an environment that fosters their well-being and learning.

3. Environment

Summary

Children are cared for in a clean and tidy environment, providing a stimulating and safe environment for children. Risk assessments are in place. The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced, with an adequate range of equipment and furniture to enable children to play, learn and relax. We made recommendations to improve hand drying and storage of liquids in the bathroom area.

Our findings

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

In the main the environment is a secure and safe place for children. It is clean, well maintained and hazards are risk assessed with written records completed regularly. However, we noted that the first floor bathroom had communal towels in use alongside individual towels. We discussed that this may confuse the children when they needed to dry their hands. Sharing towels could cause cross contamination of germs and infections. In addition we noted that there was a selection of shampoo and mouthwash types of chemicals that were in easy reach of the children. The child minder agreed to store the items out of reach of the minded children. In the main the child minder's home is free from clutter and provides sufficient space for the number of children and age ranges cared for so that all the children can play and relax. The front door was locked during the inspection. Smoke alarms are in place and the child minder has a fire blanket secured to the wall. We saw a recent gas safety certificate. The child minder ensures that she supervises the children whilst providing them with plenty of suitable play opportunities. This allows a free flow of play activity to take place.

Improving storage facilities will further allow children to benefit from a safe environment.

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

The child minder's home is welcoming and friendly, enabling children to relax and explore their surroundings. Toys and resources are easily accessible to the children and they are clean and well maintained. There is a toy area in the lounge housing a toys and equipment, neatly stored on shelving, with some setup for use. Resources include arts and crafts are placed mainly in the kitchen/dinning area, role play toys, games, books and construction equipment is stored in the lounge. There is a separate area in the lounge with sofas, which can be used if the children need to relax on comfortable furniture. There is a large dining table in the kitchen, where we saw the child sit together with the child minder sociably having their lunch and complete table top activities and card making. A child height table and chairs is in the lounge. There were small world animals on it that the children had been using. Children have use of

the garden, which is safely enclosed. We noted that the child minder had a large trampoline and she told us that were able to play on it if parents had given written permissions. In discussion, she told us she thought that all ages of children could use the equipment as long as the children were safely monitored such as one to one use. The child minder was not aware of the manufacturers' guidelines for the equipment and therefore she decided to cease the use of the trampoline. Most manufactures guidelines state that children under the age of six years old are not recommended to use the trampoline.

Most child minding areas are suitable for children to play and learn in a relaxed and homely atmosphere.

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

The child minder has a good range of resources to promote children's development and to keep them engaged and stimulated. The resources include play materials that promote cultural awareness, including the Welsh language, such as books, games and multicultural dolls. There is also Welsh media displayed with activities such as the weather board and the calendar. From discussions with the child minder, it was clear that they make good use of the outdoors and that she values the benefit of this to children. The resources and equipment we saw were all clean and of a good standard.

Equipment was of good quality and suitable for a home based child care service.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is well organised and routinely reviews her service. She gathers the views of parents and children, to assess their satisfaction and to identify any improvements to be made to the service when needed. She has in place policies and processes to help her to operate her business effectively. However, she needs to amend her Statement of Purpose.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

All required policies for the child minding service are in place which supports the effective running of the service. They are signed and dated to evidence their annual review. Overall the Statement of Purpose (SOP) was well written. However, in light of the child minder deciding not to allow minded children to use the trampoline she must ensure that this information is noted in her SOP and shared with all parents. The child minder accurately records children's times of attendance on a register. We saw evidence of contracts that were shared with parents, setting out the expectations and responsibilities of both parties.

Overall Leadership is sound and the child minder has the relevant documentation in place to operate her business. Continued improvements will better improve the service she offers.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder plans to review and develops her service. She is aware of her responsibilities of writing an annual Quality of Care Report. We saw questionnaires that had been completed in preparation for this, seeking the views of parents and children about the service that they receive. The feedback evidences a high level of satisfaction with the service. Both parents and children stated they were happy and delighted to have the child minder care for them. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place, although no complaints had been received.

The child minder has a process in place to review her service.

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

The child minder does not employ any staff. She has undertaken relevant training in order to ensure good outcomes for children. Appropriate contracts are in place with parents and they are kept well informed of any planned holidays or absences, so that alternative child care arrangements can be arranged. The child minder uses a backup child minder whom the children are familiar with because they meet up for excursions.

Arrangements are in place for meeting the necessary standards and providing a reliable service to parents.

The child minder manages her own time well, keeps up to date with current practice and ensures resources for the service are appropriate.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

There are good partnerships with parents and these are promoted by the systems and processes in place. The child minder uses appropriate child record forms and contracts to help her to collect important information regarding the children. This helps to ensure that there is clarity about the service provided. Settling in sessions are offered when children start, to ensure that the child minder can meet children's needs and parents understand the service provided. The child minder discussed with us instances when children have taken longer to settle, through to success when they have felt happier being left in her care. Through the discussion it was clear that the child minder shows genuine compassion towards supporting parents and children with these times of separation. She gave examples of how she comforts the children, through cuddles and conversations, demonstrating that she is skilled and experienced with helping the children during these transitions. It was also evident from the paperwork completed that the child minder invests time finding out as much detail as she can about children prior to them starting, to understand their needs and to support positive relationships all round. The child minder ensures that information is shared with parents, including policies and procedures and information about the children's needs and development. She gives feedback to parents on a daily basis to share information about their child's day, including basic care needs, activities and food intake. The questionnaires collated showed the high levels of satisfaction from children and parents. One parent wrote 'I don't worry about leaving my child behind because I know what a lovely time they have with you'. Children noted that they enjoy coming to the child minders house and they enjoy seeing other children and are always happy to be there.

The child minder communicates effectively and works closely with parents to support their child's well-being.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to further improve the service for the children attending we advised that:

- Update the Statement of Purpose to clearly state that the child minder no longer wishes to use the trampoline whilst child minding;
- minimise the accessibility of liquids in the bathroom to keep children safe such items as mouth wash and shampoo;
- remove communal towels so that children are encouraged to use the individual towels provided for hand drying to minimising cross contamination of germs and spread of infections, and
- ensure children's individual observations and assessments consistently include their next steps in learning.

How we undertook this inspection

We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We looked at what we already knew about the service, including notifications since the service was first registered in February 2018;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector and took place over one visit;
- we observed activities and interactions between the child minder and the children;
- we sampled documentation and records, which included the statement of purpose, policies and procedures, records of accidents, incidents and complaints;
- we viewed operational plans, records of attendance and records of any medication administered; and We viewed all parts of the premises which are being used for child minding purposes, looked at maintenance records and other documentation relating to safety measures and took account of the security measures in place.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Amanda Regan
Registered maximum number of places	8
Age range of children	1 year old to 10 years old
Opening hours	Monday to Friday 7.15am to 5.30pm throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the first inspection since registration in February 2018
Date of this inspection visit	13 March 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?	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. We recommend that the service provider consider Welsh Government's 'More Than just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information: None	