



Childcare Inspection Report on

Nicole Lindsay

Llantwit Major



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Description of the service

Nicole Lindsay registered as a child minder in August 2004 to care for up to six children. Her service is based in her detached home in Llantwit Major which she shares with her husband and parents. Hours of operation are between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. The child minder caters for children up to 12 years of age. The child minder does not offer the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities. They are very happy, settled and confident. The child minder promotes a healthy lifestyle and places an emphasis on outdoor play and outings. Children are settled and have obvious good bonds of affection with the child minder. The environment in which care is given is safe, homely and has many toys and resources for the children to use. The child minder is committed to ongoing improvement through training and development. The child minder has competent administrative skills and all documents and records are organised and comprehensive. However, some recommendations have been made to ensure that the service meets all national minimum standards in relation to childcare.

2. Improvements

Following on from the inspection the child minder completed the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process by sending CIW the certificates to view.

3. Requirements and recommendations

No non-compliance was identified at this inspection.

We made recommendations to the child minder in respect of policies and procedures, infection control procedures, planning of activities and records. These can be found at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are happy and relaxed to spend time in the child minder's care. They benefit from a good range of play, learning and social opportunities that enable them to develop skills and make friends with others.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are able to make choices and they freely express themselves.

Children freely chose the toys and resources they wished to play with asked for toys if they could not find them. This showed that children were confident to speak and make their wishes known. For example, one child was playing with a toy phone and another also wanted one, so the child minder found another so they could both have a phone to play with. They also chose what fruit they wanted for snack. One child asked for apple, another pear, whilst the youngest child had a drink of milk. Children flowed freely between the living room and kitchen/diner depending on where they wished to spend their time.

Children have a confident voice.

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

Children are settled and cope well with separation from their families

Children were generally settled as have been attending the service for some time and were familiar with the child minder and their environment. They were comfortable to ask for things that they wanted and knew where to find certain toys and resources. Children had a positive attachment to the child minder. Some of the children approached her for cuddles showing that they felt reassured by her company.

Children are very settled and happy.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning to understand and manage their feelings and behaviour.

A child found it very difficult to share with others and to wait for things that they wanted, but this was typical for their age and stage of development. One of the children willingly offered their strawberries to the youngest child and they gladly accepted one. This showed that children were learning socially accepted ways to behave and were learning to be kind to others.

The children sustained interest in toys for a suitable length of time appropriate for their age and stage of development

Children interact appropriately.

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

Children take part in play-based activities and have the freedom to move around and choose the toys that they wish to play with.

The children were interested in the toys that had been placed out for them, such as the farm, crane, car garage, books and musical instruments. Children were engaged and focused whilst they made shapes with the playdough and cutters. One made cakes and pretended to put them in the oven stating, "*I'm making a cake for mummy!*" Another child spent time scooping dried pasta in the play kitchen, exploring the texture and feel. For a time, the children focused on the television for a period which helped to settle them.

Children engage well with the toys and resources

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

Children are supported to develop through play and regular trips and outings.

The older children ably fed themselves using cutlery and the youngest child used their hands to eat. The child minder assisted with toileting of the older children, when it was needed. This showed that children were learning to become independent.

Children had opportunities to learn through their play. For example they picked out coloured items from the shopping basket to sort onto matching coloured plates. This enabled them to identify different colours. Children had regularly visited places that enable them to socialise with other children, such as playgroups. They had also benefitted from regular outings to the park and other local places of interest, such as the beach and museum, which provided opportunities for physical and intellectual development.

Children develop sufficiently for their age and stage of development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Children benefit from a competent, caring child minder who is committed to providing a good child care service.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is mindful of children's health and safety but would benefit from developing policies and procedures to follow best practice guidance.

The child minder used booster seats for the children to sit at the dining table and ensured that children were strapped in for their safety. The child minder provided some food or snacks for the children, such as fish fingers, waffles and fruit, whilst others brought items from home to eat. The child minder did not follow a handwashing routine prior to eating, but hands were wiped with wet wipes when the children had finished eating. For hygiene reasons, the child minder put the dog outside whilst the children were eating and it was clear that this was common practice. The child minder did not have a pet policy to reflect how pets were managed whilst children were being cared for. A basic nappy changing policy was in place but her practice did not wholly reflect the current infection control guidance.

The child minder had recently undertaken child protection training so was aware of safeguarding issues. However, her child protection policy was brief and did not cover safeguarding considerations, such as the 'Prevent Strategy' and was not clear on the procedure to follow if any concerns were to be forward to social services. The child minder had undertaken first aid training and food hygiene training.

The child minder keeps children appropriately safe and healthy.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder is a positive role model who has developed good relationships with the children.

Children's behaviour was managed effectively as the child minder gave consistent messages to children to reinforce expectations. The child minder remained calm throughout her interactions with the children and used distraction and encouragement to help children overcome their emotions. She reminded children of the need to share whilst they played and generally managed behaviour in a way that was consistent with her behaviour management policy.

The child minder manages behaviour well.

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

The child minder provides a nurturing environment for the children. She ensures that children have plenty of opportunities for free play and activities/outings that supports their general development.

The child minder gave examples of the types of activities that she undertook with the children, such as making lanterns for Chinese New Year and multi-sensory play using coloured rice. She had recorded some of the activities or places that they had visited in a diary although no activity had been formally planned with a specific development outcome in mind. The child minder said that she tended to be child-led and set up activities that the children had shown an interest in. The child minder had regularly taken the children to soft play centres and toddler groups and occasional visits to other places of local interest, such as to Romilly Park, local beaches or a walk to the fish pond and feed the ducks after nursery.

The child minder had kept development records to record children's progress and had made brief observations of children's skills which had been dated to show progression. She had displayed photographs of the children in the files which evidenced them doing different things whilst attending the service such as playing games, at the park, on a bouncy castle.

The child minder competently supports children's play and development.

3. Environment

Summary

Children benefit from a clean, homely environment that is very well maintained by the child minder. There is a range of resources for children to play with to suit varying ages, tastes and interests. Most toys are easily accessible to the children.

Our findings

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

Children are cared for in a safe, clean and very well maintained home.

The door was locked to prevent access from unwanted visitors but there was not a visitors' book. The child minder had developed basic risk assessments for the areas of the house that were used for child minding purposes. The control measures put in place to minimise the risk of hazards to children included cupboard locks on many of the kitchen cabinet doors and safety stickers on the glass of the patio doors. The premises were very clean and well maintained: records showed that a gas safety check had been undertaken and smoke alarms had been tested monthly. However, only a shared hand towel was available for use in the toilet.

In the main, the childminder successfully ensures that the premises is safe for children.

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

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

Children were cared for in a play environment that was clean, child friendly, accessible and suitable for purpose. The dining area of the kitchen had a table which the children used for table top play and arts and crafts as well as eating meals. The lounge area was comfortably furnished with chairs and a sofa to relax upon. Some toys and craft equipment were stored within children's reach in the living area whilst others were stored in a downstairs cupboard or upstairs. Children had access to a good sized, securely fenced rear garden with space to run around and be active.

The child minder purposefully ensures the suitability of the environment.

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

Children have access to furniture toys and materials that are suitable for their needs.

Toys and resources were rotated and set out for the children in the living room. The children were able to independently access these. Children openly asked for some resources, which showed that they knew what was available. A list of toys and resources was kept in the child minder's file. This included outdoor toys such as a sand and water tray, slide, gardening basket, wheelbarrow, lawnmower, hula hoops.

Other indoor toys included, mega blocks dressing up clothes, musical instruments, mini kitchen, a safari mat with animals, shopping trolley and tills, books, board games, puzzles. The toys, books and resources were of good quality and were in good condition.

The child minder has an appropriate range of toys and resources for the children to use.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is organised and manages her service appropriately. On the whole, she maintains the required records and documentation and has suitable organisational skills. She builds effective partnerships with parents and provides clear information on the service she provides.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Overall, the child minder complies with regulations and meets many of the national minimum standards.

The statement of purpose was clear, informative and provided a good picture of the service, although required amendment as there had been changes. For example, there were no longer two dogs at the premises and the email address had changed. Policies were in place although some had not been updated to reflect changes and current practice. There was no record of the review date.. All the required child records and documentation were in place and we saw that records were well organised and securely stored. The child minder had obtained all the necessary consent forms from parents. Public liability insurance was in place and business cover had been obtained in respect of the use of her vehicle for her child minding service.

Child minder has competent leadership skills.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Child minder has developed a system for gathering feedback about her service.

The child minder had completed the required self-assessments (SASS) for CIW. Annual questionnaires had been given out to gather parents and children's feedback about the service she provides. Examples of comments from the last review included, *"X loves his days with you and communication and care for him from one to four years old has been brilliant. I would highly recommend your childcare service to anyone."*

The child minder had referred to action points but these tended to be quite generic statements rather than specific targets to help the service improve: *"I will continue to do as I am and I will continue to inform parents of their child's day at collection and ask that they pass on any important at handover."*

The child minder self-evaluates the service she provides adequately and has a basic plan for making improvements.

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

The child minder undertakes regular training showing that she values professional development. Some record keeping could be improved.

The child minder had recently renewed her DBS and ensured that household members had also renewed theirs to show that they continued to be suitable to have contact with children. However, she had not completed the process as she had not sent the certificates to CIW. The attendance register mostly included the times that children arrived and departed. However, by the end of the inspection visit the attendance register had not been completed for the day. The record showed that the child minder was working within her conditions of registration by caring for no more than six children under 12 at a time. She had submitted a variation application to increase registered numbers to eight children, although at the time this had not been approved. The child minder had undertaken many training courses since the last inspection which showed that she values professional development to remain informed about current childcare practice and issues.

The child minder manages resources appropriately.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder ensures that contracts are in place and that information is sought from parents before children start at the service.

The child minder said that she provided parents with copies of her statement of purpose and her other policies and procedures were available to view at any time in her file. The child minder gave verbal feedback to parents on collection and some photos were sent directly to them using WhatsApp. However, no daily diaries were in use for children under two years.

The child minder has sound relationships with parents.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that the child minder:

- provides daily written feedback to parents of children aged two and under;
- keeps a record of the activities that are undertaken with children as evidence of the opportunities that are provided for them;
- plans and undertakes activities that support children's specific development needs;
- expands and updates the child protection policy to include all information required by the national minimum standards and the 'Prevent Strategy';
- undertakes an audit of infection control procedures and ensures policies and practice reflect the current best practice guidance;
- records visitors; and
- reviews policies on an annual basis and records the date.

6. How we undertook this inspection

The inspection took place over three hours on 20 February 2019. Feedback was provided separately on 8 March 2019. This was an inspection as part of the planned schedule.

- one inspector carried out the inspection;
- we made general observations of the interactions between the child minder and the children attending the service and we spoke to the children;
- we left questionnaires for parents to fill out and send to us, if they so wished;
- we viewed records and documents including: the attendance register, children's contracts, policies and procedures, accident and incident records, medication records, the service's statement of purpose; and
- we performed a visual inspection of the rooms/outdoor areas that the children have access to.

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	Nicole Lindsay
Registered maximum number of places	8
Age range of children	0 to 12 years
Opening hours	8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	1 December 2014
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	20 February 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 service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of children who use or intend to use their service. We recommend that the child minder considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words' strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.
Additional Information:	