



Childcare Inspection Report on

Maxine Smart

Cardiff



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Description of the service

The child minder is registered to care for up to 6 children under the age of 12 years. She operates from her family home which is located in a residential area on the outskirts of Cardiff. Care is undertaken on the ground floor with access to a toilet on the first floor and a safe enclosed patio and garden area to the rear of the property. The childminder has a family pet dog. This is an English speaking service.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children have good opportunities for play and learning. They are developing new skills and positive relationships with their peers and the child minder. Care practice is responsive and the child minder regularly updates her skills and knowledge to offer children a good level of care. The environment is welcoming, well maintained and suitable for the care of children. Generally, the child minder runs her service in an organised and effective manner.

2. Improvements

The childminder has actioned all good practise recommendations made at the last inspection in May 2015 and achieved compliance in relation to DBS checks for household members.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We found that there was a non compliance in relation to some risks in the outdoor environment, however we have not issued a notice as the childminder took immediate action to address these issues and has achieved compliance. We found minor amendments are required to some documents and this matter is discussed in more detail at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children have an enjoyable time at the child minders. They have a suitable variety of play and learning activities. Children across age ranges interact and play well together and their independence is promoted.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are confident to speak out and express themselves. The child minder listens to them and responds to their needs. We heard the child minder ask children what they would like to do and they were able to make their own decisions regarding what they played with. Children attending on an after school basis presented as confident and able to say what they liked and disliked. We spoke to all the children and they told us that they were able to play with resources of their choice and if they were concerned about anything they would speak to the child minder. Conversations between children and the child minder flowed naturally and it was evident that children felt they could discuss and talk about anything.

Children are able to make their needs known and their communication is valued. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Children are settled, comfortable and supported. They are forming attachments with the child minder who provides appropriate care and support. We joined the child minder on the school pick up and noted that each child came out and cuddled and chatted to her about their day or plans for when they got home. We asked them what they liked to play with and they were all excited to tell us their favourite things to do at child minders. We spoke to an older child and they told us that they had enough things to do when they came after school. Children were at ease and happily played alone and with other children.' Children enjoyed interacting with the family pet dog who greeted them when they arrived home from school.

Children are forming good attachments with each other and the child minder and they are treated kindly and with respect. This benefits their well-being and makes their time at the child minders an enjoyable experience.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning to take turns, share and play co-operatively. Older children display an ability to play together without the need for adult attention and support. No unwanted behaviour was noted during the visit. They sat together and took turns sharing paints whilst completing a pottery painting craft activity. The children played very well together during this activity, chatted happily and were interested in each other's designs.

Children are learning to share and play co-operatively. This supports their social development.

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

Children have a range of suitable play activities and enjoy the opportunities they have. There is a selection of play activities in the child minder's home to maintain children's interest. They told us that they loved to play in the garden with bats and balls, ride on toys, footballs and the children's swimming pool during the hotter weather. We saw photographic evidence of regular trips out including the local sand park with homemade treasure map and the beach. The children were excited to share stories about their recent visit to the park where they saw "a mummy swan and six baby's swans".

Children have positive play opportunities to extend their development and promote their all-round development.

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

Children are developing and learning self-help skills. They chose their own activities and picked out resources without requiring the child minder's assistance. Children who attend the home after school are independent. We saw that the child minder encouraged younger children to look at books independently, encouraging them to turn the pages without her help. We saw that there was photographic evidence of children's engagement in craft and baking activities to widen their development and fine motor skills.

Children are encouraged to develop their independence. This prepares them for more formal education.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Overall, children are safe and well cared for. The child minder manages interactions in a positive way and is aware of the individual needs of children in her care. Record keeping and policies are generally appropriate, although some review of policies should be considered.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder follows procedures to ensure children's safety and health needs. There is a suitable child protection policy outlining types of abuse and procedures to follow in a safeguarding situation, although it does not currently include information on the Prevent duty (this is a government strategy which places a responsibility on providers to prevent children from becoming radicalised). The child minder holds a current paediatric first aid certificate and has undertaken food hygiene training. We examined accidents, incidents and pre-existing injury records and found these to be well completed and signed by parents.

The child minder follows appropriate health and safety procedures to ensure the welfare of children in her care

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder manages interactions between children appropriately. There is a brief behaviour management policy which explains the strategies that are used to support children although this needs to detail how the behaviour of older children will be managed. Throughout our visits the child minder was respectful and polite to the children and was a good role model giving the children lots of praise for positive behaviour such as 'well done for sharing' and 'thank you for helping'.

Appropriate behaviour management strategies are in place. This benefits children's social development.

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, and is aware of children's individual needs. We saw that children were offered a range of play experiences which included reading, drawing, games and crafts. The child minder engaged with and supported children during some of these activities, whilst also giving the children space to make their own decisions. There is photographic evidence of children's involvement in a good variety of play activities and the child minder maintains books of children's work/progress and areas of development. These books are available for parents to review. We discussed activity planning with the child minder and she told us that the themes are based on the ages of children she cares for. The child minder told

us she identifies next steps in children's learning, although this is not formally recorded.

Children benefit from a suitable range of play activities to support their all-round development.

3. Environment

Summary

The home is welcoming and provides children with a safe and well maintained space for play, learning and rest. There is an adequate range of play resources for children suitable for their age. Safety checks are conducted regularly although care must be taken to ensure hazards are removed promptly and activities are risk assessed.

Our findings

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

Overall, children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment. The front door is locked and the back garden is enclosed. The home is clean, organised and generally free from hazards. There are risk assessments and safety checklists in place, and the gas safety check and fire drills are completed regularly. However, we saw that there were some hazards in the outdoor environment and explained that this did not meet the legal requirements. The child minder took immediate action, and removed the hazards identified. We discussed outdoor play and the use of a large paddling pool in the summer period. She explained that although this was not formally risk assessed, the children were supervised at all times.

Overall, the childminder implements some safety measure but care needs to be taken to ensure that risks are identified and removed without delay.

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

The child minder's home has sufficient space and facilities to meet the needs of the children in her care. Children have access to the ground floor of the property which contains a dedicated lounge area, kitchen diner and the washroom on the first floor. Access to the garden is from the conservatory. The child minder has established good routines to ensure the children are well cared for in the environment. Resources are stored in see through clear plastic containers in the lounge area and in a cupboard on the first floor. Children said that they were able to ask for resources from the upstairs cupboard and could access these if needed with the assistance of the childminder.

Overall, the child minder has ensured her home has been adapted to suit the needs of the children in her care.

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

Resources provided by the child minder are suitable for their needs. There is a suitable range of play equipment for children including arts and crafts and games which children enjoyed using during our visit. The toys we saw were in good condition and suitable for the range of children who attend the service.

The child minder provides children with an adequate selection of toys which are maintained to an appropriate standard and are available in sufficient quantities.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is aware of her responsibilities to maintain good standards of care and meet the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care (NMS). There are effective systems in place to help her manage her service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has a good understanding of her role and the responsibilities relating to running her child care business. Registers of attendance, children's contracts and daily records are well maintained. There is a Statement of Purpose and a suitable range of policies and procedures which provide parents with some information regarding the service, but they are not currently up to date. Paperwork has not been updated to reflect CIW's recent change in name. Contracts are agreed with parents setting out the expectations of both parties. Record keeping is organised and well maintained. The attendance register is kept up to date and a current public liability certificate is in place.

The service is managed effectively with some areas identified as requiring amendments.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder is aware of her responsibility regarding relevant CIW documentation and has completed her Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS). We examined the Quality of Care review which contained the views of parents and children who use the service. There are procedures in place such as a complaints policy which help to obtain additional feedback. The child minder told us she had not received any complaints. The complaints policy does not currently contain details of how children can raise a complaint or concern.

The child minder ensures that she reviews her service and plans for improvements to benefit children and parents.

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

The child minder does not employ an assistant and manages her time well. She is organised and maintains records of her qualifications and training. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are up to date for herself and family members over the age of 16 years and we saw documented evidence confirming this.

The child minder is effective in managing her time and ensuring that relevant training and DBS checks are completed.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder uses child record forms and contracts designed by an umbrella organisation to help her collect important information regarding the children. The child

minder has been operating for a number of years and in that time she has development good links within the community and much of her business is word of mouth and via recommendations from parents who use her service. Parent feedback questionnaires stated 'she does a fantastic job'. The child minder uses daily diaries which included a written record of what the child ate, how they slept and general well-being information. She told us that she has good relationships with parents, and they spend time each day discussing how the child has been and what they have been doing.

The positive relationships established with parents help to ensure children receive appropriate care and keep parents up to date with any changes that may occur.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of noncompliance from previous inspections

At this inspection we were satisfied that Disclosure and Barring Checks for all family members were complete.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Update the Statement of Purpose in line with regulatory requirements;
- Update the behaviour management policy with how behaviour of older children will be managed;
- update the complaints policy with info on how children can raise a concern or complaint.
- update the safeguarding policy with details on prevent duty;
- update all policies in general and with information on CIW change of name.
- ensure all parts of children's registration forms complete;
- develop risk assessment for use of the swimming pool;
- put fire blanket up on wall and
- consider current arrangements for storage of resources to ensure they are accessible to children and encourage independence.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection which was undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector completed one visit to the service. The following methodology to inform our inspection findings. We:

- reviewed information held by CIW;
- undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- spoke to children throughout the visit;
- reviewed feedback from parents;
- looked at a range of records including a sample of children's records and other records maintained at the setting. These included the statement of purpose, some policies and procedures, accidents and incidents records and attendance registers.

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	Maxine Smart
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	0 to 12 years
Opening hours	Monday-Friday 7.30 until 18.30
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	22 May 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	11 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 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 considers Welsh Government's More 'Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information: None	