



Childcare Inspection Report on

Marisa Hopkins

Dinas Powys



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from her home in Dinas Powys, where she lives with her husband and two children. She currently has eight children on roll and is registered to care for eight children under 12 years. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday between 7:30am to 6:30pm throughout the year. Children have access to the ground floor areas within the home. Care is provided through the English language, with the use of incidental Welsh. The child minder has two pet cats, a dog and goldfish.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy attending this service. They are developing positive independence skills in their learning and play. The child minder is responsive to their needs and she provides a good variety of activities for them to support their all-round development. They benefit from a clean and tidy environment and resources easily accessible to them. Feedback from parents indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service. We made some recommendations in respect to the child minder's administration.

2. Improvements

There were no non-compliance issues raised at the child minder's last inspection. She had addressed a recommendation to update her Food Hygiene certificate. Further improvements the child minder has made since her last inspection include, completing her Level 3 qualification in children's care, learning and development. She has also developed the garden area with decking and an all-weather shelter is in the process of being built, which will provide for safe outdoor play opportunities throughout the year.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. However, we have made recommendations with regards to some of the child minder's record keeping. These have been discussed in further detail at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are provided with a good range of opportunities that enhance their all-round growth and development to reach their full potential. They are listened to and their ideas and contributions are valued. They are happy and engaged in activities and are age appropriately independent in their play and development. They are developing sociably and learning to manage their own behaviour, to support their interactions and develop positive relationships.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are listened to and are allowed to make choices and decisions. They select toys and activities that they want to play with and they let the child minder know when they need things, such as basic care needs or help within their play. They speak freely to express themselves and they are listened to, supporting them to feel valued and confident to ask for things. All children were made to feel included, because the child minder included them in discussions and supported them to make choices about what they wanted to play with. The children told us that they enjoy attending the service and an older child told us that they have made good friends there.

Children clearly feel that they have a voice and they are given the time and support to make choices and express their opinions.

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

Children have formed positive relationships with one another and with the child minder. They looked secure and content and they clearly felt at home. They confidently selected different activities and chose the resources that they wanted to use. We saw them playing with sensory toys, toy cars and building tracks to push them along. The older children were helpful towards the younger children, assisting them in their play. The children also have the opportunity to engage in planned activities, such as Halloween crafts in keeping with the season. The activities are optional and the children freely choose what they wish to participate in, learning through their own directed play ideas. They were independent in their play and comfortable in their surroundings to access the things that they wanted to use. We noted 'children's rights' statements displayed on the wall, including positive affirmations such as "the right to be heard, relax, play and join in", promoting children's sense of belonging in the setting and a feeling of being valued. The child minder told us that one of the children she looks after wants to take the statements in to show her school, which demonstrates the positive impact that they have.

The children have formed secure attachments with the child minder and this enables them to feel valued, safe and relaxed whilst in her care.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are at ease with one another and have formed close friendships. We saw them playing alongside one another, happily engaged in their chosen activities. At other times we saw the older children assisting the younger children. Activities sustain their interests for sufficient time. We noted that when they interacted with one another and the child minder, they were respectful and used polite manners. We noted a relaxed atmosphere with co-operative children. The children have developed good social skills according to their age and stage of development.

Children are well behaved and have positive social interactions with one another.

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

Children are busy and engaged in activities within a room setup thoughtfully for play. They choose between a good variety of toys and resources that maintain their interests, stored neatly for their easy access. Their play is supported when required and at other times uninterrupted, enabling them the freedom to enjoy their environment and to seek out the child minder when needed. They make use of the garden and it is being further developed to include an all-weather play area, under a canopy that is being built onto the side of the house. The children also frequently go on trips out, giving them the benefit of plenty of exercise and fresh air. Trips out include to local parks, the beach, woodlands, nature trails, soft play centres, the library and meeting up with other child minder's and the children in their care. Therefore, the children receive plenty of play and social opportunities in a variety of contexts.

Children enjoy the activities on offer and are well engaged in their play, showing curiosity as they learn new things.

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

Children are confident in their surroundings. They know where things are and resources are organised in such a way that they can help themselves and be independent in their play. We saw children's good levels of independence accessing resources that they wanted to use, washing their hands at appropriate times and when prompted to do so and helping to tidy away things away when they had finished playing with them. Children learn about healthy eating because the child minder encourages healthy options, such as fresh drinking water and fruit snacks are always made available to them.

Children are confident and learning independent skills in line with their age and stage of development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder provides children with warm, safe and nurturing care. Her established boundaries and high expectations for acceptable behaviour are evident in children's positive social interactions, supporting them to form good relationships. The child minder is caring and she supports children in their day to day activities, to help them to reach their full potential. A recommendation was set with regards to further evidencing children's attainment.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is experienced in her role and has a good range of procedures in place for keeping children healthy. She renews her Disclosure and Barring Service Certificates as necessary. She also keeps up to date with food hygiene training, paediatric first aid and safeguarding training. As such, she is aware of her 'Prevent' duty, a responsibility on all schools and registered early years providers to have due regard to preventing children being drawn into extremism. A Safeguarding policy is in place including all of the relevant details. The child minder provides fresh drinking water that is readily available, healthy snacks and meals. Children benefit from plenty of exercise, as they regularly go outdoors on walks, including to and from school. Fire drills are practised regularly and logged. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that they are appropriately recorded and monitored.

The child minder promotes children's healthy lifestyles.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Children are guided in their day to day play and learning, to follow guidelines of acceptable behaviour. These were clearly documented in the behaviour management policy. During the session, children were well behaved and the child minder did not need to intervene to offer guidance, indicating that clear and realistic boundaries had already been established. This in turn has benefited the children's social learning, helping them to develop lasting friendships in the setting, as they talked about the friends that they have made there. We noted that the child minder was relaxed in her approach and she engaged in everyday conversations with the children, showing an interest in their day. She created an atmosphere that was calm and nurturing, enabling the children to feel relaxed and at home in her care.

The child minder is a positive role model to the children in her care, supporting their social skills and relationships with others.

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

The child minder plans for and provides a good range of activities for the children in her care. Children are central to their own learning, as they are included in the selection of activities and resources that they enjoy. We saw that there was a good variety to suit all age ranges and abilities. The child minder has a good understanding of the Foundation Phase, a Statutory Curriculum for all children aged three to seven years. She records early years aged children's progress and next steps for development, using flower charts, and observations and milestone sheets, identifying the areas that they have achieved. We discussed with the child minder ensuring that assessments are dated to evidence a timeline of children's progress. Incidental Welsh is used in the setting and Welsh resources are in place for children to use, including books, matching pairs, a folder of Welsh vocabulary and media on the walls.

The child minder promotes children's development through a good range of activities.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced with equipment and furniture to enable children to play, learn and relax. Children are cared for in a home which is clean, stimulating and safe.

Our findings

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

The child minder has appropriate measures and procedures in place to maintain the environment in order to keep children safe. Daily visual checks are made of the premises to ensure that all areas are safe for children. A yearly written risk assessment is in place for all areas of the home, outdoors and trips out. A fire blanket is secured to the kitchen wall and smoke alarms are in place. A current gas safety check certificate is also in place. The 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. Children have use of the downstairs areas of the property and garden, which is safely enclosed. The child minder ensures that she supervises the children well whilst providing them with plenty of play opportunities. We noted her calm manner interacting with them, whilst also allowing a free flow of play activity to take place.

Procedures and equipment are in place to maximise the safety of children.

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

The child minder ensures that her home and garden are clean, secure and welcoming. Rooms are tidy, well decorated, bright and airy. Resources are within easy reach of the children in boxes, drawers and setup for use in the play room. There is a dining table in the kitchen if needed, but mostly the children use the child height table and chairs in the play room to enjoy crafts/table top activities and eat their meals and snacks together. There is also a sofa in this room for the children to relax. A toilet is next door, enabling the child minder to support children that need assistance with toileting, whilst also being able to keep an eye on the others.

The 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 keep them engaged and stimulated. Resources include craft materials, small world items, construction equipment, role play items and books. The child minder also has play

materials that promote cultural awareness and reflect disabilities, including up/small world items and books. The garden provides plenty of space and physical equipment for children to play and benefit from fresh air and exercise. There is adequate storage, as weatherproof boxes for outside use are in place. The resources and equipment we saw were all clean and in good working order.

Equipment is all of a good standard and suitable for a home based child care service.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder has policies and processes in place to help her to operate her business effectively. She reviews her service and has evidence of self-evaluation to improve outcomes. We set two recommendations with regards to expanding her review and Statement of Purpose.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

All policies required for the child minding service are made available and signed and dated to evidence their annual review. A Statement of Purpose is in place. However, we discussed with the child minder expanding it to cover all aspects of the National Minimum Standards. This has been highlighted in further detail at the end of this report. The child minder records children's accurate times of attendance. We saw contracts that were shared with parents, setting out the expectations of both parties.

The child minder complies with the relevant regulations and meets the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care, but needs to amend her Statement of Purpose.

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

The child minder has a system in place to review the quality of her care and identify improvements. She annually reviews and develops her service, including seeking the views of parents and children. However, we discussed with the child minder ensuring that she includes this feedback from service users in her next written review. The questionnaires that were handed out to parents and children in preparation for compiling her report reflected a high level of satisfaction with the service. Comments from parents included, "*Nothing is too much for the child minder and child is completely at ease in her company*" and, "*Always a variety of activities, which are changed depending on the child's preferences*". We also had the opportunity to talk to a parent. They told us that they are very happy with the care that their child receives, that they settled in quickly and they are making good progress. When we chatted to the children about attending the service, they told us about the activities that they enjoy, including crafts and dressing up. The positive comments evidence that both parents and children are happy with the service provided to them. The child minder has also identified further improvements that she would like to make, including developing her garden. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place, but no complaints had been received about the quality of the service provided.

The child minder has a process in place to review her practice, including all service users' views on the quality of care provided, but we discussed including these on her next review.

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

The child minder does not employ any staff. 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 made. The child minder renews relevant training certificates to keep up to date with best practise.

The service is well organised and managed by the child minder to ensure that it runs smoothly and parents are clear of childcare arrangements.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnership with parents is promoted by the good systems and processes in place. The child minder uses appropriate child record forms to help her to collect important information regarding the children and to ensure 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. It was evident from the paperwork completed that the child minder spends time gaining information prior to children starting, to gain a good insight into the children's needs and to develop positive relationships all round at an early stage. The child minder ensures that information is shared with parents, including policies and procedures and information about the children. Verbal feedback is provided daily and daily diaries are in use for younger children until school age, to share information regarding their daily care tasks, needs and activities. The child minder also uses 'WhatsApp', a daily text messaging service, as an extra communication method particularly when sharing photographs.

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

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

There were no areas of non-compliance noted at the previous inspection.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to develop the service and improve outcomes for children, we discussed the following matters with the child minder. They should:

- Update the Statement of Purpose to include arrangements in place for dealing with complaints and emergencies;
- ensure that the annual Quality of Care review reflects the feedback received from service users; and
- ensure that assessment records are dated to evidence children's achievements.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections;

- One inspector undertook one visit to the service and spent time with the child minder and four children in her care. The inspection was conducted in one day;
- observations of the child minder's interactions with the children were undertaken;
- we reviewed all information held by CIW;
- we examined a range of documentation, including, policies, procedures, record sheets, children's files and log sheets;
- we spoke to one parents; and
- our findings were fed back to the child minder at the end of 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	Marisa Hopkins
Registered maximum number of places	8
Age range of children	Registered to care for 0 to 12 years Child minder's admissions policy – 4 months to 12 years
Opening hours	7:30am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	29 December 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	24 October 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 through the medium of Welsh. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words</i> ' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information: None	