



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Suzanne Finn**

**Cardiff**



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## **Description of the service**

The child minder was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in 2001. She provides home based child care for up to six children under 12 years old. She operates from Monday to Friday providing a flexible service to meet the needs of several families including school holidays. She lives in a suburb of Cardiff and employs her mother and her adult daughter to assist on an ad hoc basis. This is an English language service where the Welsh language is supported and encouraged through some activities.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

The child minder provides a good 'home from home' service. She gives children lots of choice in their activities and encourages them to share their views and do things for themselves. She knows the children well and ensures they have fun with her while promoting their learning and development. Children benefit from a healthy lifestyle and affection is freely given. The child minder's home is well maintained, safe and secure. The children are cared for in a comfortable, child friendly environment, with access to a suitable range of experiences and resources. The child minder keeps effective policies and procedures, keeps her training up to date and completes additional training for her professional development.

### **2. Improvements**

The child minder had met the recommendations made at the last inspection about record keeping and updating some policies and procedures. We were told that there had been no significant changes to the environment affecting child care, although a small extension and outdoor area have been provided as a separate space for the family dogs. The child minder has replaced and added to the resources for children's use, responding to children's interests.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

The child minder is meeting her legal responsibility in providing a safe child care service. We made some recommendations to develop the service and improve outcomes for children. These included some minor revision to paperwork, to consider ways in which to widen children's understanding of our cultural diversity and the Welsh language and to consider ways to record children's views about the care they receive.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children's views are valued by the child minder and they are able to influence their activities. Children feel welcomed, very much at home and have formed good relationships with the child minder and each other. They are able to develop their self-help skills and undertake activities which build their confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy a good variety of activities at the child minder's home and are able to spend time outside.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children can make choices and they are encouraged to express their views. We observed children helping themselves to toys and games from the range available. We saw that younger children's comments and statements were reinforced and encouraged by the child minder, and all children were included in general conversation. We saw children choosing which fish pictures they wanted to colour, as part of the day's seaside activity theme. They compared and asked about the colours they were using, and a child said "I've got green, too". During a game of doctors, children were encouraged to use words like 'temperature and thermometer'. Children were asked about what activity they wanted to do next, which was provided. When they chose action rhymes, they helped identify the specific video they wanted, and had fun being 'sleeping bunnies', singing and taking part in the familiar actions.

Children are listened to by the child minder and are able to make choices within the activities she provides.

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

Children are settled and relaxed in their care because the child minder knows them well and has developed good bonds of affection with them. Children were praised for their efforts and we observed lots of quiet chatty conversation during games, enabling children to feel valued. Children were confident and happy to join in or play by themselves, asking the child minder for anything they needed. A child took time out from their game to sit on a chair and fall asleep. They were content being moved by the child minder to a place where they could rest in more comfort.

Children feel secure and comfortable in their care with a child minder who creates a relaxed 'family' environment.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

Children interact well at this service and enjoy each other's company. Some children are siblings, and all played together happily. We observed a busy role play game with an ice

cream stall. The children played co-operatively, making ice creams for the adults and charging and paying with paper money. We saw them all engrossed in exploring shapes and textures with playdoh together. There were sufficient scissors and cutter shapes to enable them to play without having to wait to take turns to use them, avoiding potential tension.

Children's emotional security and wellbeing are enhanced by the positive relationships fostered by the child minder.

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

Children are able to enjoy a variety of play based activities which suit their interests and are appropriate to their age and stage of development. We observed children enjoying lots of play when they were engaged with the child minder and/or her daughter, who is an assistant. They happily worked together as 'hairdressers', brushing and straightening her hair, sharing laughter and funny comments. Throughout their activities, children were encouraged to count and describe colours and shapes. We saw that children enjoyed a relaxed mixture of free play and guided activities throughout the day, happy to join in or follow their own imagination separately, such as setting up the train tracks.

Children enjoy a good range of play and learning experiences with the child minder who recognises the importance of children's play opportunities for their overall development.

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

Children are confident in their surroundings and they know where things are. Resources are organised so that they can mostly help themselves and be independent in their play. Children helped to tidy toys away between activities in a familiar routine. All children used the toilet and hand wash facilities independently, although younger children were given some additional support to tend to their own personal needs. Children asked for help if they needed it, while one said "No, I can do it by myself" when offered help with a task. Children are praised often, encouraging them to do their best. We were told about a child's positive response to the use of a specific reward chart set up for them.

Children develop confidence and independence with a child minder who encourages children to do things for themselves and gives them time to carry out their chosen activities.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The child minder uses her knowledge and experience caring for children to inform her practice while applying a 'home from home' approach to her service. She is able to identify children at risk and has the confidence to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures. She treats children with warmth and respect and has realistic expectations of them. Good hygiene routines are carried out. The child minder is aware of how children in her care are developing and is able to plan for their individual needs effectively. She provides activities that she knows the children will engage with and will promote their learning and development.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

The child minder keeps a clean and safe home. She is experienced in her role and has suitable procedures in place for keeping children safe and healthy. She renews the Disclosure and Barring Service certificates (DBS) for herself and adults in the household and her mother who assists her with the service. The child minder knows what action to take in the event of a safeguarding situation and keeps up to date with child protection training. We recommended that she undertake training on the Prevent Duty 2015 which is about the responsibility to prevent children who attend child care settings from being drawn into extremism. Once completed, she should include a statement about it in her safeguarding policy which otherwise meets current recommendations. The child minder is up to date with Paediatric First Aid training and has a good understanding of food hygiene practice and dietary requirements and is registered with the local authority. Parents provide all food for their children and packed lunches are kept in a separate fridge so that there is always sufficient space to store them safely. Drinks were made available at all times by the child minder. Nappy changing and potty training routines are maintained appropriately. Fire drills are practised regularly and are logged appropriately along with the monthly checks on smoke detectors. Accident, incident and medication recording systems are all in place and the child minder was clear about what action to take in the event of an emergency.

The child minder maintains effective systems to promote children's health, safety and welfare.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

Children are clear about what is and is not, acceptable because the child minder applies a consistent approach that takes into account the age, stage of development and needs of each child, reflecting her policy and procedure for managing behaviour. We observed no areas of tension between children who each received lots of individual attention, were given gentle and appropriate prompts to be helpful and they were praised for their efforts and kind

acts. They were encouraged to share and take turns if needed, and occasionally distracted to make sure all children were included in games. As children became tired, they were offered some quiet time and a sit down. The child minder keeps 'house rules' which are shared with children and their parents. They are displayed in the playroom, along with examples of children's work, acknowledging their efforts which promotes self-esteem.

The child minder sets and holds realistic expectations of children's behaviour and celebrates their achievements.

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

The child minder provides care which is child centred and meets children's individual needs in a cheerful and caring atmosphere. She keeps an appropriate range of toys, activities and resources in the play room and garden that are suitable for the children who attend. This is an English speaking service. The child minder told us she supports the Welsh language within some activities such as counting and learning colours, although we heard no Welsh used during the visit. The child minder described her weekly routine which is based on children's attendance at school and nursery. She arranges free play and focused activities at home and out and about, such as going to a park for a picnic and run around. During school holidays children enjoy trips to Roath and Danescourt Parks, or outings into the wider community such as St Fagans, or Cosmeston Lakes. The child minder observes younger children's developments in agreement with their parents, which take account of most of the Foundation Phase principles. We saw a 'Learning Journey' book recording a child's milestones, activities and achievements. We were told that the child minder arranges activities that celebrate festivals such as Easter and Christmas, and we recommended that she considers ways to increase children's understanding and awareness of cultural diversity and the Welsh language. The child minder keeps the number of children she cares for at any time lower than she might, so that she can be confident about the attention she gives them.

Children's play and learning are promoted by the child minder who has skills and knowledge to meet their individual needs.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The child minder ensures that her home is safe, secure and child friendly. Children are given a good range of resources and experiences that support and enhance their learning and development. The child minder provides an environment in which children can learn, play and relax safely and she takes steps to minimise risks to children.

#### **Our findings**

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

Children are looked after in a safe, clean and secure environment and the child minder carries out regular risk assessments and cleaning routines, including a daily visual check throughout the play space. We were told that daily cleaning takes place, and steam cleans at week-ends. The front door was kept locked during the inspection and the garden access is kept secure. The child minder told us she also has a wireless house alarm with audio and video motion surveillance at the front of the house. We saw the first aid kit and a fire blanket were easily available. A record of accidents is kept, which showed that only minor accidents had occurred and had been dealt with appropriately. Toilet and hand wash facilities are on the ground floor, which are appropriately kept and children can use them independently. Safety gates are in doorways and the family dogs are kept completely separate from minded children. The child minder maintains relevant insurances and the annual gas safety certificate for her home. She has an e-safety policy and procedure to cover children's access to, and use of, the internet, mobile phones and computer games, although children have no access to the internet while in her care.

The child minder is clear about her responsibility for maintaining a safe environment for children.

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

The child minder's home is welcoming and furnished comfortably, enabling children to relax, play and do many things for themselves. The main play space is the playroom which is furnished with storage units for resources, and child sized table and chairs. Access to the garden is accompanied, via a family room. The garden is fenced into three different areas with either decking or fake grass surfaces, and wheeled toys, a small gazebo and seating areas. Children may use the family living room for quiet sleeping space. Children are able to help themselves to toys and resources from the storage boxes or those left out, such as vehicles, construction toys, books, small world and home corner equipment. Storage is labelled with words and pictures, so children can easily find what they want.

Children are cared for in a home from home environment which provides appropriate play and learning opportunities.



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

Children have easy access to furniture, equipment and a suitable range of toys and materials that are kept in good condition and meet children's needs. The child minder checks the toys and equipment she uses within her daily visual risk assessment and more formally within the annual written risk assessment. Toys and resources are also checked for wear and tear as they are used, or tidied away. Deeper cleaning of all toys and play space is planned and carried out regularly.

The child minder maintains good routines to ensure resources are suitable for children's use.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Children are cared for by a child minder who runs her service so that it meets the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care (NMS) and relevant regulations. She is organised and keeps her paperwork in a good, clear and accessible system, although she must make some minor revisions to some policies and procedures. Parents are given the information they need to make an informed choice about using the service. The child minder keeps her training up to date and has undertaken additional training to ensure that experiences for children are positive. She provides an improving service, sets up ways to reflect on her practice and includes parents' views in the process.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

The child minder manages her service effectively and is compliant with the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 and the NMS. Her statement of purpose is clear, but needs to include information about the level of Welsh used in her service and that CIW will be informed of any changes to her service within 28 days. Her policies and procedures are appropriate and she confirmed that she shares them with parents. However, the complaints procedure does not include a statement that parents of a child sponsored by the Local Authority can use the Local Authority's complaints procedure should they wish. No information is provided in the event of a concurrent investigation. The child minder has a complaints procedure that older children may use, although it could be more child-friendly. The child minder is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and takes account of recent developments in regulations about data protection. Appropriate contracts are completed with parents, setting out the expectations of both parties. Daily registers are maintained and she keeps good, clear records and systems.

The child minder delivers a consistent and improving standard of care to children.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

Children's outcomes are enhanced because the child minder takes a reflective approach to operating her service. She reviews her service annually and we looked at the latest questionnaires completed by parents completed earlier this year. We saw that parents are very satisfied with the care their children receive and had made no suggestions for improvements. We found that children are given lots of opportunities to share their views with the child minder, but children's views about the care they receive are not included in the annual review of service. A parent told us they "wouldn't change anything", but knew how to voice a concern, or complaint should there ever be a need.

The child minder reflects on her service and takes steps to improve it for children and their parents.

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

The child minder ensures that children's needs are met by setting clearly defined roles and responsibilities for herself and her voluntary assistants. Her mother and her daughter attend the child minding service on an individual and ad hoc basis, providing 'an extra pair of hands'. The child minder is clear that they hold no legal responsibility for the minded children and are always supervised. Full information is kept on file about each assistant in line with regulations. We observed the minded children were familiar with the child minder's daughter, cheerfully sharing their play with her. She works as a teaching assistant in a local primary school, assisting within the child minding service during school holidays. We were told that children call the child minder's mother Nanny Brown, and they appreciate the mature qualities she brings to the service, during before and after school sessions.

Management of staff and resources is effective and ensures the smooth-running of the service.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

The child minder works closely with parents to ensure their children's needs are met. Discussion with her showed that she knows the children and their families well. She is currently caring for children who have mostly been placed with her due to 'word of mouth' recommendations and within families. The child minder provides parents with the information needed to make informed choices about their child's care and she carries out appropriate settling in processes designed to meet each family's needs. We spoke to a parent who told us they had a few short visits and their children had settled well. The child minder told us that she enjoys a good relationship with the local primary school and a nursery that minded children attend, sharing information to parents as needed. She shares daily diaries about each child with their parents, so that they are kept well-informed about their child's care. We observed relaxed handovers with parents as they collected their children who told us they were "really happy" with the care their child receives.

The child minder understands the importance of working in partnership to ensure that children receive the support they need.

## **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 develop the service and improve outcomes for children we discussed the following matters with the child minder:

- the statement of purpose needs to include information about the level of Welsh used in the service and that CIW will be informed of any changes to her service within 28 days;
- the complaints procedure needs to include a statement that parents of a child sponsored by the Local Authority can use the Local Authority's complaints procedure should they wish. It should also reflect action to take in the event of a concurrent investigation;
- to consider ways to make the children's complaints procedure more child friendly;
- to consider ways to increase children's understanding and awareness of cultural diversity and the Welsh language within their play activities; and
- consider ways to record children's views about the care they receive as part of the quality of care review report.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This inspection was announced at short notice and undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. The inspector undertook one visit to the service, of approximately six and a half hours. We gave feedback of our findings to the child minder at the end of the visit. There were three children present during the inspection between the ages of two and four years. Evidence for the report was gathered using the following methodology:

- we looked at the range of paperwork the child minder keeps about her service – including policies and procedures, risk assessments, contracts, children’s records, accident records and safety certificates;
- we observed the children interacting with the child minder and assistant and choosing their activities;
- we spoke with children and parents; and
- we spoke with the child minder about how she runs her service and her plans for the future.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Suzanne Finn
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	Under 12 years of age
Opening hours	7.30 – 17.00; weekdays including school holidays.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	16 December 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	30 July 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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care</i> '.
Additional Information: the child minder's mother and daughter assist on an individual and ad hoc basis.	