



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Geraldine Collins**

**Merthyr Tydfil**



**Date of Publication**

**Friday, 8 February 2019**

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## **Description of the service**

The child minder operates her service from her home in the Merthyr area, where she lives with her husband. She currently has five children on roll and is registered to care for six children under 12 years. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday 6:00am to 5:30pm throughout the year. During the inspection, there were two minded children present aged under five years. Children have access to the ground floor areas within the home. The garden is out of use due to works being carried out. Care is provided through the English language, with the use of incidental Welsh.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **Overall assessment**

We found that children attending the child minder's home are happy and they enjoy their time there. They have clearly developed positive relationships with the child minder and have made close friendships with others who attend the service. There are plenty of opportunities for play, exploration and socialising because the child minder has sufficient equipment and resources in place. She plans a good balance of activities and trips into the community, to promote children's all-round development. The environment is well decorated and maintained. The child minder operates her business in accordance with the regulations and the national minimum standards. To further improve the overall management, she needs to make some improvements to her administration.

### **Improvements**

The child minder has attempted to address all of the recommendations set at her previous inspection. Most were completed satisfactorily; however, further work is needed to her Quality of Care review.

### **Requirements and recommendations**

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. However, we made recommendations in respect to the child minder updating some of her record keeping and following the manufacturer's guidelines in respect to storing her fire blanket.

The above have all been highlighted in further detail at the end of this report.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children are provided with opportunities that enhance their all-round growth and development. They are listened to and their ideas and contributions are valued. They are happy and engaged in activities and are learning to be independent in their play and development. They are developing positive social interactions with the child minder and their peers, who also attend the service.

## **Our findings**

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

Children are listened to, respected and asked for their ideas and contributions. They select toys and activities that they want to play with and their opinions are valued. They communicate their needs confidently, approaching the childminder to ask for things that they need. Their views are prioritised and listened to because the child minder is inclusive and responsive to them, and she takes an interest in their needs and requests. For example, she had a planned activity making rainbow dinosaur pictures. However, a child wanted to go to the park instead, so they agreed to make the pictures another time.

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

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

Children have formed positive relationships with one another and with the child minder. They told us that they enjoyed attending the setting. We saw that they looked secure and content within the child minder's care. We chatted to them about attending the child minders. They told us that they 'like lots of things', but that their favourite things were dressing up as different characters from a television show. They then proceeded to show us the specific costumes that they liked and they tried them on, appearing very pleased to role play as the characters. They were confident and independent to play within the different areas, appearing comfortable in their surroundings. For example, they moved between the living room and hallway to gather resources for imaginative play, and the kitchen for eating their food and accessing their drinks. They were fully engaged in activities and the child minder was alongside them for when they needed her, such as for help with putting on their masks and capes during dress up. Children have a sense of belonging because some of their work is displayed on the walls.

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

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

Children are at ease with one another and have formed close friendships. We saw them playing co-operatively together, taking turns and showing interest and respect for each other. Activities sustain their interests for sufficient time. They are developing their social skills according to their age and stage of development and we noted that established boundaries are in place that the children know and follow. As such, the child minder did not

need to intervene during the children's play with one another, other than to provide them with safe play reminders.

Children are well behaved and co-operative.

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

Children are busy and engaged in activities within a layout that facilitates movement between appropriately setup areas. They have good opportunities for free flow play and they choose between toys and resources that maintain their interests. We saw them during the lunch time period, following which they role played with toys and dressing up clothes, and then one child went to nursery and the other had a trip out to the park. From discussions with the child minder and children, it was evident that they have opportunities to visit new places and explore different environments. They go to local play groups, parks, soft play centres and meet up with other child minders and children. These experiences give them the benefit of plenty of fresh air and exercise, but also widen their play experiences in different contexts and support their social skills meeting new people.

Children enjoy their play and learning at this service.

### **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 using the toilet, washing their hands at appropriate times, helping themselves to toys, activities and resources, as well as tidying things away, with support. They were also confident approaching the child minder for help and to ask her things. They learn about healthy eating and the child minder told us that healthy options, such as fresh drinking water and fruit snacks, are always made available to them. Children are encouraged to do things for themselves as much as possible. For example, to put their own shoes and coats on, feed themselves and carry out self-care tasks in line with their age and stage of development.

We saw that children are developing confidence at an age appropriate pace and they are progressing to be independent learners.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

Children are provided with warm, safe and nurturing care. The child minder is caring, supports them in their day to day activities and plans things for them to do in different contexts. However, she needs to expand her assessment records. She has a gentle approach to supporting and managing children's interactions, to help them to develop positive relationships.

### **Our findings**

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

The child minder has a good range of procedures in place for keeping children safe and 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. 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. She provides children with fresh drinking water that is readily available, milk and healthy snacks and provides all home cooked meals. We saw the children eating a healthy lunch, consisting of jacket potatoes, tomatoes, cucumber and ham. Appropriate hygiene routines are in place to promote children's good health, including good nappy changing procedures and encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times, using liquid soap and paper towels for separate drying facilities to help infection control. Fire drills are practised regularly and logged appropriately and there is a fire evacuation plan and procedure in place. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that they are appropriately recorded and monitored.

The child minder's policies and procedures promote children's wellbeing.

#### **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 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. The occasional reminders she gave were for things such as saying please and thank you and encouraging children to play calmly, to prevent any accidents from occurring. We noted that the child minder was consistent, calm and sensitive in her approach. She gave positive feedback, encouragement and praise and created an atmosphere that was calm and nurturing.

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

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

The child minder plans for and provides a sufficient 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 an appropriate variety to suit all age ranges and abilities. There was evidence of children's work displayed on the walls and the child minder told us that they also take pieces home, promoting their sense of achievement. The child minder has an appropriate understanding of the Foundation Phase and documents children's progress on development flower charts categorising the seven areas of learning. However, we discussed with the child minder ensuring that she identifies children's next steps for development, to support them in their learning journey. We noted that incidental Welsh is used in the setting, and the child minder also introduces learning concepts during children's play, such as Welsh colours. Furthermore, the child minder has books in Welsh to promote children's use of the Welsh Language.

The child minder promotes children's development through a range of activities, but she needs to ensure that she is identifying children's learning goals.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The child minder's home is welcoming and 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**

##### **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. The child minder told us that a written risk assessment is in place, but due to her computer breaking down, she did not have it available for inspection. It has been available for previous inspections with no highlighted concerns, and so it was agreed that she would ensure that a printed copy is provided at her next inspection. During discussions around safety precautions, it was noted that she had a good understanding of how to identify hazards, risks and any actions needed to be taken. Safety equipment is in place, such as smoke alarms and a fire blanket. However, the fire blanket was stored on a shelf in the kitchen. We discussed with the child minder ensuring that she follows the manufacturers guidelines to ensure its effective use if needed, by securing it to the wall and familiarising herself with the directions for use. 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 full use of the downstairs of the property and we saw them move freely from one area to another. 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, but to maximise the safety of children, guidelines for storing the fire blanket need to be followed and written risk assessments need to be accessible.

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

The child minder ensures that her home is secure and welcoming. Rooms are tidy, well decorated, bright and airy. Resources are within easy reach of the children organised in the kitchen, lounge and hallway. There was a child height table and chairs in the kitchen for children to enjoy craft and messy play and eat their meals and snacks together. There were sofas for the children to relax, and the living area provides an additional dining table and chairs for if needed. Children know where things are kept and are able to independently access things of interest.

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



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

The child minder has a suitable range of resources to promote children's development and keep them engaged and stimulated. Resources include play sets, small world items, books and crafts, as well as play materials that promote cultural awareness. The garden is out of use, but children receive opportunities for outdoor play on excursions that are risk assessed. 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. She reviews her service and has evidence of self-evaluation to improve outcomes, but further work is needed to provide clarity about her Quality of Care review. The overall management of her service is satisfactory, with some amendments needed to her administration procedures.

### **Our findings**

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

All policies required for the child minding service are made available. However, we discussed with the child minder ensuring that they are signed and dated to evidence their annual review. A fully comprehensive Statement of Purpose is in place, covering all aspects of the changes to the regulations and how the business operates, but needs expanding to include the child minder's contact details and arrangements in place to review the policy. The child minder accurately records children's 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 some of her record keeping.

#### **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. Questionnaires are handed out to parents in preparation for compiling her report and they reflect a high level of satisfaction with the service. Comments included, "... has loved every day has spent with child minder and within her setting... has come on so much with the child minder's help and guidance". Following the child minder's review, she has very briefly identified further improvements that she would like to make. We discussed with her expanding on the improvement journey of her service, to give a better overall description of what she has done and plans to do within her setting. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place. We were told that 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, in line with the regulations, but needs to provide more detail within her report.

#### **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 also has a named back up child minder in place, in case of emergencies or the need for short term alternative child care. The children are fully familiar with the emergency backup child minder. 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.

### **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 with parents at an early stage. The child minder ensures that information is shared with parents, including policies and procedures and information about the children.

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**

### **Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections**

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

### **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 the child minder's contact details and arrangements in place to review the policy;
- expand the Quality of Care review to include greater details about the improvement journey of the service;
- include children's next steps for development on their progress records;
- ensure that policies and procedures are dated to evidence their annual review; and
- follow the manufactures guidelines to secure the fire blanket to the wall.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector undertook one visit to the service and spent time with the child minder and two 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; 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](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Geraldine Collins
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday, 6:00am-5:30pm throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	13 November 2013
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	12 September 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	