



Childcare Inspection Report on

Alyson Grant

Cardiff



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her child care service from her family home in the Thornhill area of Cardiff. She provides care weekdays and does not provide overnight care. She is registered to care for up to 10 children at any one time and offers places for children from birth to 12 years. Children are cared for on the ground floor but younger children access sleep facilities upstairs, with supervised access to an enclosed rear garden. The service is delivered through the English language and does not provide the Welsh language 'Active Offer.'

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

The child minder has a well established business and has developed good partnerships with parents. Children enjoy their time with her and feel safe and secure in her care. The home offers suitable play spaces and areas for relaxation. The child minder has many resources which support children's routines and there is plenty of toys, games and equipment to keep them occupied and entertained.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection the child minder has moved home. There is additional play space for minded children which has increased the amount of play opportunities that are provided. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated and the child minder has introduced developmental records for children.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We did not identify any areas of non compliance but we have made recommendations in relation to some policies, training and improving outcomes for children. More can be found in the body of the report and in section five.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are very comfortable in the child minders care. They are confident to speak up and explore areas of personal interest, which encourages their learning and development. Children are valued, with their feelings and decisions being considered and respected. They have plenty of choice and they are encouraged to think for themselves which enhances their play and learning experiences. There are some good opportunities for children to be independent and develop self-help skills.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are listened to. They made requests to the child minder, which were responded to in an appropriate manner. Children feel relaxed which gives them confidence to speak up when they have a particular need or preference. The child minder listens to their wishes and respects their decisions. For example, when playing outside, a child declined the offer of assistance from the child minder, which was respected and they continued to play. Children have plenty of choice through access to an excellent variety of activities and resources. Younger children are given different options to help them decide what to do and older children are able to express their ideas clearly. Storage boxes are labelled, with words and pictures to describe the contents. This helped children to identify what is available to support their decision making.

Children are able to make choices, express their opinions and contribute in what they would like to do.

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

Children are content and happy. They have developed a strong relationship with the child minder and her family. The children sought assurances from the child minder regarding our presence, demonstrating that they felt secure in her care. After a short while they were confident to talk to us and tell us what they were playing with and it was evident they were enjoying the activities available. Children moved around the home and garden freely showing familiarity with routines. After lunch, they enjoyed a television programme at their request and were content when the child minder explained they would only watch for a short time. Individual routines are recognised and followed. For example, when a child required a nap after lunch, they settled very quickly in one of the bedrooms, demonstrating a strong sense of security and familiarity with their surroundings.

Children feel valued and are confident to seek support from the child minder who they have developed a strong bond with.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning to co-operate and take turns. During the inspection they played nicely and very naturally together, sharing resources. For example, as they played with the animals in the sand they frequently took turns with limited intervention from the child minder. They all tidied away together, each gaining recognition for what they did. The child minder sets realistic goals and tasks for the children depending on their age and abilities. Praise helped them to understand the differences between right and wrong and encouraged more of the same behaviour. Older children interact well with younger children. They involved them in games and showed genuine sensitivity towards them.

Children are kind, considerate and caring towards others. They are respectful of the child minder's guidance, which helps to develop socially acceptable rules of behaviour.

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

Children have fun and participate in an excellent range of suitable play opportunities. They played happily outside in the sunshine with some sand, toy animals, wheeled toys, a see saw, small slide and much more. They enjoyed the freedom to move around the garden and as they played, they talked to each other in a relaxed and natural way. At times, they laughed loudly and excitedly together demonstrating they were really enjoying these play experiences. Indoors the children enjoyed some music and movement, table top activities, small world and role play. They eagerly chose the songs they wanted to hear and enthusiastically danced and completed the actions to their favourite rhymes. Older children have access to age appropriate activities and also enjoy their time with the child minder. One child told us they liked playing with the vehicles, roadway and large garage as well as the play dough. He described being at the child minder's as, "*just always great!*" The child was particularly pleased when the child minder and her son played tennis outside. They practised with the tennis racquets and balls and discussed what skills they could try. They were clearly having fun together.

Children are actively engaged in play based activities which capture their interests and motivate them to try/learn new skills.

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

Children experience a very good range of activities that helps them to learn through play. Activities are not planned formally because the child minder likes the children to choose or for the experiences to evolve. However, the home is set up in a way that children can explore a good variety of freely chosen play. We saw that children do this with confidence and ease, exploring both indoors and outside. The child minder extends the children's learning effectively through appropriate questioning as they

play, such as, how does it feel? And, what colour is it? Thus encouraging children to think and develop. Children learn daily routines and are introduced to technology. For example, the children were included in putting some music on, using a voice controlled piece of technology 'Alexa'. The children persevered until they got this to work for them. Some opportunities to be independent are promoted. Children are encouraged to do things for themselves. For example, putting their own shoes on/off, feeding themselves, tidying away their toys and collecting their belongings. Some consideration could be given to increasing the levels of independence for older children. For example, getting themselves a drink.

Children experience both organised and free play opportunities and gain a sense of achievement from their play and learning. They are developing well because of these experiences and most children develop good independent skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder has a good understanding of her roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe and healthy. The safeguarding policy could be strengthened but the child minder's knowledge in this area is very good. Children are introduced to good learning experiences. The child minder has developed close relationships with the children in her care and she nurtures them well.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder ensures that safeguarding is given high priority. She has attended various safeguarding courses and is aware of the Prevent Duty (a statutory duty placed on all child care providers to consider what action they may take to prevent children from being drawn into extremism). The Safeguarding policy has been updated to reflect her responsibility to this duty as a childminder. However, it does not include information on what action she may take if she has a concern of this nature. It also required details on what action should be taken should an allegation be made against the child minder.

Children's health and well-being is promoted well. Policies and procedures guide the child minder and outline good practice. The child minder maintains relevant health and safety records well, ensuring they are kept confidentially. We considered a sample of forms and records including, medication records, accident/incidents, accidents at home and the children's personal records. These are all well documented and filed for ease of reference. Parent signatures are obtained on all documents retained and they have their own copy of some forms. Information on allergens is displayed in the playroom and the child minder demonstrated comprehensive knowledge of children's diets, needs and preferences. Nappy changing and toilet training procedures are in place, which respect children's privacy and dignity.

Children are kept safe by an experienced child minder who considers their health and well-being needs carefully.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder has well established routines and sets realistic boundaries. Children understand what is acceptable within the child minders home and are respectful when she provides direction. A Behaviour Management Policy for the service promotes positive behaviour. We saw that the child minder's practice was consistent with the policy. For example, the childminder reminded children to be polite at lunchtime and praised children for being kind and helpful. Minor disagreements were rare and resolved quickly. The child minder stepped in using distraction methods and gently

reminded children how to take turns. Children were familiar with the house rules, such as, taking shoes off inside and sitting nicely on furniture.

The child minder manages children's interactions well, promoting positive behaviour and celebrating what they do 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 and caring atmosphere which encourages children's growth and development. She knows the children well and caters for their individual needs by carefully considering what their interests are and finding activities which will capture their attention. Welsh language is introduced to the children through the use of posters, signs and books although we did not hear the language spoken. Young children told us they had enjoyed painting prior to our arrival and they showed us their pictures drying. Children were constantly active and engaged in activities and their learning was enhanced as they moved between indoors and outside to play. After lunch they played with dolls, jigsaws and other table top toys which held their interest and developed their concentration skills. Children are given clear guidance about why they need to do particular things. For example, the child minder explained, *"We need to tidy up now because it is time to go to school"* and *"We will leave these pictures here to dry and give them to mummy when she picks you up later."* Because of the good communication, children respect the decisions and directions given.

Developmental files are completed and retained. These include observations and photographs on a monthly basis. In addition to this the child minder completes a language and literacy checklist based on the foundation phase, a variety of worksheets and an overview of their all-round development. Although next steps in children's learning are not recorded the child minder was able to talk to us about each child's progress.

The child minder carefully considers children's individual needs and provides a good learning environment for them, which promotes their development.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder considers any potential risk to children in her home and on outings and takes appropriate precautions. It is a welcoming and homely environment for children with plenty of good opportunities to explore and have fun. Good use is made of the space available and children can free flow between outdoors and inside as they choose. The furniture and layout furniture available suits purposes of child minding well.

Our findings

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

The child minder has adopted suitable routines and policies to support her in ensuring health and safety matters are met. She is familiar with the regulatory requirements and has registered her business with Environmental Health. Practice fire drills are completed monthly and log of these is maintained. This shows that they are practiced at different times of the day to ensure all children experience a drill. A fire blanket is wall mounted in the kitchen and the first aid kits are easy to access. An annual gas safety inspection was carried out in February 2018. The child minder uses a baby monitor to listen for young children who take a short nap upstairs in a travel cot.

We saw a range of risk assessments which are completed on a room by room basis. Potential risks and methods for prevention are recorded. A visual monthly checklist is completed by the child minder which includes things such as, garden checks, the contents of the first aid box, smoke alarms tests and general hygiene of the home. Individual hand towels are used for children to reduce the risk of cross contamination. Areas in the home were clean and tidy and a homely atmosphere was evident.

The child minder has a safe and secure home and she has well established routines to check for potential health and safety matters.

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

The child minder's home is welcoming and inviting. Children have access to the whole of the ground floor. They utilised these areas throughout the day, following their own interests and playing or relaxing in different areas of the home. Children had access to messy play indoors and outside as well as a wide variety of activities in the conservatory. Most activities and resources are easy for the children to access independently. However, some resources are stored on shelves which are out of the children's reach, but these are brought down if children request them. For example, after lunch one child requested some additional resources to play with the dolls and the child minder collected an iron, ironing board, washing line and pegs. The children enjoyed playing with these which extended their play and learning experiences with the dolls, introducing real life, everyday experiences to them. We noticed there were

some resources stacked on the top of the shelves which may pose a risk if they were to fall. A toilet downstairs was accessed by the children independently and a toddler step is available to assist children when needed.

The child minder ensures her home is suitable for the purposes of child minding.

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

The child minder has established a system to monitor the quality of resources and equipment. When purchasing new resources, the child minder considers the needs of the children attending along with their wishes and known preferences. A good range of resources including books were available. Resources are checked as part of the visual safety checks and the child minder told us she cleans resources regularly to minimise any germs or spread of infection. The process for this varies and the child minder explained her vigilance for this as she has a few younger children who tend to put things in their mouths.

Resources and equipment were of a good standard and there are good routines in place to monitor their quality and cleanliness.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is very organised and manages her service well. Paperwork is neatly filed and easy to locate. She is an experienced child minder who values continuous professional development, undertaking additional training courses each year. She has a good understanding of the National Minimum Standards and Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations which help to deliver a good service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder complies with all regulations and strives and exceeds the National Minimum Standards for regulated Child Care. We examined a range of documentation and found these were well maintained. Registers of attendance were up to date and included actual times children were in attendance. The Statement of Purpose and nearly all policies for the service are up to date and accurately reflect the practice. The child minder is a member of an umbrella organisation which provides her with public liability insurance and support and information appropriate for her service. She demonstrates an awareness of legislation changes and takes action to incorporate these changes into her policies for the service. The business is registered with the Information Commissioners Office and all documentation is kept securely and in an organised manner. Parents contracts are regularly reviewed and additional parental permissions are sought for routine outings and taking photographs to ensure parents are fully aware what practice is undertaken.

The child minder pays due regard to guidance, training and feedback helping her to operate the business to a good standard.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

Self evaluation is embedded into practice. The child minder has established good relationships with parents and keeps communication open daily. She feels that this helps to ensure she can gather any useful feedback from parents. An annual quality of care review was last completed in May 2018. To inform the report the child minder consulted with parents and children, and reflected on her own practice and achievements throughout the year. A complaints policy is in place should parents have any concerns but no concerns have been received by the child minder or CIW about this service.

Well established systems help to ensure the service is monitored effectively and areas for improvement are identified.

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

The child minder fulfils her role well. She does not employ any assistants. Household members all have a current Disclosure and Barring Service check and the child minder is aware of her responsibilities in renewing these checks every three years. She routinely undertakes training to keep up to date with any best practice and changes to legislation. For example, food hygiene, safeguarding and first aid training had all been updated since the previous inspection and the child minder is enrolled on an advanced safeguarding course in November 2018.

The child minder sets realistic targets for her business and manages her business well.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder communicates well with parents. Parent comments in the quality of care review, letters and thank you cards speak highly of the service they receive. They rate the child minder as 'excellent' and express their gratitude for the care provided to their children. One parent told us that they were very happy with the care their children receive and that the child minder had been very supportive to her family's needs. Many parents have returned to the child minder with siblings, as they have been so pleased with the care they receive. The child minder has established links in the community and with other child minders. They attend toddler groups and other children's activities, as well as go on outings together. This provides children with opportunities to socialise with others. On outings they become familiar with the community they live in and experience different outdoor spaces.

Partnerships are effective.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

The following recommendations were discussed:

- Review the Safeguarding policy to include details regarding the referral process relating to the Prevent Duty and actions to be taken if an allegation was made against yourself;
- developmental records for children could include more specific details in the next steps in children's learning;
- consider ways of increasing children's independence skills and the use of the Welsh language to support their learning and development and
- review the storage of items on the top of the shelving unit;

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector carried out an announced inspection of the service due to previous visits where the child minder was not at home. We telephoned the child minder the evening before.

We:

- spent approximately five hours with the child minder, including accompanying her on a school run;
- observed the child minder's practice and interactions;
- spoke to the child minder and the children present;
- reviewed all information held by CIW;
- spoke to one parent;
- examined a range of documentation including, policies, procedures, daily records, several children's files and other relevant records maintained as part of the service;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the areas used for minding, and
- we provided formal feedback over the telephone on 26 October 2018.

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	Alyson Grant
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	Monday – Thursday 7:30 – 5:30p.m. and Fridays 7:30 – 9a.m.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	3 December 2014
Dates of this inspection visit	25 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?	<p>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. <i>This may be because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service.</i></p> <p>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>'.</p>
Additional Information:	