

# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Anne Neale**

**Pontypool**



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## **Description of the service**

The child minder is registered to provide home based child care for up to ten children under 12 years of age. She operates her service, which has been registered with CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) for nearly 10 years, from her home on the outskirts of Pontypool. Child minding takes place mainly on the ground floor, and children have easy access to an enclosed garden. The service is open from 6.30am to 6pm, weekdays. This is a mainly English language service with some use of incidental Welsh to help promote children's learning.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children are cared for by a well-qualified and experienced child minder, who values their views and encourages them to make their own decisions. They have formed good relationships with her and her family, and are happy, confident and settled in her care. They are excited to take part in the good variety of activities and experiences provided, and enjoy creating their own games with very good support from the child minder. The child minder's home is welcoming and comfortable, with a good range of resources for the children. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure it is safe and secure. Overall, the service is well managed.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the previous inspection the child minder has:

- completed relevant training in areas such as autism, internet safety and the Level 5 in Child Care, Learning and Development in order to develop her professional knowledge and practice;
- increased the security of the back garden;
- improved storage of resources so children can more easily find what they want to play with;
- fitted carpet to the children's play area so floor play is more comfortable;
- introduced systems to record allergens in the food provided, and
- provided additional outdoor play resources.

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

There are no issues of non-compliance following this inspection. We noted some additional information needs to be included in the child protection and concerns policies to provide clarity for parents, and the service would benefit from written risk assessments in addition to the check list used. We recommended observations of children's activities are recorded to help identify the next steps in their learning. Recommendations are discussed in the body of the report, and listed towards the end.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children feel happy, secure and valued at the service. They have built up good relationships with the child minder and her family, and are confident to express their views and ideas. They are excited to take part in the good range of activities available to them, and develop their self-help and social skills successfully.

## **Our findings**

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

Children make good choices and are confident to direct their own play. They chose to go outside in the garden, and made their own decisions about what they would like to do, such as play on the trikes and mark-make with chalks. They created their own games and involved the child minder in their play. For example, they directed her within their imaginative play, and explained the rules of their football game, confident they would be listened to. They give their ideas about where they would like to go in the holidays, such as St Fagans, and make decisions about their meals, for example they chose the fillings in their toasted sandwiches.

Children are confident to express themselves and make decisions about their play.

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

Children forge good relationships with the child minder and her family. They form good friendships and are secure and happy. They giggled, smiled and chatted with the child minder and involved her in their play, such as racing on the bikes and scoring goals. They enjoy playing with the child minder's son which helps them feel part of the family. They have suitable places to put their coats and their art work is displayed which gives them a sense of belonging, and they enjoy lots of individual attention which helps them feel valued.

Children are relaxed and comfortable at the child minders.

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

Children co-operate and interact well. They create their own games, and play together and with the child minder well. They share resources and take turns successfully, such as on the swings. They listen to the child minder and respond well to her requests to, for example, wash their hands at appropriate times or go the correct way down the slide. There is a fun, relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Children interact and co-operate well with each other and the child minder.

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

Children have fun at the child minders. They are excited to take part in the activities available, and they are involved in what they do. For example, they spent time creating pictures and patterns on the patio with chalk, and were proud of their creations. They engage well in imaginative play, for example when playing with rice and vehicles in the tuff tray. They persevere for good amounts of time. For example, trying to master the art of swinging on the swing. They enjoy visits out and about such as to Cardiff museum and picking pumpkins at a local farm.

Children engage well in their activities and are active and involved.

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

Children have good self-help skills. They manage their own meals successfully and help themselves to their drinks. They are confident to make their own decisions and find the resources they wish to play with. They have good social skills and enjoy meal times together.

Children are developing their independence and social skills successfully.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The child minder promotes children's health and welfare effectively. She is well qualified, and knows the children well. This allows her to meet their needs successfully, and provide a good range of activities which follow their interests and support their development. However, record keeping around observations of children's activities and identification of the next steps in their learning should be provided so parents can be clear how their children are developing.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well does the child minder keep children safe and healthy?**

The child minder implements suitable policies and procedures to promote children's health and welfare. She has attended training in safeguarding, and understands the processes to follow if she has any concerns about a child's welfare. She promotes healthy eating with children and encourages them to drink regularly. She is aware of children's specific dietary needs and allergies, and records any allergens in the food provided. Appropriate procedures are followed to protect children's health in relation to food storage and preparation, and children are supported to follow good personal hygiene practices well.

The child minder is clear about the appropriate procedures to follow in relation to the administration of medication, and suitable forms to record medication, existing injuries, incidents and accidents are used and completed appropriately. Paediatric first aid is up-to-date so the child minder can respond appropriately to minor accidents. There is a suitable fire evacuation plan in place and the child minder practises drills with the children monthly so they would know what to do if they needed to leave the house quickly.

The child minder encourages children to play in her garden as much as possible, and regularly visits local parks to encourage active outdoor play. She takes appropriate steps to ensure they are safe when out and about by, for example, using the correct car seats.

The child minder promotes children's welfare and health well.

#### **2.2 How well does the child minder manage interactions?**

The child minder uses positive strategies to support children and promote wanted behaviour. She praises children for their efforts, for example when they attempt to write their name with chalks on the patio, and gives them lots of encouragement and individual attention. She uses gentle tones and suitable language effectively to explain to children what to do rather than not what to do to encourage wanted behaviour. She encourages children to help with tasks such as laying the table or helping the younger

ones with their coats which promotes their self-esteem. The child minder engages with the children's play when it is appropriate to do so, and follows their directions and rules, which develops their self-confidence. There is a fun and unhurried atmosphere.

The child minder promotes children's interactions effectively.

### **2.3 How well does the child minder promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?**

The child minder knows the children well and meets their individual needs successfully. She encourages parents to bring their children for settling in days before they start at the service, and seeks appropriate information about each child so they can get to know each other and the child minder can plan the appropriate care. The child minder is well qualified and continues to attend training so she can support children well. She interacts with the children effectively, and asks good questions to help extend their play. For example, she asked one child how they could fix the toy aeroplane and encouraged them to find a solution, which developed their language and imagination. The child minder observes children's play in order to plan appropriate activities she knows they will enjoy and which will promote their learning and development. For example, she encouraged children to put the rice in different colour trucks to reinforce their knowledge of colours and counted with them when they played a game of catch with the ball. She takes them to places of interest to extend their learning opportunities such as Cardiff museum. The child minder uses simple Welsh words and phrases to promote children's learning of the Welsh language. However, she does not currently record her observations to show children's progress or record the next steps in their learning to clarify how the planned activities will develop their learning.

The child minder knows the children well and supports their play and learning successfully.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The child minder takes suitable steps to ensure children are cared for in a safe, clean and homely environment. There is an appropriate range of suitable quality play resources and equipment to meet their needs and interests and promote their development.

#### **Our findings**

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

The child minder ensures children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. She identifies hazards within her home and garden effectively, and has appropriate safety measures in place to mitigate risks. For example, the front door is kept locked while the children are in her home, the back garden is secure, and smaller resources for older children are stored on higher shelves out of reach of the younger ones. Detailed check lists are used to support the child minder in ensuring her home is safe. However, written risk assessments are not provided. There are records of general maintenance being carried out, including the gas boiler check, which show the house is well maintained and safe.

The child minder effectively ensures her home and garden are safe.

##### **3.2 How well does the child minder ensure the suitability of the environment?**

The child minder takes effective steps to ensure her home provides a comfortable, clean and welcoming space for children. Child minding takes place mainly on the ground floor, and children move freely between the kitchen/dining room and sitting room where there is suitable space for them to play and relax. Their independence and self-help skills are promoted successfully through the thoughtful lay-out of play resources and suitable position of coat hooks. The children can easily access the back garden which provides a good space for them to enjoy a variety of activities such as planting, mark-making and water play. Their 'work' and relevant posters are displayed which helps promote their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

The child minder ensures the environment is child-centred and homely so children feel secure and have a sense of belonging.

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

Children have easy access to a good range of resources and equipment. The resources and play materials are of good quality, age appropriate, and meet their interests successfully. There is a good selection of books, including some Welsh



stories, which are well set out so children can find the ones they want easily. The outdoor play resources extend children's play opportunities, and the ride on toys, for example, encourage them to take some risks in their play. Furniture and equipment are of good quality and support children's needs well. For example, tables and chairs are of differing sizes to suit the ages of children attending, and comfortable sofas give opportunity for the children to relax and enjoy some quiet time.

The child minder provides good quality resources which promote children's learning and development effectively.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

Overall, the child minder manages the service well, and is keen to extend her knowledge of child care to develop her service and ensure good outcomes for children. The child minder values children's and parents' views and plans improvements to the service. However, the self-evaluation process needs to be more robust.

### **Our findings**

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

Overall, the service is well run and effectively managed. The child minder enjoys her role and is keen to extend her knowledge to inform and improve her practice. She promotes safe practices and creates a supportive environment where children and their parents feel valued. The child minder has good systems in place to ensure all mandatory training is up-to-date, and records are well-organised and maintained in line with the National Minimum Standards and regulations. The statement of purpose gives a detailed and accurate picture of the service; policies and procedures are comprehensive and shared with parents so overall they can be clear how the service operates. We noted the complaint and child protection policies required some additional information to provide further clarity to parents. Suitable contracts are agreed with parents and reviewed regularly, and appropriate permissions are sought for activities such as taking their children on local walks. However, the child minder had not sought written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. This was addressed by our second visit. The child minder values the views of parents and children and is keen to develop her service to improve outcomes for children through, for example, attending relevant training. However, systems to evaluate the quality of care need to be more thorough.

The service is generally well organised and managed efficiently.

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

The child minder is motivated to provide an improving and reliable service which meets children's and parents' needs. She has implemented improvements since the previous inspection such as providing additional outdoor resources and improving the security of the back garden, and spoke with us about planned developments, including the provision of a covered area so children can enjoy outside play regardless of the weather. The child minder undertakes training to extend her knowledge and develop her child care practice in areas such as child care, autism and internet safety, as well as to ensure she is up-to-date with current practice in relation to safeguarding, food hygiene and paediatric first aid. She invites children's and parents' views, and provides meals, resources and activities which follow children's interests and

preferences. She welcomes the support of the local authority and acts on their advice and guidance to improve outcomes for children. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed, and the child minder was keen to address recommendations made during this visit. However, the child minder had not undertaken a formal review of the quality of her care, and provided a written action plan for improvements since July 2017. The child minder addressed this following the inspection. An adequate complaint policy was in place and the child minder had not received any concerns about her service. However, the policy required some additional information to provide clarity to parents. This was addressed following the inspection.

The child minder welcomes views of parents, children and other external agencies to develop the service and improve outcomes for children. However, systems to review the quality of care are not sufficiently robust.

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

The child minder is very well qualified and has many years' experience working with children. For example, she recently completed her Level 5 in Child Care, Learning and Development. She ensures herself, and all family members living in her home over the age of 16 years have an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to ensure their suitability. There are suitable contingency plans in place in the event of an emergency, which are shared with parents. The child minder meets regularly with the child minder she uses as her emergency back-up person. This means children would be familiar with this child minder in the event of an emergency, and so reduce any anxiety an event of this nature may cause them. The child minder works as flexibly as possible to accommodate parents' changing child care needs, and gives good notice of leave so they may make suitable alternative arrangements.

The child minder has very good systems in place to ensure a safe and reliable service to parents.

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

The child minder works closely with parents to promote their child's well-being. She operates a flexible settling in procedure to ensure that the children settle at their own pace. Suitable forms are used to ensure that each child's preferences, and other personal information such as health needs are understood before they start at her service so she can provide appropriate care. The child minder shares information with parents about their child's development and experiences verbally and through photographs. She also uses newsletters to notify parents of any changes to her service such as updated policies and activities such as planned trips. We discussed

using daily diaries to record pertinent information for the younger children, in particular the under twos in the future. The child minder works with the local authority to access advice and training, and values the important relationship she has established with teachers at the local schools where some of the minded children attend to help her support the children well. She works closely with three other child minders and accesses activities in the local community such as parent and toddler groups which serves to extend children's play and learning opportunities.

There are good communication systems in place with parents, and the child minder has established effective relationships with them, the local community and other professionals to support the children in her care well.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

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

None

### **5.2 Areas of non-compliance from this inspection**

None

### **5.3 Recommendations for improvement**

- Maintain records of observations of children's activities to help identify the next steps in their learning;
- provide written risk assessments in addition to safety check lists currently used;
- include information about Prevent Duty in the child protection policy, and
- include information in the complaint procedure about how complaints subject to concurrent investigation would be managed.

## 6 How we undertook this inspection

This was a full, unannounced inspection looking at all aspects of the service, undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We looked at what we already knew about the service;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector over two days;
- we observed activities and interactions between the child minder and children present;
- we looked at a range of records and documents including contracts, the statement of purpose, children's records, records of attendance and policies and procedures;
- we viewed the parts of the premises used for child minding and looked at the safety measures in place;
- we spoke with the child minder about how she ran the service and her plans for the future, and
- our findings were fed back to the child minder following the inspection.

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	Anne Neale
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Birth up to 12 years
Opening hours	6.30am to 6pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10 August 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	27 and 28 March 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 <i>More 'Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'</i> .
Additional Information: None	