



Childcare Inspection Report on

Karl McCarthy

Tredegar



Date Inspection Completed

19/07/2019

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Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being
Good	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
Adequate	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
Poor	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice

Description of the service

The child minder is registered with CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) to provide home based child care from his property in a residential area of Tredegar. He operates alongside his wife, who is also a registered child minder. When working alone, the child minder is registered to provide care for five children under 12 years of age; when working with his wife care may be provided for up to ten children. Child minding takes place on the ground floor of the home, with easy access for the children to an enclosed back garden for outdoor play. This is an English language service.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Care and Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

1. Overall assessment

Children are able to make good choices and express their ideas about their activities and issues which affect their care. They are relaxed, happy and feel at home in the child minder's care. They have very strong bonds of affection with both the child minder and his wife, and form friendships with each other. The child minder knows the children well and works closely with his wife to provide activities which promote the next steps in their learning and which he knows they will enjoy. The child minder ensures his home is safe, welcoming and comfortable, with a good range of resources to enhance children's learning. The child minder promotes children's health and welfare well. He manages his service suitably, and is keen to make improvements, further his professional knowledge and work closely with parents to secure positive outcomes for children.

2. Improvements

- Comprehensive systems have been introduced to help assess children's development and identify the next steps in their learning and development;
- more play resources and new equipment have been provided;
- areas of the home and garden have been redecorated to provide a bright and welcoming play space;
- training has been attended to ensure the child minder remains up-to-date with current practice and develops professional knowledge in areas such as online safety, and

- hygiene practices have been improved in line with current environmental health guidelines.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. We made five recommendations following the inspection which are discussed in body of the report and outlined in section five.

1. Well-being

Good

Our findings

Children express their views and ideas confidently and make good choices over a wide range of issues, including when and what to have for their snacks and meals, where they would like to play and what they would like to do. For example, younger children chose to take part in role play “cooking dinner” and build towers with the blocks. Older children decided to play in the conservatory, or watch a film of their choosing in the living room. In the school holidays children are happy to give their thoughts on what they would like to do, confident the child minder will listen, and readily contribute their views to the child minder’s review of the quality of the care provided.

Children are very relaxed and at home at the child minders. They have built up exceptionally close bonds with the child minder and his wife. One parent commented in their report for the child minder: *“The [children] most definitely do not consider [the child minder and his wife] as just child minders, they feel like part of their family”*. Children are confident to seek extra support if they are upset or want extra cuddles and comfort. One parent stated: *“The children love and trust [the child minder]. They confide in [him] and communicate anything they are worried about with school etc.”* Older children enjoy lots of banter and rough and tumble with the child minder. They feel valued and are confident the child minder will listen to their ideas or support them to make decisions. They feel a sense of belonging as they have places to put their belongings, a dedicated playroom with toys and resources, and can choose where they play. Children’s comments in their reports showed how much they *“loved”* coming to the child minders.

Children cooperate very well with the child minder. For example, they are happy to wash their hands at appropriate times, and know the routine well such as taking off their shoes when they arrive. Younger children are beginning to learn to share and take turns and respond to the child minder’s gentle support. Older children are polite and treat each other and the child minder with respect and consideration.

Children enjoy their time at the child minders. They are very happy and involved in their activities. For example, the younger ones were very engaged with their role play and dressing up in their aprons and had fun playing ‘animal bowls’. Older children enjoyed playing board games with the child minder and chatting to him while he prepared their tea. They liked to relax at the end of the school day and were keen to talk with the child minder about topics of interest to them such as the Queen’s birthday. Parents’ expressed in their reports for the child minder how much their children love being at the child minders, and have lots of fun playing their friends. Children told us they love spending time with the child minder, *“playing imaginary games”*, drawing, colouring, and going out in the garden, and are looking forward to the activities in the summer holidays such as picnics in the park and

trips to the cinema. Children have opportunities to practice their self-help skills and are becoming increasingly independent. For example, they manage their own food with increasing levels of success and can help themselves to their own drinks. They attend to their own personal needs with varying degrees of support, dependent on their needs. However, we discussed giving consideration to providing additional opportunities in line with their age and stage of development.

2. Care and Development

Good

Our findings

Overall, the child minder ensures he promotes children's health and welfare well. Ensuring children are safeguarded effectively is a high priority and the child minder attends relevant training in child protection regularly. Records of concerns are logged appropriately. However, we discussed ensuring any action taken and outcomes are also noted to provide a clear chronology of events. Appropriate procedures are generally followed in relation to the administering of medication. Accidents recorded are as expected of the age groups attending. The child minder explained the difficulties with sometimes obtaining parents' signatures to acknowledge any medication given or accidents and agreed to ensure these are always obtained in future. The child minder has undertaken an audit of the infection control measures in place using the Public Health Wales tool and good procedures are followed to minimise the risk of spreading infection. For example, individual hand towels are available for children and appropriate nappy changing processes are followed. The child minder is very aware of the importance of understanding each child's health and dietary needs and any allergens in food provided are logged. He has up-to-date training in food hygiene and follows the advice of environmental health to ensure food is stored and prepared safely, and the kitchen is kept clean. The child minder is flexible with meals in accordance with parents' wishes and children's preferences. He provides a choice of fruit at snack times and children can access their drinks freely. The child minder agreed to familiarise himself with the new Welsh government's healthy eating guidance for regulated childcare settings to ensure he is up-to-date with the latest information about how to provide children with a balanced diet.

The child minder takes steps to ensure children are safe when online. For example, the child minder has attended training in on line safety and benefits from his previous work experience in Information Technology. Appropriate controls are set on any devices provided by the child minder. However, the child minder had not provided an e-safety policy so parents can be clear about what to expect. This was addressed immediately following the inspection.

The child minder has a very calm and patient approach, and uses positive strategies to promote children's behaviour. For younger children, he offers clear explanations so children understand what is expected of them and supports them very well with sometimes difficult concepts such as taking turns and sharing. He praises children for specific activities such as helping to tidy up and sometimes sets up competitions between himself and the child to see who can get the most stickers to help provide encouragement and promote children's self-esteem. He works closely with his wife to act as good role models. For example both childminders speak respectfully to each other, and help children with tasks such as tidying up. The child minder promotes children's sense of self-esteem well by involving them in a range of decisions which affect them such as what they would like to do.

The child minder is well qualified and committed to providing a good range of activities to promote children's development and encourage them to play. For the younger children, he works closely with his wife to track their progress and plan activities which will promote the next steps in their learning. The child minder uses routines and activities to help promote younger children's numeracy skills. He engages naturally with them and supports their communication skills effectively. Parents' comments show they feel their children are progressing very well and are coming on "*leaps and bounds*". The child minder encourages older children to enjoy games or have fun with maths, for example. However, he does not currently use any simple Welsh words or phrases with the children to promote their learning in relation to the Welsh language.

3. Environment

Good

Our findings

The child minder implements effective measures to ensure the environment is safe and secure. For example, he undertakes daily visual checks for indoors and outdoors. These highlight any changes in the environment and ensure it is as far as reasonably practical, free from risks to children's safety. Records are completed to ensure all aspects of the service such as trips and areas of the home used are safe; these are reviewed regularly and acted upon. However, we discussed ways to improve these in terms of identifying hazards, associated risks and relevant safety measures put in place more clearly. The house is clean and well maintained; safety checks for the heating system are carried out annually.

The child minder's home is comfortable, bright and welcoming. Children can move freely between the rooms used for minding, and choose where they want to play, although safety gates are in place to ensure their safety when required. The conservatory is set up as a dedicated play room with resources in clear, low level units so children can find what they want to play with easily. The living room is used for children to relax and provides good additional play space. The kitchen provides a suitable place for children to enjoy their meals and craft activities. There is easy access to the enclosed, level back garden which provides a spacious area for outdoor play. Children can access the downstairs washroom which helps promote their sense of independence, and they have places to put their coats and belongings which helps them feel at home and a sense of belonging.

The child minder invests in good quality play resources which meet the interests of the children and are suitable to their different ages and stages of development. These are reviewed regularly and new ones provided in accordance with their needs and interests. For example, the child minder has provided a new soft play surface that can be set up each day so very young children can enjoy outdoor play comfortably. The play resources and books help children appreciate a diverse and multicultural society. All resources are cleaned regularly to ensure they are safe and in good condition. The equipment provided supports children's needs and promotes their safety, such as car seats and high chairs. Outdoor resources are stored appropriately when not in use so they remain in good condition. We discussed providing additional types of resources outside to extend children's opportunities to develop their creativity.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Our findings

The child minder works effectively with his wife to provide a well-run and managed service. He attends training to further his professional development and takes on board advice from the local authority and other sources to help promote positive outcomes for children. For example, he has attended courses in areas such as e-safety, and works closely with his wife to implement systems recommended by the local authority to help assess children's play and learning and identify the next steps in their learning. Records are well organised and overall, are completed in line with the National Minimum Standards. The statement of purpose gives a detailed and accurate picture of the service, and policies and procedures are comprehensive and provided to parents so they can be clear about how the service operates. Suitable contracts are discussed and shared with parents, and the appropriate permissions are sought for activities such as taking photographs and seeking emergency medical treatment.

The child minder reviews the quality of his service annually and identifies areas he wishes to develop. The review covers many aspects of the service including keeping children safe, working in partnership with parents and promoting children's learning and development, and includes the views of parents and children. A complaints procedure is in place although the child minder has not received any complaints about his service.

The child minder is suitably qualified and has worked as a child minder with his wife for the past 10 years. Registers show he operates within the conditions of her registration, which allow him to care for a maximum of five children under the age of 12 years when working alone, and up to ten children when working with his wife. The child minder runs his setting as flexibly as possible to meet parents' child care needs, and works closely with them to ensure he can provide a reliable service. For example, he gives very good notice of any planned leave. The child minder and all adults living in his home over the age of 16 years have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to confirm their suitability.

The child minder values the close relationship he has built up with parents to promote their child's well-being. He is also able to signpost them to any support they may need with issues such as toilet training. He operates a flexible settling in procedure to help children get to know him at their own pace. Suitable forms are used so each child's preferences and care needs are understood before they start at the service. This ensures the child minder can put appropriate plans in place to provide suitable care. Parents feel they are kept very well informed about their child's progress, routines and experiences. For example, when they deliver and collect their children the child minder shares useful details about their child's experiences, moods and care needs. This information is supported with written daily diary diaries for younger children, and all information in relation to their child's development

is available for them to view at their request. Parents also receive regular photographs of their children throughout the day to keep them regularly updated. The child minder has a good relationship with the local authority through which he receives advice and training.

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

a. Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure parents always sign to acknowledge entry regarding accidents and medication;
- record any actions taken and outcomes in relation to incidents logged;
- develop the use of incidental Welsh with the children;
- consider improvements to the written risk assessments, and
- consider providing additional resources outdoors to develop children's creativity.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full 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 and took place over one day;
- we observed activities and interactions between the child minder, his wife who works alongside him as a registered child minder, and the 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, looked at safety checks and took account of the safety measures in place;
- we took account of the comments made in parent and children questionnaires provided for the child minder;
- we spoke with the child minder about how he ran his service and his plans for the future, and
- our findings were discussed with the child minder at the end of the inspection.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Karl McCarthy
Registered maximum number of places	5 when working alone; 10 when working with his wife (also a registered child minder)
Age range of children	Birth up to 12 years
Opening hours	Weekdays 5am to a negotiable time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	19 November 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	19 July 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	

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