



Childcare Inspection Report on

Gemma Chicken

Blackwood



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from her family home which she shares with her husband and step son, in Blackwood. She is registered to care for up to six children under the age of 12 years. She operates Monday to Friday, from 6am until 8pm throughout the year. Her service is conducted through the medium of English.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are well settled and happy at the service and have developed warm and secure relationships with the child minder. They have good opportunities to play, learn and develop their independence. The child minder is suitably qualified and proactive in developing her skills and knowledge as a child care professional. There is a dedicated playroom which is set up to meet the needs of children. There are some limitations to direct, independent access for children to toilet facilities which are on the first floor and to outside play. However, the child minder plans well to minimise the impact of these. Overall, the management of the service is well organised but some improvements are needed to details within record keeping.

2. Improvements

The child minder has addressed recommendations from the previous inspection;

- Consulted with parents and children to inform the review of the service she provides;
- updated CIW telephone contact details in the complaints policy and Statement of Purpose;
- written a policy on the use of dummies at the setting and
- resources have been replenished and replaced so that children can continue to enjoy arts and crafts activities.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no issues of non compliance raised during the inspection. We have made recommendations regarding the environment, leadership and management and these are detailed at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are able to make choices and their feedback is actively used in the planning of activities and the development of the service. Children are relaxed and comfortable in their surroundings and enjoy their play opportunities. They are able to make friends, develop their social skills and gain independence. Children's well-being is central to how the service operates.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children know that their choices and decisions are listened to. Children had free choice and we saw that their decisions and requests were appropriately responded to. Children's feedback is considered when delivering the service and they had been consulted for the annual review of the service. We saw that they had written and drawn pictures to record what they felt about the service which included "friends" and going to "Kidsfun" soft play centre. We did note that the complaints procedure did not clarify how children over the age of eight could raise a complaint and consultation with children could be developed further.

Children have a clear voice and play an active part in the planning of the service.

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

Children are relaxed and settled within the environment and in their interactions with the child minder and the other children. We saw that younger children were confident saying to the child minder during a craft activity "Me do it!" knowing that she would listen to them and support their choice. Children chatted and moved within the environment with ease. When one child became tired they looked to the child minder for comfort, knowing that they would receive the cuddle they were seeking.

Children feel safe and confident because they are valued and treated with respect.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning the rules of social interaction. Older children included younger children in their play and were kind and considerate to them. They laughed and made jokes and proudly showed, and then played with, a 'pass the parcel' game they had made in school. They were eager to demonstrate this game and share it with the other children and the child minder. We heard lots of laughter and co-operation. Older children were able to tell us that they felt that they had made friends at the child minder's home. Later, they chose to play a game that was not fully understood by younger children, however, they still encouraged younger children to play and were patient when explaining the rules to them. They were able to complete several rounds of a guessing game which included the younger children. We heard children use good manners and followed house rules.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of appropriate behaviour in line with their age and stage of development.

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

Children express enjoyment in their play and learning. We saw that children had the opportunity to undertake an activity with the child minder or could choose to play on their own. During both the afternoon and after school sessions children chose to invite the child minder into their play. We saw a younger child really enjoying playing with play dough, choosing colours and shapes to use and happily recalling making reindeers and Santa's at Christmas time. They took great pride in recognising colours and working with their favourite one. Older children chose to play with a head band guessing game and lots of laughter and interaction took place between children and the child minder. We saw that both younger and older children concentrated and engaged very well as they were so interested in the play options available to them. Children told us that they especially liked games such as 'Kerplunk!' and playing with 'slime'.

Children are well engaged in their play and take pride in their learning.

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

Children are given good opportunities to learn and become independent. We saw that children were encouraged to put on their own coats and shoes and that all children were encouraged to feed themselves sat at the table. Whilst children could not access the upstairs toilet independently as a safety gate was appropriately placed at the bottom of the stairs, the child minder was very vigilant so children could access the toilet promptly and with support if needed. They had easy access to resources so that their play choices were easily met and were encouraged to put away the toys once they had finished playing with them.

Children are given opportunities and encouraged to develop their independence skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is enthusiastic and engages children well. Relevant procedures and policies are implemented to keep children safe and healthy. She builds good relationships with children and is able to manage behaviour in a very positive manner. She plans stimulating activities to engage children and promote their learning.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder implements her procedures in order to keep children safe and healthy. There is a medication policy and we saw that medication records had been signed and dated by parents. There is an extensive child protection policy and she clearly understood her responsibility in safeguarding children having undergone child protection training. However, this document did not clarify what specific actions would be taken if a family member were implicated in a child protection matter. Infection control procedures are evident in relation to food preparation and hand washing and the child minder has completed a Food Hygiene and Safety course. The Food Standards Agency has visited and no recommendations have been made. Monthly fire drills are conducted and recorded appropriately; there is an outings policy and a small first aid box is stored in the car for use in an emergency. The child minder has a current paediatric first aid certificate and there is a detailed illness/infection policy. The child minder has an Internet policy but needs to review this to ensure that her procedures are able to keep children safe.

The child minder maintains relevant records and documents and appropriate infection control measures are implemented.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Children are well supported and their behaviour is managed in a positive, calm and caring manner. There is a clear behaviour management policy which outlines the strategies the child minder uses to support children's behaviour. We noted that she was proactive in supporting and acknowledging 'good' behaviour and praised children when they shared toys and reminded them of the importance of 'kind hands' She praised children "What a clever girl you are!" in their learning, so that children had a sense of pride and achievement. We saw one occasion in which a child did not immediately respond to the child minder as they were over tired. However, once the child had slept and was refreshed they played happily with others, responding well to the child minders interactions. Her approach to caring for children is flexible and relaxed and this results in an informal and warm atmosphere within the home.

The child minder is effective in managing interactions positively.

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

The child minder is skilled in engaging children and developing their curiosity. She is enthusiastic and shows a real interest in what they do explaining that she loves seeing children progress and learn. She uses questioning well to extend children's language and understanding of subjects. We saw that she listened to children and asked them about their home life and what they like to do. During a play dough session we heard her supporting the child to identify shapes and colours and the child was delighted when they were able to identify their favourite colour. The child minder ensures that children have opportunities for outside activities and told us that she takes children on walks to the local parks and play centre. The child minder has initiated a process to assess and observe children to plan for the next step in their development. She identifies areas for learning, highlights what children have learnt through play and plans future activities through weekly planning around children's needs.

The child minder demonstrates a good understanding of children's individual needs and plans well to ensure that their all-round development needs are met.

3. Environment

Summary

The environment is clean, well maintained and safe. Children have access to a dedicated playroom that is well resourced and a lounge where they can relax and sleep if they need to. There are some limitations within the home as the toilet is upstairs and there is no direct access to an outside play area. However, the child minder is aware of this and takes steps to minimise the impact of these issues upon children.

Our findings

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

The child minder has good systems in place to ensure the environment is safe for children. The front door was kept locked throughout the inspection and we were asked to sign a visitor's book on arrival. We saw risk assessments for all play environments, outings, the school run and regarding her pet dog who is never left unattended with children. Daily visual checks are completed and we did not detect any obvious risks within the environment. Annual gas safety checks had been completed and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors were checked and recorded monthly. The child minder had safety gates preventing access into the kitchen and up the stairs and a fire blanket and first aid kit was easily accessible within the kitchen. The back garden was not accessible to children as the child minder had, appropriately, risk assessed it and felt that at present it was not suitable for children. The child minder has registered her business with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and had been inspected on 21 January 2019 and she told us that there had been no recommendations made as the FSA had been satisfied with her food preparation procedures.

The child minder is able to maintain a safe environment in which to care for children.

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

The environment is homely and generally suitable to care for children. There are, however, some limitations due to the layout of the home, that is, upstairs toilet and no direct access to an outside play space. However, the child minder manages this well. We noted that the bathroom ensured children had appropriate hand washing and drying facilities and easy access to the toilet with a step available for younger children. We saw that the dedicated playroom had suitable chairs, settee and table to accommodate children's needs and a separate sleep room for younger children. The child minder explained that she had identified the need to improve the organisation and storage of toys within the playroom.

The child minder arranges the environment so that it meets children's needs satisfactorily.

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

The child minder is able to ensure that the quality of resources is maintained to a good standard. On inspection resources were seen to be of good quality, plentiful and able to meet the needs of the age range of children attending. The child minder told us that resources were checked regularly and discarded immediately if damaged or worn. We were also told that they are cleaned regularly and we saw that children treated the toys with respect. There was a good range of toys and books including multicultural toys and resources.

The child minder follows procedures that ensure resources and equipment is maintained to a good standard.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder understands her obligations in relation to her child minding business. Record keeping is organised and quality assurance process are being developed. The service is managed effectively and positive links are developed with parents and other professionals.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The service is generally well organised so that children and parents experience a service that operates smoothly and efficiently. There is a statement of purpose which gives parents essential information so that they can make an informed choice about whether the service meets their needs although this document needs slight amendments. The policy file is well organised and there is a good range of policies covering various aspects of the service including safeguarding, pets, health eating and health and safety. These are reviewed on an annual basis and we discussed with the child minder developing certain policies to ensure they were effective. Accident and incident records are maintained to a good standard and the accident records we viewed had been signed by parents. The child minder conducts her service primarily through the medium of English although she discussed with us her ideas for introducing more Welsh and we saw some Welsh language posters in the play room. Children's time of arrival and departure is recorded; contracts we viewed were up to date and contained relevant details and parent consent. There is current motor vehicle documentation and up to date public liability insurance. The child minder has copies of the national minimum standards for reference. She is not currently registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

The child minder runs an organised and effective service.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder has systems in place to review her service and plan for improvement. Feedback is sought from parents to inform her review and observations and verbal feedback is currently sought from children who use the service. The child minder was able to discuss with us her plans to further develop her service focussing on improvements to the playroom she had planned and had also completed an action plan for improvements. We also saw that she undertook good evaluations of incidents and accidents and monitored her service to ensure it remained safe and stimulating for children.

The child minder recognises her responsibility to review and plan for development of her service.

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

The child minder does not employ an assistant. Should an emergency arise,

arrangements are in place for a second child minder who lives locally, to step in and provide assistance. She had not had 'Prevent' training which is a government strategy which places responsibility on providers to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation. However, she had ensured all other training had been completed and had made arrangements to renew her Disclosure and Barring Service check to ensure its continuity.

The child minder is suitably qualified and takes steps to ensure that she manages her time effectively.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder values the relationships she builds with parents, children and other professionals and understands the importance of information sharing to ensure children's needs are being met. She maintains links with parents and keeps them informed about their children's routines and progress via daily diaries for younger children if parents require, face to face discussions and via texts throughout the day. Parents receive an information pack as part of the admission process and the child minder maintains individual booklets which contain photographs of children participating in activities and examples of their work. We saw some feedback from parents and these demonstrated a very high level of satisfaction with the service.

The child minder is able to build and maintain good working relationships with parents and families who use her service.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Undertake prevent training;
- Update the statement of purpose as it currently states that the child minder is registered to care for children under eight years and should state 12 years;
- further promote the use of the Welsh language;
- develop children's questionnaires and review complaints policy so that once the child minder starts caring for children aged over eight years she has a relevant complaints procedure for children;
- review internet and mobile phone policy and
- contact Information Commissioner's Office to establish whether she needs to register with them.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection which was carried out over the course of one day. There were two minded children present. The inspection was completed by one inspector and as part of the inspection process we:

- Spoke to the child minder and minded children;
- observed care practice and interactions;
- sampled a selection of service records and documents;
- completed a visual inspection of the premises;
- looked at information held by CIW and
- provided feedback over the telephone after 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	Gemma Chicken
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Opening hours	6am to 8pm Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	24 June 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	22 January 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Is early year's 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 'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'
Additional Information:None	