

Childcare Inspection Report on

Helen Wilson

Swansea



Date Inspection Completed

16/05/2019

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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

Helen Wilson registered as a child minder in March 2013 to care from her home in Penclawdd, Swansea. She can care for a total of 7 children at any one time and caters for children up to the age of 12 years. She operates between the hours of 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. English is the main language of care although the child minder is working towards the 'Active Offer' on relation to the provision of Welsh.

Summary

| Theme | Rating |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Well-being</u> | Excellent |
| <u>Care and Development</u> | Excellent |
| <u>Environment</u> | Good |
| <u>Leadership and Management</u> | Excellent |

1. Overall assessment

Children experience excellent well-being as they have a confident voice, build strong bonds with others and their needs are fully met. They benefit from participating in highly stimulating activities and outings that they thoroughly enjoy and which supports their all-round development. The child minder is an excellent child-care practitioner as she skilfully manages interactions and has a thorough understanding of how children learn and actively promotes their health and safety. Her home is a warm, comfortable and suitably resourced environment that is clean and secure. The child minder has excellent leadership skills and has developed successful partnerships with others.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection, the child minder had implemented the recommendation made and ensured that children had individual towels to dry their hands with. The child minder had also replaced or purchased additional resources such as food thermometer, first aid provisions, maths resources and baby toys. She had also renewed membership for the Wild Wetlands Centre and Gower Heritage Centre so that children could enjoy regular visits.

3. Requirements and recommendations

No non-compliance was identified.

We made a recommendation in relation to records. This is detailed at the back of the report.

1. Well-being

Excellent

Summary

Children's well-being is successfully supported. They are fully involved in making choices in decisions. They thrive at this service as their needs are fully recognised and met and they benefit from participating in a broad range of stimulating play and learning experiences.

Our findings

Children have a strong and confident voice because they have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about what affects them. For example, they have a say in the activities they undertake and the snacks that they eat. Children chose a story to listen to, one of which was 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt.' They joined in with the stories which showed that they were familiar with them and had heard them many times before. The older child pretended to be a character getting water in their shoes. One child later wanted to sing songs and pointed to the box of instruments showing that they knew where to find them. Children had a choice of snack, including Welsh cakes, nuts or fruit. They chose to have Welsh cake and strawberries. Children were offered spinach with their lunch; one child said yes, another did not want any and their wishes were respected. Children chose milk or water to drink.

Children's feelings, likes, dislikes and needs are acknowledged and highly valued as they have very strong bonds of affection and attachment to others. They therefore feel particularly safe, secure and happy to spend time in the child minder's care. Children were familiar with where things were kept. After a time, they were relaxed and chatty which showed that they felt comfortable in their surroundings and with others' company and they were becoming used to the visitor's presence.

Children interact very positively with others. They are engaged and show respect for people and property as they help their friends and help to tidy away toys when they have finished with them. It was evident that good friendships had developed. When with their friends, they were more confident and spoke freely, they were animated and interacting well. Children initiated their own games. For example, they sat on the floor and rolled a ball between each other, naturally taking turns.

Children are self-motivated to initiate their own play and to influence the tasks and activities because child-led activities predominate. They therefore very much enjoy their play and learning. Children clearly enjoyed the stories and singing as they asked for more. Children spent an appropriate length of time involved in activities which showed they were interested in what they were doing. One child pretended to make a 'blueberry cake' with the playdough whilst the other child made different impressions in the playdough using different materials such as pasta shapes and shells. Later on, children immediately busied themselves in the garden area; two headed straight to the sandpit and began to dig in the

sand; the other young child went to the slide and then began making 'cups of tea' at the play/mud kitchen.

Children make excellent progress because they experience innovative and age/developmentally appropriate opportunities that fully promote their all-round development and enable them to follow their interests. They have suitable opportunities to develop their independence. For instance, before eating snack children were assisted to wash their hands in a tub with soap and paper towels to dry them on. They also helped to make their own playdough by measuring out the ingredients. They chose the colour and whether they wanted it to smell (no smell today). After adding the colouring the child explained, "*It's turning blue, but not that blue!*" they later decided to add peppermint essence to reflect the colour they had made.

2. Care and Development

Excellent

Summary

Care and Development at this service is excellent. This is because the child minder is highly competent and, on the whole, has a thorough knowledge and understanding of best practice in relation to child care.

Our findings

The child minder understands and implements policies and procedures to ensure children are kept safe and healthy. Her policies link to current best practice guidance to ensure good outcomes. She had obtained a Healthy Gold Snack Award as a recognition of her commitment to the promotion of healthy eating and followed current infection control guidance to support good hygiene. The child minder had the necessary core training and had recently updated her training in first aid, child protection and food hygiene. She had also undertaken online 'Prevent Strategy' training to gain an understanding of safeguarding in relation to extremism. The child minder was confident of the safeguarding procedures to follow if she had any concerns about a child in her care. However, conversations that she had held with parents about children's well-being and progress had not been documented.

The child minder is an excellent role model. She has a good knowledge and understanding of child development and how this affects children's behaviour. She was very quiet, calm and reassuring to the children. The child minder suggested activities to relax them, such as stories they liked, asked them questions and actively involved them in the story. For example, she used knitted animals as a tool when singing songs so that children participated. When they sang 'Monkeys on the Bed,' the children used stuffed monkeys to illustrate the lyrics of the song and numbers. The child minder often encouraged children to repeat words to promote development of their speech and provided lots of praise and encouragement such as, "*Good sharing!*" and "*You're a good friend!*"

The child minder is well qualified and experienced with working with children. She provides an excellent range of play and learning activities that children find fun and which enable them to develop holistically. She places a strong emphasis on outdoor play and incorporates lots of natural resources in their play that they find on their outings. The children are regularly taken to places such as the Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre, local woodlands, parks and beaches. A parent commented that, "*The activities she does with our daughter are exactly what we would do, if we were not working mums. (And if we had Helen's talent for crafts!). We love the outdoor activities!*" The child minder encourages children to think for themselves and make connections when undertaking activities to enable them to develop. For example, when adding food colouring to the play dough mixture she asked, "*What's happening to our blue dots? They're spreading out and mixing,*" and explained the reasons. The child minder measured and tracked children's development against the foundation phase outcomes/levels.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

The environment is good. The child minder provides care from her terraced home which is safe, comfortable, welcoming and well-resourced.

Our findings

The child minder successfully ensures that her home is safe, secure and well maintained. For example, regular maintenance such as gas checks and fire alarm checks are carried out regularly. Her record keeping reflects the fact that the child minder pays good attention to safety and security such as regular discussions with children about fire safety and practice of emergency evacuations. Detailed risk assessments were in place which identified potential risks and the measures that she took to reduce or minimise the risk of harm. These were dated to show they were kept under review. Comments had been added to the risk assessment, for example, to draw attention to the potential risk posed by a split in one of the trees in the garden.

The child minder's home is comfortable, welcoming and suitably equipped and resourced so that it is child-friendly. The living room and snug were largely used for child minding purposes, which were easy for the child minder to supervise if in the kitchen. Children were able to eat and undertake activities at the dining table. Comfortable sofas and chairs were available for the children to relax upon and a travel cot was present for younger children's use. Toys were accessible to the children; some were kept in open wicker storage baskets, others in clear plastic boxes or storage units around the rooms. Children knew where to find the toys and resources as they pointed to what they wanted. The garden, which is located around the side and can only be accessed with supervision. This is wild and natural space that is securely fenced around the perimeter. It is equipped with a lidded sandpit, slide and mud kitchen. Outdoor equipment was stored in a shed to help protect and maintain items when not in use.

The child minder ensures that nearly all of the resources are clean, well maintained and safe. There is a good range and an adequate supply of resources to stimulate the children's interest and imagination. For instance, there were resources that promoted creativity, imagination, fine motor skills, language and communication, mathematics etc. Many natural resources and small parts were available for children to explore such as pine cones, painted pebbles and small logs. These are in good condition.

4. Leadership and Management

Excellent

Summary

The child minder has effective leadership skills. Her business is run smoothly as she is organised and conscientious. She demonstrates a strong commitment to on-going professional development and to forging partnerships with others.

Our findings

The child minder is committed to providing an excellent service for parents. She demonstrates effective leadership skills as her business is organised and well-run. For example, the child minder has a file that contains a printed copy of all of the policies and documents. These had been dated to evidence when they had last been checked and reviewed. The policies linked to the relevant national minimum standards and current best practice guidelines. For instance, the nappy changing policy referred to the 'infection Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings' guidance. All records were organised and had been diligently completed. The child minder had developed a matrix to show when tasks are due for renewal, such as public liability insurance, completion of the self-assessment and quality of care review. This helped to ensure that that the business ran smoothly and she remained compliant with regulations.

The child minder has developed an effective system for reviewing and evaluating her service. She identifies areas for improvement so that her business continues to develop. She provides surveys for older children and parents and actively welcomed verbal feedback at any time. Children's views had been reflected in the report. This indicated that the child minder listens to their views and responds to them. For example, it was noted that sports were popular with the children so she had purchased additional equipment, such as a swing ball set/volleyball net, to enhance their provision in recognition of this interest. Also, younger children noted that they enjoyed dolls so she had bought additional dolls and pushchairs so they did not have to share. Parents comments included; '*X clearly loves the activities that you do together,*' '*you are approachable and understanding,*' '*you appreciate and respect the individual and put a lot of love and effort into each child.*' Also, "*We love the updates we get through the day*".

The child minder demonstrates a strong commitment to professional development. For example, she had begun to contribute to a Welsh pilot with the Gwirirw project who have produced a Welsh language assessment tool for childcare workers. This assesses practitioners' ability in Welsh and grades their ability. This enables the child minder to access a half hour monthly language session that provides words and phrases that can be used for the session. The child minder used some of the words and phrases throughout the inspection visit, which clearly enhanced her knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language resulting in the effective promotion of the children's Welsh language skills. The

child minder ensures that she adheres to adult: child ratios as her records showed that she kept to her registered conditions.

Parents are kept well informed. The child minder has very strong links with a wide range of professionals, the community and parents and therefore has developed excellent partnerships. This is because she has forged professional links that keep her well-informed on issues relating to childcare and early years practice. For instance, she attended the monthly Family Information Service (FIS) meetings to be kept updated and had joined an 'Early Excellence Network' with local schools, child care support agencies and the health board to support good transitions and links between childcare providers and education. Parents provided feedback on the child minder and their comments were overwhelmingly positive. For example, the child minder, *"Keeps us informed during the day, every day. It's so reassuring, and joyful, to get photos and updates. Our daughter always looks so happy. We are often envious of what they are out and about doing!"* Another stated, *"Helen has taken the time to observe and understand our daughter and purchases beautiful food to prepare and offer. This is above and beyond and you only need to look at the plates of food Helen prepares to see how much she cares about her mindees. Helen communicates with us brilliantly."*

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We recommended that the child minder:

- keep a record of conversations held with parents in relation to children's development and well-being.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was undertaken by one inspector as part of the scheduled programme of inspections and took place on 16 March 2018. As part of this inspection we:

- made general observations of the interactions between the child minder and the children;
- held conversations with the child minder and the children.
- viewed records and documents including: the attendance register, children's contracts, policies and procedures, accident and incident records, medication records, the service's statement of purpose; and
- performed a visual inspection of the rooms of the areas used by the service.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

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|---|---|
| Type of care provided | Child Minder |
| Registered Person | Helen Wilson |
| Registered maximum number of places | 7 |
| Age range of children | Up to 12 years |
| Opening hours | 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday |
| Operating Language of the service | English |
| Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 17 November 2015 |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s) | 16 May 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 is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and intends to become a bilingual service or demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture. |
| Additional Information: | |

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