



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Paul Ironmonger**

**Deeside**



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## **Description of the service**

Paul Ironmonger operates a child minding service from his home in Connah's Quay and is registered to care for a maximum of ten children under 12 years of age. When working with Sian Ironmonger, also a registered child minder they may together care for no more than ten children, six of which may be under five years of age. The service is open from 07:45 – 18:00 Monday to Friday during term time only, with the exception of bank holidays. The main language of the service is English with some basic Welsh introduced into some play and learning activities. The child minder does not provide the Welsh Government's 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. This is a 'Flying Start' service.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

This was a focused inspection following an anonymous concern that looked only at some aspects of each theme. Children are happy at this service. They have choice over the toys they play with and participate in structured activities which stimulate and interest them. They have positive interactions with the child minder and have formed a clear bond of affection with him, chatting openly and being relaxed in his company. The environment is safe and clean and consequently very suitable for children's needs. The child minders work well together and have effectively made improvements to the service when shortcomings have been identified.

### **2. Improvements**

As this was a focussed inspection we did not consider improvements made to the service since the last inspection. However, we are able to report that maintenance and repair of the outdoor play space was ongoing. A few policies and procedures had recently been changed in response to an incident reported to Care Inspectorate Wales by the child minder themselves.

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

We found that the child minder was fully compliant with regulations, however we recommended that contact details be included in certain policies.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children make choices and express themselves well. They are listened to, are settled and are developing positive emotional attachments with the child minder and each other. They are learning to manage their own behaviour, co-operating, taking turns and show an interest in the toys and resources available to them. Children know the daily routines well and are given opportunities to develop their independence.

## **Our findings**

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

Children are confident to speak up and are listened to.

Children speak and communicate their preferences confidently. We heard children asking the child minder if they could go outside when they returned from nursery school, he responded straight away with “*of course.*” Throughout the inspection the children were heard to initiate conversations and chat to the child minder, confident they would be listened and responded to, in particular when they changed activity or wanted assistance. Children also told us they could choose what they would like to do by pointing to photographs used as a visual timetable on the fridge door. This enabled even the youngest children and those with additional needs to indicate clearly what they wanted to do.

Children have an appropriate amount of choice and control.

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

Children are settled and secure.

Children were settled with the child minder and had a sense of belonging. Children collected from school entered the child minder’s home confidently, putting their shoes and bag away in the dedicated place and happily saying ‘hello’ to the other children present and ‘auntie Sian’. The children had developed bonds of affection with the child minder and enjoyed the humour, fun, and friendliness he showed towards them when playing.

Children’s well-being is supported by the secure relationship they have with each other and the child minder.

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

Children interact well.

Children played well together and were becoming sensitive to the emotions of others; the child minder supported the children to understand how to play and share appropriately. The children took turns on the swing, bikes and trampoline. They enjoyed interacting with the child minder and enjoyed his company, one child even asked to travel in the car with him to

collect children from school in preference to staying at the home and playing. The children behaved and co-operated well when outdoors, listening to instructions and having a clear understanding of the rules of the service and how to stay safe when on the rope swing and trampoline.

Children are developing friendships and learning how to interact positively.

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

Children engage with the toys and resources available to them.

During this inspection both registered child minders were present which meant there were opportunities for the children to play alongside both adults, which they enjoyed. Children engaged positively with the child minder when playing. The child minder told us an emphasis is placed on outdoor play at this service as many of the pre-school children enjoy being physically active outdoors on a daily basis and in all weathers, which impacts on their well-being and behaviour. We saw the children energetically bouncing on the sunken trampoline in their coats and wellies and were told that they had spent a few hours in an indoor play centre during the morning.

Children have a great amount of fun at this service.

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

Children have opportunities to develop, learn and become independent.

The youngest child was given time and opportunity to develop physically away from the pushchair and walker with the child minder supporting the child to stand and develop their core strength in readiness for learning to walk. Children are provided with opportunities to develop their independence, for example when getting ready to go outdoors, when eating independently at the table and when finding and returning resources to their storage boxes on a day to day basis.

Children develop the required skills which enable them to be curious learners and independent.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The child minder has positive relationships with the children and knows them well. He considers their safety and promotes healthy lifestyles by ensuring the children are physically active each day. The child minder has ample toys and resources available for the children to promote children's play, learning and development by planning activities which would meet their individual needs. As this was a focused inspection we did not consider all aspects of each key area.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

The child minder gives consideration to keeping children safe.

The child minder reported an incident to CIW recently and made a referral to Social Services. Additional procedures have been put in place to ensure that the child minder is aware of when children are to be collected from school and who should collect them. These include having daily alarms and reminders on mobile phones and iPads and ensuring parents are reminded to alert the child minders when they have returned from holidays and require their services.

Children are kept safe and healthy.

#### **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

The child minder manages interactions positively.

The child minder spoke to the children respectfully and in a manner which was appropriate to their age and stage of development. The children responded well to him and enjoyed the fun filled interactions; for example when asking the children "are you ready for a tizzy?" which indicated he was going to twist the rope swing to send them into a twisting swinging action, something they all really enjoyed.

The child minder interacts with the children appropriately and with due care.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection but it will be considered at future inspections. However, we can confirm the child minder provides opportunities for children to play, learn and develop in a relaxed manner.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

CIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of the environment on this occasion because this theme was considered in depth during our inspection on 26 May 2017. However we saw that the premises were safe, clean and suitable for child minding purposes and in relation to security concerns at the premises, we concluded that the current procedures in place were sufficient to ensure that children's safety is not being compromised.

#### **Our findings**

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection. We did focus on the security of the premises and found no evidence to suggest that children's safety was being compromised.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection. We found the premises to be safe, clean and suitable for child minding purposes.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection. We had no concerns about the quality of the resources and equipment used and can report that maintenance and repairs to the outdoor play areas were being carried out during this inspection, for example a tunnel slide was being put up in the garden and final work being carried out on a new roof and awning over the patio area.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

The child minder works successfully with his wife, also a registered child minder. Both work on a full time basis. Leadership is effective with records being maintained appropriately. Any required improvements recognised by the child minder or raised by parents are actioned promptly following consideration.

### **Our findings**

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

The child minder keeps records up to date to ensure best outcomes for children.

We found the child minders' registers to be up to date and recorded the exact time the children arrived and departed. These registers also showed when both child minders were present, which was practically every day as they both work on a full time basis. The child minders are well organised and keep to routines in relation to taking children to school and picking them up. However, there had been one incident which the child minder had notified the Care Inspectorate Wales of which related to collecting children from school. We found additional precautions had been put into place.

The child minder strives to provide a well-managed service and overcomes challenges effectively when needed.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection; however, it will be considered in future inspections.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection; however, it will be considered in future inspections.

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

This key area was not inspected during this focused inspection; however, it will be considered at future inspections.



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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

We informed the child minder that he was fully compliant with regulations; recommendations were made in relation to including all of the required contact details on policies and procedures, in particular the child protection policy.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a focused unannounced inspection undertaken as the result of an anonymous concern about the service. One inspector visited the service on 5 November 2018 from 14:00 – 16:10 hours. We were also present at the service on 7 November 2018 from 14:33 -17:50 to inspect Sian Ironmonger.

We:

- Observed children's engagement and the care being provided by the child minder;
- spoke to the child minder;
- looked at attendance registers, policies and procedures;
- considered the areas of the premises where the children played and the quality of toys and resources, and
- provided the child minder with detailed feedback of our findings.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Paul Ironmonger
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Opening hours	07:45 - 18:00
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	26 May 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	5 November 2018 7 November 2018 to inspect Sian Ironmonger
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'
<b>Additional Information:</b>  Paul Ironmonger child minds on a full time basis independently, and alongside his wife Sian Ironmonger.	