



Childcare Inspection Report on

Karen Spence

Barry



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Description of the service

The childminder is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to six children aged under 12 years. Care is provided from her home in the Westend of Barry, which she shares with her husband and two older children. The service is delivered through the English language with incidental Welsh used during activities.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Overall, we found that children experience a good standard of care. Children are happy and their needs are at the centre of the service. They are confident to explore, express their feelings and ask for help. The child minder provides resources, which are age appropriate, and she has a number of policies and procedures in place to keep children safe. Children benefit from a well-organised environment that encourages them to make independent choices and generally promotes their play, learning and development. Leadership and management of the service is generally strong and the child minder's experience and interest in additional training is evident.

2. Improvements

The last inspection report recommended that the child minder undertakes a Quality of Care review, updates the Statement of Purpose and reviews risk assessments. The child minder has acted on these recommendations and made improvements in these areas.

Since the last inspection, the child minder has reviewed her service regarding the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Prevent duty (This is a government strategy regarding extremism and radicalisation). She has also developed a policy regarding electronic safety. Additionally, she has completed an Apprenticeship Certificate in Children's Care and Learning.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made minor recommendations regarding updating the complaint procedure and linking activity planning to the children's individual needs.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are settled and happy and enjoy their time at the service. They find the range of activities and play experiences interesting and exciting. They express themselves confidently and have a strong voice. They play happily together and interact well with each other and the child minder.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children speak or express themselves well and can communicate their needs in a variety of ways according to their age range. This included non-verbal and verbal communication. Their preferences, needs and feelings are well understood by the child minder and we saw these take precedence over daily routines. Children make appropriate choices and decisions because they are aware of the options available to them. We saw children approaching the child minder confidently for assistance and their wishes were valued.

Children have a strong voice.

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

Children are settled, happy and relaxed. Children benefit from a flexible settling in process that ensures they are able to cope with being separated from their parents. We observed a child who was very familiar with the environment as well as a young child who had only recently started. Both children had settled well and played happily, frequently approaching the child minder to interact with her. The children also went to her for comfort and reassurance and strong bonds were evident through interactions. They were 'at home' in their play space, moving from one activity to another. A young child was content sitting on the floor watching and smiling as they enjoyed playing with musical toys and a ball pit. We heard lots of laughter as they played.

Children's emotional well-being is enhanced by the close and consistent care provided.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact appropriately and in line with their age and stage of development. The children happily interacted with the child minder throughout our visit and was receptive to her direction and distraction when a child wanted to play independently. One child was also keen to show us what they were playing with and moved towards us happily.

Children interact appropriately.

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

Children are engaged in their play and can relax during quieter times. They have access to plenty of activities and resources that are age-appropriate. Throughout the visit, there was a balance of both self-directed and adult directed play available for the children to choose from. One child enjoyed playing with a tent and used their imagination to pretend to be a princess in a castle. A younger child was content and happy to play with a selection of age appropriate toys. Equally, we saw them enjoying their play with the support of the child minder. Children also benefit from regularly being outside in the fresh air, such as regular trips to the park and long walks.

Children enjoy a good range of play and learning experiences, both indoor and outdoor.

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

Children are developing their confidence and independence. They are encouraged to do things for themselves, they take pride in doing so and are given time to carry out their chosen activities and discover how things work. We watched a child try to turn the pages of a hard book independently and they smiled with pride when they received praise for their efforts to throw balls in the ball pit. They were also clearly pleased to be able to stand up and move around the sofa, learning to walk. Children have opportunities to undertake a variety of different play activities designed to develop a variety skills. They are able to extend their play because the child minder is always on hand to provide assistance if needed. An older child enjoyed tidying the balls away and doing a playdough activity. They are learning to use the toilet independently and develop good eating skills.

Children have influence over their play and learning and are well supported and encouraged to develop a good range of self-help skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder has good systems and procedures in place to ensure that she can offer a safe, interesting and valuable service to children in her care. She is confident and competent in her role as a child minder and has attended a very good range of training to keep her practices and knowledge up to date. She manages interactions well and generally promotes children's play and learning effectively.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

There are good systems in place to promote the health and safety of children. The child minder understands her responsibility to protect children and her safeguarding policy includes reference to the Prevent duty. She has also completed training on Prevent. She is very clear about her duty to refer any concerns relating to the welfare of a child to the appropriate authority. The child minder provides drinks, fresh fruit and snacks. These support children to develop healthy eating habits. There is a system in place to record accidents and incidents. The child minder demonstrated that accidents are evaluated and appropriate action taken to minimise risks. The child minder has a current first aid certificate and she has completed food hygiene and child protection training.

The child minder keeps children in her care safe and healthy because of her knowledge and the systems she has in place.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder understands child development, how this affects children's behaviour and she supports children in a positive manner to promote their social development. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place and the child minder described the positive behaviour management strategies she uses to promote children's welfare. We saw that she took into account the age and developmental stage of children well and used distraction techniques when younger children disrupted the play of an older child. We heard the child minder praising the children for appropriate interactions such as learning to share items and show patience with other children. The child minder spoke kindly and respectfully to the minded child and there was an informal and relaxed atmosphere in the home.

The child minder manages interactions well.

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

The child minder provides care that is child centred and meets children's individual needs. We heard her consistently chatting to the child, explaining what she was doing and checking their understanding as they went along. For example, when sorting the balls in the ball pool into colours, the child minder said "*You're so clever, now can we sort the different shades of colours?*" This engaged the younger child sat in the ball pool and extended the learning of an older child. The child minder provides a variety of enjoyable play and learning opportunities, both indoors and outside to promote children's all-round development. We saw that the child minder was responsive to the communication attempts by the minded children. There was good eye contact and questioning to help understand what the child wanted or needed and she spent much of her time at the child's level. This supported children to engage and expand their thinking and learning skills. The child minder has a system in place to track children's development and she plans activities on a termly basis. Activity planning is not linked to children's individual needs, however.

The child minder promotes children's individual needs appropriately.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is clean and well maintained. Children have use of a large lounge, small kitchen and downstairs bathroom that provides sufficient space for children to play. A rear garden provides good facilities for children to play outdoors on a regular basis. Good attention is given to safety and security.

Our findings

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

The child minder spoke knowledgeably about safety matters. The home is tidy, bright, well decorated and welcoming. There are a number of safety precautions in place such as a fireguard, covers on radiators and sharp edges. Safety gates to prevent children from accessing the kitchen and the upstairs of the property and the front and back doors are secure. There is a signing in book so that all visitors are logged in and out. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place that are reviewed appropriately. The kitchen is only used under supervision for eating, messy activities or when children need to walk through to access the toilet. There is a fire blanket located on the wall in the kitchen and some cupboards have locks on them to prevent children's unsupervised access.

The child minder has good systems in place to ensure children are safe.

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

The child minder has modified her home to ensure that it is suitable and meets the needs of the children she currently cares for. Only the downstairs areas are used. The large lounge is adapted for play and sleep purposes with a travel cot situated at one end. Comfortable settees provide facilities for children to relax. The kitchen is small and space is limited. A dining room is also used occasionally to provide a quiet area for children to sleep in a pushchair following a walk or for older children to use the dining table. Externally, the back garden is clean and well maintained and provides good opportunities for children to easily access fresh air and exercise without leaving the premises.

The child minder ensures that the environment is suitable for the children cared for.

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

Children have access to a suitable range of good quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources and equipment to meet their needs. Toys are stored in boxes and tubs. Most are easily accessible, with care taken to ensure younger children cannot access inappropriate items. Resources to promote the Welsh language and multicultural play were limited. We saw there was suitable equipment to support the child minder's care of the

children. These included a travel cot, car seats, pushchair, high chair, a nappy changing mat and child sized table and chairs for pre-school children. The child minder told us that she regularly cleans the toys and equipment, discarding anything that is broken at once. There were some toys in the outside area that were used in all weather, but she explained that she has a number of other toys stored in her shed that will be cleaned ready for use in the spring.

The child minder ensures that there is a varied range of resources and suitable equipment available to enhance children's experiences and development.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder is motivated and open to new developments as a means of promoting positive outcomes for children and their families. She has good organisational skills and maintains required records and documentation effectively. Although most policies and procedures are well written, the complaints policy could be strengthened. The child minder has developed good relationships with parents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has a vision for the service and this is shared in her Statement of Purpose. She has good understanding of current best practice relevant to her service. She has reviewed policies and procedures to reflect changes to legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). A variety of relevant policies and procedures are in place and we saw that parents are provided with this information prior to their children starting, to enable them to make an informed choice about using the service. We saw that all documentation is reviewed regularly. We looked at a sample of records including children's contracts, which contained relevant information and registers were fully completed.

Leadership of this service is good.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder is reflective and has an effective system in place for reviewing her service. She values feedback from parents and children. The current quality of care report is comprehensive and well-written taking account of the views of children and feedback, both written and verbal from parents. The child minder completes self-evaluation information for CIW as requested. The child minder told us that she uses the CIW website and her umbrella support group if she has any queries and to keep up to date with any changes. A complaint policy is in place, but this does not clearly outline how any complaints raised by children would be addressed.

The child minder effectively evaluates her service.

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

The child minder works alone and manages her time appropriately. She has contingency plans in place to cover her in the event of an emergency that are discussed and agreed with parents. The child minder told us that she ensures that resources are available to facilitate planned activities and we saw that she was organised and had planned the

activities well on the day we visited. All adults living at the home have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to confirm their suitability. The child minder is aware of the mandatory training requirements, all of which have been completed. She has also completed an Apprenticeship Certificate in Children's Care and Learning, extending her skills and knowledge further.

The child minder manages her time and resources well.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnerships with parents are mutually respectful and effective. The child minder speaks to parents daily regarding their child's care. Parents receive regular daily written and verbal feedback and ongoing updates about their child from the child minder. Photographs are also sent to parents during the day via secure social media. CIW parent questionnaires received were very positive regarding the service and communication methods about their children's care and development.

The child minder understands the importance of working in partnership and these are effective.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Complaint procedure should be reviewed to make it clear how children attending the service can complain, and
- further expand activity planning to link activities to children's individual developmental needs.

How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection, undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections:

- One inspector completed one visit to the service
- we reviewed information held by CIW;
- observations were carried out indoors to capture evidence of the minded children's engagement and the care provided;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- we looked at a range of records including children's contracts, statement of purpose, several policies and procedures and a quality of care report;
- we considered information received from parents in questionnaires received by CIW;
- we provided feedback to the child minder at the end of the inspection visit and
- we considered information provided to CIW from the child minder during the course of the inspection.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Karen Spence
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	Birth to 12 years
Opening hours	7am to 6pm Monday to Friday and bank holidays on request
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	5 March 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	3 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 ' <i>More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care</i> '.
Additional Information:	