



Childcare Inspection Report on

Ann-Marie Constantinou

Cardiff



Date of Publication

13 December 2018

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Description of the service

The child minder is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to ten children under the age of 12 years. The child minder operates her service from her home in Pontprennau in Cardiff which she shares with her husband and two children. The service operates Monday to Saturday from 7.30am-6.30pm. English is the main language of the service.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

We found that children experience a good standard of care. The child minder has a caring nature, children feel comfortable with her and close bonds were evident between her and the child present. The child minder told us that she spends as much time outdoors as possible and that keeping children healthy is very important to her. The home is well maintained and offers children a lovely environment for play with a dedicated play room and outdoor space. There are some effective systems in place to help her manage her business. She is beginning to develop ways in which she can monitor the children's development and progression. The child minder manages her service very well; she is keen to provide an excellent level of care and work effectively with parents.

2. Improvements

The child minder has actioned some of the recommendations from the last inspection including;

- Completion of a safeguarding course in October 2018;
- completion of a Quality of Care review and SASS and
- individual hand towels are now available for children.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non compliance issues identified at this inspection.

We made some recommendations for the child minder to develop her service, which are summarised at the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are content and settled with the child minder. They receive good quality care which provides a strong foundation for their learning and development. There is a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere within the home where children are happy to express their views. There are opportunities for children to develop and have fun through planned activities and freely chosen play. Children's needs are met by the child minder who makes efforts to create a healthy and secure environment for them.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves. The child minder provided a selection of play items on the floor and table so that the child could easily access them. They chose the items that interested them freely. Children make appropriate choices and decisions because they are aware of the options available to them and the child minder told us that she regularly asks children what they are interested in and what they would like to do next. The child minder is very patient, which allows children time to express their needs and wishes. The child present frequently approached the child minder, who spent much of her time at their level.

Children have a voice in the setting which is respected and valued by the child minder and they feel confident to approach her for help, reassurance and to play.

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

Children receive consistent, nurturing care at the service. They are familiar with the routines of the child minder's home and we saw child going to her for comfort and reassurance. Close bonds were evident and the child was confident with our presence. For example, the child frequently approached the child minder to interact with her, which demonstrated how content they were in her care. The child minder was responsive; she spoke gently and was very encouraging towards them, giving lots of praise for achievements and efforts. The child enjoyed a puzzle activity and was praised for answering questions associated with the picture they made together. The child minder told us that when the older children are in school, she visits toddler groups or play areas regularly to ensure opportunities are provided to socialise with other children.

Children's emotional wellbeing is enhanced by the close and consistent care provided.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are beginning to understand their feelings and how their behaviour affects others. There was only one child being cared for during our visit. They told us about how they liked to share, take turns and play with the other minded children. The child minder encouraged the child to share by taking turns when they were playing together. We heard the child saying please and thank you regularly and they were praised for their good manners.

Children are developing an understanding of right from wrong and learning to play cooperatively with help and guidance. This is typical for their age and stage of development.

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

Children are busy and occupied exploring the toys available to them, but can also relax and enjoy quiet times at the end of a busy school day. There was a selection of resources to capture children's interests and keep them occupied. We saw the child played alone and also enjoyed completing tasks with the child minder. We saw the child fetch resources from the playroom and take them into the kitchen to play with the child minder.

Children enjoy good play and learning opportunities which benefits their overall development.

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

Children are developing as individuals and are beginning to show independence in daily tasks. The child minder offers guidance and encouragement for toilet training and where possible allows children time to do things for themselves. For example, the child accessed the toilet independently and washed their hands before and after snack. Children are developing their language skills through interactions and communication with the child minder. For example, during the child's play the child minder encouraged word recognition. She took out some words that the child was learning at school and was seen to praise the child as they read them confidently. She also spent time talking to the child about the toys they used and what they could see. Throughout our observations it was clear the children were learning and developing from the activities available to them. They moved around frequently, with a good selection of resources available to keep them occupied.

Children enjoy good play and learning opportunities which benefit their overall development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

Overall, we found that the child minder has a caring nature and is passionate about her work. Throughout the time she has been minding she has established some good systems and procedures to ensure that she can offer a valuable service to children in her care.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder has policies, procedures and systems in place to manage her business, ensuring children are kept safe. We discussed safeguarding and the referral process and found that the child minder understands her duty to refer any concerns relating to the welfare of a child to the appropriate authority and record any issues of concern. The child minder's safeguarding and child protection policies include information about the child minder's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. This relates to the need for all child care providers to protect children from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism as part of their safeguarding duty. We saw the child was provided with a healthy lunch including tuna and cucumber sandwiches, fresh fruit with water to drink. The child minder has a menu available and the day's food choices are displayed on a chalk board in the main entrance of her home. The menu is not currently updated with food allergens information. The child minder told us that she is aware of the children's individual dietary requirements and that it is important to her to ensure that minded children have a nutritionally balanced diet and daily exercise to keep them healthy. We saw that accidents, incidents are recorded appropriately and that the child minder has a current first aid certificate. Pre-existing injuries are not currently recorded. Medication records are maintained although the forms do not allow for two signatures from parents or guardians, one before the medication is administered and one after.

The child minder understands her responsibility to keep children safe and healthy and is keen to further develop systems to support her in this.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

There is a behaviour management policy in place and we saw that the child minder is a good role model and uses positive behaviour management strategies to promote children's welfare. She takes into account the age and developmental stage of children and understands that these factors can affect their behaviour. We heard the child minder praising the child for good behaviour and saw that she encouraged cooperation and sharing.

The child minder supports positive interactions between children and acts as a good role model for them.

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

The child minder provides a fun environment for children and has a good understanding of their specific needs and backgrounds. She begins to gather information regarding the child's abilities during the settling in period. Children benefit from going on walks together or to play places, providing opportunities to socialise with peers. The child minder told us that they use the garden frequently and that recently children have enjoyed playing in the sandpit and with the slide during the better weather. She told us they spend as much time outdoors as possible to allow children the space and freedom to run around and play in the fresh air. The child minder plans a variety of activities for the children to enjoy such as drawing and using craft materials which are usually related to current themes and topical events, such as Father's Day. We noted that the child minder has developed her knowledge of the Foundation Phase with her CCLD level 3 qualifications and that her planning is linked to these principles. We saw that the child minder has begun to keep a record of children's achievements. More detail should be added to these records to support the next steps in their learning and development. We noted that there was basic use of incidental Welsh.

The child minder promotes children's development by understanding their needs and responding to children as individuals.

3. Environment

Summary

Overall, we found that the child minder is able to care for the children in a suitable environment. The child minder uses the playroom, lounge, kitchen diner and garden to care for the children. The child minder ensures that children are well supervised at all times.

Our findings

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

Children are cared for in a clean and safe environment. The front door is locked at all times, all visitors are recorded when minded children are present the garden gates are kept locked when children play outside. Registers for children's attendance were also completed. We saw documents which showed that relevant checks had been carried out such as a gas safety certificate, public liability insurance and appropriate car insurance. The child minder completes regular fire drills when different children are present and they are documented appropriately. The child minder showed us risk assessments she has devised and these were practical and provided an appropriate foundation to progress from. Children's have access to individual hand drying facilities in the bathroom to avoid cross contamination.

The child minder ensures that appropriate systems are in place to promote children's safety.

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

The home is very comfortable and benefits from good natural light. There is sufficient space for the number of children cared for. Children have access to rooms on the ground floor. The child minder told us that young children have use of the quiet lounge if they want to have a sleep in the cot. The child minder also told us that they use the back garden regularly but prefers to take children out walking to the nearby park or play centre for physical play. The bathroom is downstairs and accessible off the main hall. The child minder supervises the use of the bathroom and is mindful of encouraging children's independence whilst discreetly monitoring. Toys are stored in storage boxes in the playroom and are clearly labelled. We noted that the child knew what was available to them and the child minder was on hand to assist with toy rotation. The children are able to make choices about what they play with from the selection provided.

The child minder ensures that resources are safe and suitable.

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

Resources provided by the child minder are suitable for their needs and are clean and well maintained. We saw that activities and games were age appropriate. Practical equipment such as a step stool in the bathroom, push chair and suitable cups and crockery were all readily available. We noticed that there was small sized furniture in the playroom for children to sit comfortably when playing. The child minder told us that she encouraged children to develop an understanding of other cultures by celebrating festivals throughout the year such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. The child minder has a selection of multicultural, natural and Welsh resources available for children use.

The child minder provides a good range of resources and equipment to meet the needs of the children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder manages her service well. She is motivated, competent and open to new developments as a means of promoting positive outcomes for children and their families.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

Overall we found that the child minder has very good systems in place to help her to manage her business. She has a vision for the service which is shared in her statement of purpose. Relevant policies and procedures for the service are in place and she confirmed that she is aware of the need to review them annually and share any updates with parents. We recommended that all policies and procedures are dated for monitoring purposes. We looked at a sample of records including daily registers, accident/incident forms and a selection of contracts which were well maintained.

The child minder has sufficient systems and procedures in place to support her to run her business. Some minor amendments are required.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

We found that the child minder is reflective and seeks feedback on her own practice. She told us that she is committed to improving her service and is looking at ways to further develop and adapt her practices to meet the needs of children. The child minder is aware of the need to evaluate her service and has completed a quality of care review for 2018. We saw that she had sought the views of parents and children and was diligent in her approach to her review. She addressed each request from parents and children and where possible facilitated their requests. We saw questionnaires completed by parents regarding the service which were very positive. The child minder is proactive in verbally checking if children are enjoying the activities on offer. There are procedures in place such as a complaints policy which also help to obtain feedback. The child minder told us she had not received any complaints. She told us that she has good relationships with the parents and felt that they would share any concerns with her. They spend time each day discussing how their child has been and she seeks information each day from parents regarding their needs.

The child minder is beginning to establish ways of self-evaluation and reflection of her service to help her plan for improvement.

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

The child minder is establishing ways in which she will manage her business well. We saw that the child minder, her husband and one of her children over the age of sixteen

years of age have an up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The child minder said that her husband occasionally acts as her assistant in the case of any emergency or unforeseen situation but this is not formally documented with CIW. She is organised and maintains records of her qualifications and training.

The child minder meets her legal responsibilities with regard to maintaining records that demonstrate her suitability to care for children.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnerships with parents are very positive. Parents and carers are provided with all the relevant information needed to make informed choices about the care of their child. The child minder speaks to parents frequently and daily diaries are used to aid communication for younger children. We were told that she also uses a 'Whatsapp' and Facebook closed group to communicate generic information to parents, and is aware of the need to ensure confidentiality.

The child minder understands the need to work closely with parents to meet children's individual needs.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None.

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

None.

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

The following good practice recommendations were discussed to support the ongoing development of the service:

- expand development tracking system already in place by including additional comments and date to support children's individual next steps;
- update CIW with current status regarding employment of her husband as a child-minder assistant;
- update medication records to include a parent/ guardian signature before and after the administration of medication and
- update the menu with information on food allergens.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector completed one visit to the service and observations were carried out to capture evidence of the child present engagement and the care provided;
- we reviewed information held by CIW;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- we spoke to one child present during the inspection;
- we viewed feedback from parents questionnaires and children's feedback recorded by the child-minder;
- we looked at a range of records including a sample of children's records and other records maintained at the setting. These included the statement of purpose, some policies and procedures, accidents and incidents records and attendance registers.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Ann-Marie Constantinou
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0 -12years
Opening hours	7.30am until 6.30pm Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	5 March 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	29 October 2018
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	