

Childcare Inspection Report on

Bethany Mahoney

Cardiff



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from her property in the Cardiff area. Minded children have use of the ground floor. The child minder is registered to provide care for ten children under 12 years. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday 8:00am to 6:00pm throughout the year. During our inspection visit there was one minded children present, aged under eight years old. Care is provided through the medium of English, with the use of incidental Welsh.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy and relaxed in the care of the child minder. The child minder is responsive to their needs and she provides a good variety of activities for them, which the children are included in the selection of. The environment is well maintained and children can access a good supply of resources to suit all age ranges. The service is appropriately managed, but we identified some good practice recommendations. Parents have written positive feedback on questionnaires issued by the child minder, about the service that they receive.

2. Improvements

The child minder has addressed most of the recommendations highlighted at her last inspection. However, we discussed that further work is needed to her Quality of Care review to reflect the improvement journey of her service. For example, she has re-organised the play room to define areas for role play activities and rest. She is also developing the garden to include a patio area.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. However, we made recommendations in respect to administration, Food Hygiene training and infection control.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children enjoy attending this service and their opinions are valued. They are included in the planning of activities and supported to reach their full potential, through a good range of play opportunities. They have formed positive relationships with the child minder. They are developing positive independence skills in line with their age and stage of development.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children communicate their needs confidently, asking the child minder for help when needed and expressing their ideas and opinions freely. We observed the children asking for specific toys, food to eat and for help with activities they were completing. Their views were valued by the child minder, which promoted their self-esteem. Children's non-verbal cues are also noted and responded to in a timely manner. For example, when a minded child needed the toilet, the child minder noticed and encouraged them to go. We also saw them express their emotions and seek comfort and support from the child minder. For example, when a child expressed wanting their mummy, the child minder comforted them and reassured them when they would be coming to get them. She helped the child to understand the concept of time through steps of what they were going to do before their mummy arrived. The children are able to effectively communicate and their needs are met, because the child minder is responsive and nurturing.

Children clearly have a voice that is prioritised and valued.

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

Children have formed positive relationships with the child minder and appear happy and relaxed in her care. A minded child had only attended once before our visit and already we could see that they were content and at ease approaching the child minder for assistance when needed. Activities are tailored to the children's likes and dislikes and the child minder operates an ethos of free play, enabling the children to select their play preferences. Children feel happy, secure and valued, as they receive help with basic care tasks and within their play and learning.

Children are kept safe at this service and they clearly enjoy attending.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are co-operative with the child minder and they respond well to the boundaries she sets. When she guided them in their play they responded appropriately. For example, they stopped jumping on the sofa when the child minder explained that they didn't want them to hurt themselves. We noted that the children used polite manners and clearly knew the boundaries for how to behave. We saw that they had the skills to positively manage their own behaviour. They are developing positive relationships with the child minder. The child minder told us that when more children are present, they all play co-operatively with one another and enjoy each other's company.

Children are developing positively in their social interactions.

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

Children enjoy the activities on offer. There is a good supply and variety of resources accessible for them to freely choose from, promoting their development. They engaged in activities and used toys and equipment of particular interest to them, engaging in free extended periods of uninterrupted play. We saw that they initiated their own learning whilst having fun in a supportive environment, as the child minder was alongside them for help and assistance when needed. We saw a child playing with cars and small world toys, attaching carriages to a Ferris wheel. The child minder was alongside them for support. We noted that she held every day conversations with the child during their play, supporting them to develop their speech and language skills whilst describing activities from home. We saw that activities sustained children's interest for a good time period. Throughout our observations, we noted that the children received positive feedback for their achievements, promoting their self-esteem.

Children enjoy their play and learning at this service.

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

Children are learning and developing age appropriately. They are developing their independence skills because of the child minder's good balance of support and standing back when necessary. The setup of the environment enables children to access things for themselves. This includes a step to wash their hands and use the toilet independently, toys set up ready for their use and organised on shelving for them to help themselves. They are encouraged to develop their independence skills further, in line with their age and stage of development. For example, to put their own shoes and coats on and to tidy away toys after themselves. We also saw that they have

strong communication skills to ask the child minder for help and support when needed, furthering their journey as independent learners.

Children are making good progress with gaining independence skills.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder provides children with warm and responsive care and she encourages healthy lifestyles, to promote their wellbeing. However, we discussed hand drying facilities to further promote children's good hygiene and completing Food Hygiene training. The child minder supports the children to manage their interactions and develop positive social skills. She also plans a good range of play, learning and developmental opportunities to support their learning all round.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is experienced in her role and she promotes children's health and wellbeing, but she needs to ensure that strict infection control procedures are in place. We noted that a shared hand towel is in use and we discussed with the child minder ensuring that the children have separate drying facilities, to reduce the risks of the spread of infection. She agreed to review this. We saw that she had up to date certificates in paediatric first aid and safeguarding. However, although the children bring their own packed lunches, she also needs to complete food hygiene training due to handling food, including preparing snacks for the children. She agreed to address this matter. We noted that fresh drinking water is readily available for the children to help themselves, to keep them hydrated. We noted that permission forms are in place, including for photograph's, applying sun cream, transport in the car, emergency backup care, outings, outdoor play and emergency medical treatment. A detailed child protection policy is in place, including a separate policy covering the child minder's 'Prevent' duty, a government strategy to help protect children from extremism. Some appropriate hygiene routines are in place to promote children's good health, including good nappy changing procedures and encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times, using liquid soap. Fire drills are practised and recorded routinely, ensuring that all children receive an opportunity to participate and learn about evacuating the premises in an emergency. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that they are appropriately recorded and monitored.

The child minder adequately promotes children's good health and wellbeing, but needs to review her training needs and hand drying facilities.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Children are guided in their day to day play and learning, to follow clear and realistic guidelines of acceptable behaviour. The positive strategies used by the child minder are clearly documented in the behaviour management policy. We noted that the child minder was calm and sensitive in her approach and used gentle strategies, providing a positive role model to the children in her care. For example, she encouraged tidying away of toys and using polite manners. She has created a welcoming and friendly atmosphere that works well because established rules are in place, which the children know and follow, as well as providing them with plenty of positive feedback. As such, we saw that this has cascaded down to the children's kind and respectful behaviour.

The child minder positively manages children's interactions to promote their social skills.

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

The child minder provides a good range of activities to meet children's individual needs. She plans a variety of adult led and free play opportunities, as well as trips. This enables the children to access different environments to promote their social and independence skills. They visit local parks, playgroups and farms. They also have use of the garden when works aren't being carried out (a new patio is being laid), which is equipped with a variety of physical equipment. There are also chickens and the children enjoy collecting their eggs and learning about the food that they can make with them. Evidence from the children's work displayed on the walls and in their individual records, demonstrate that they receive a balance of play experiences to promote their development. The child minder demonstrated that she has a good understanding of the Foundation Phase curriculum, a statutory curriculum for all children aged three to seven years, through the good planning of activities covering all necessary areas. Furthermore, she is completing her Level 3 in childcare to further develop her knowledge and skills. She monitors and records the children's progress on observation sheets, which also identify their next steps for development.

The child minder plans activities to promote their development in all areas.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced with equipment and furniture that enables children to play, learn and relax. Areas are kept secure and the child minder makes daily visual checks to ensure that they are safe. Written risk assessments are also in place.

Our findings

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

Children are safe because the environment is kept secure and well maintained. The front and back doors were kept locked during the inspection. Smoke alarms are in place and a fire blanket is secured to the wall so that it is easily accessible. Visual checks are made of all areas used for child minding and written risk assessments are in place for all areas of the home, garden and outings, identifying risks and any actions taken. A gas safety certificate had recently expired, but the child minder had noticed this oversight and re-booked a gas engineer to visit the following week. We observed the child minder paying close attention to the children to supervise them whilst also providing them with a safe degree of freedom, to allow them to explore their environments.

Children benefit from a safe and welcoming environment.

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

The environment is homely and suitable for a child care service. Areas are well decorated and furnished to provide suitable spaces for children to rest and play in a relaxed and friendly environment. The layout of the space promotes children's independence, as toys are set up for their use and children can easily access play equipment and facilities, such as for hand washing and toilet needs. Children are able to move freely between the different areas. There is a dining table in the kitchen for the children to eat their meals and to complete craft activities. The living room has large sofas for resting and there is a further sofa in the play room, providing plenty of spaces for children to rest and relax. Plenty of storage is in place, including a garage to store outside play equipment.

The child minding areas provide a suitable environment for children to play, learn and relax.

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

The child minder has a good range of resources to promote children's development and keep them engaged and stimulated. Toys and resources are well maintained for children's use and any broken equipment is removed and replaced. A variety of books are in place to promote children's cultural awareness, as well as Welsh books to support children's Welsh language needs. There are also Welsh posters to help children to tell the time and to learn their colours and multiplication tables in Welsh. There are plenty of opportunities for younger and older children, as there are resources to cater for all age ranges, including role play items, books, games, construction and craft/mark making materials, which the children enjoy.

Resources and equipment are of a good standard and variety to support children's learning in all areas.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder has appropriate policies and procedures in place to help her to operate her business. She reviews her service annually and has completed a quality of care review. We discussed with the child minder areas for improvement to her administration, including expanding her Quality of Care review.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has in place all required policies and procedures for managing her business. We discussed dating them to evidence their annual review, which the child minder agreed to do. We viewed the statement of purpose and saw that it covered all of the changes to the regulations. The child minder records children's accurate times of attendance on a register. We saw evidence of contracts that have been shared with parents, setting out the expectations of both parties. Disclosure and Barring Service checks are in place for all household members over the age of 16 years.

The child minder has good policies and processes in place to help her to effectively operate her business.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder annually reviews her service to identify improvements. A Quality of Care Report was written for the academic year 2017-2018. However, it was very brief. We discussed with the child minder ensuring that her next review gives more detail about the strengths and weaknesses of her service and the improvements that she plans to make. We noted that there were a lot of things that would have been relevant to include reflecting the good service that she provides, such as completing a Level 3 training course in childcare and developing children's play opportunities. The child minder agreed to address these areas in her next review. We noted positive feedback provided by parents on returned questionnaires completed in preparation for the child minder's review. Comments included, "Both children are always happy" and, "Happy with all provisions ... happy with all aspects of this service, would recommend". A complaints procedure is in place, and the child minder confirmed that no complaints had been received.

The child minder gathers service user's opinions to review and make improvements to her service where necessary, but this needs to be reflected in her annual written report.

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

The child minder does not employ any staff. She has undertaken training to update her skills and to enable her to carry out her role. We noted that a particular strength of the service was the dedication to updating her knowledge in the Foundation Phase to further her skills in this area. Parents are kept well informed of any planned holidays or absences, so that alternative child care arrangements can be arranged. The child minder uses named backup carers in emergencies, for whom the parents have signed permission. She has appropriate procedures in place for meeting the necessary standards and providing a reliable service to parents.

The child minder is experienced in her role.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnership with parents is promoted by the good systems and processes in place. The child minder uses appropriate child record forms and contracts to help her to collect important information regarding the children and to ensure that there is clarity about the service provided. Settling in sessions are offered when children start, to ensure that the child minder can meet children's needs and parents understand the service provided. It was evident from the paperwork completed that the child minder invests time gaining background information on the children prior to them starting, in order to support positive relationships all round. The child minder ensures that appropriate information is shared with parents on an on-going basis. This includes policies and procedures and information about the children's needs and developmental issues. She uses an online system to share the children's daily diaries, including their daily care tasks and activities. These are confidential to each child and family. The child minder also uses 'WhatsApp', a daily messaging service, as an extra form of communication with parents, to text messages to give parents updates during the day and to send them photographs of their children engaging in various activities.

The child minder communicates effectively and works closely with parents to support their children's wellbeing.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

There were no areas of non-compliance identified at the last inspection

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to develop the service and improve outcomes for children, we discussed the following matters with the child minder. They should:

- Reflect the improvement journey of their service in greater detail in their next Quality of Care review;
- ensure that an up to date gas safety certificate is available for inspection;
- consult with the local Environmental Health department as to the completion of training in Food Hygiene;
- provide individual hand-drying facilities to reduce the risks of cross infection; and
- ensure that all policies and procedures are dated to evidence their annual review.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled inspection as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

- One inspector undertook one visit to the service and spent time with the child minder and one child in her care. The inspection was conducted in one day;
- observations of the child minder's interactions with the children were undertaken throughout the after school period;
- we reviewed all information held by CIW;
- we examined a range of documentation, including policies, procedures, record sheets, children's files and log sheets; and
- our findings were fed back to the child minder at the end of the inspection.

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	Bethan Mahoney
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	15 December 2015
Date of this inspection visit	7 September 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 through the medium of Welsh. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words</i> ' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information:	