



Childcare Inspection Report on

Susan Shaw

Caldicot



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her child care service from her family home in the Caldicot area of Monmouthshire. She provides care weekdays and does not provide overnight care. She is registered to care for up to five children at any one time. Places are offered to children from birth to 12 years. Children are cared for on the ground floor only, with supervised access to an enclosed rear garden. The service is delivered through the English language and does not provide the Welsh language 'Active Offer.'

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

The child minder has a well established business and she has developed good partnerships with other childminders in the area. Children enjoy themselves and feel safe and secure in her care. The home offers good play space and there are suitable separate areas for relaxation. The child minder has many resources which support children's routines and there are plenty of age appropriate toys, games and equipment to keep them occupied and entertained.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection the child minder has redecorated some areas of her home and replaced the carpet in the conservatory, where children play. She has also purchased additional resources and toys, increasing the opportunities for children to learn and play.

During the course of this inspection the annual gas safety check was completed as it expired and she updated her Statement of Purpose.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We did not identify any areas of non compliance but we have made recommendations in relation to some policies, training and improving outcomes for children. More can be found in the body of the report and in section five.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are very comfortable in the child minder's care. They are confident to speak up and explore areas of personal interest, which encourages their learning and development. Children are valued, with their feelings and decisions being considered and respected. They are comforted and nurtured which gives them a good sense of security. Children have plenty of choice and they are developing through their play experiences.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children feel relaxed which gives them confidence to speak up when they have a particular need. For example, one child approached the child minder and asked for help to pull up her tights. Children's wishes are listened to and the child minder respects their decisions. As an example, at lunchtime, children requested the coloured plate they would like to have their lunch on, and this was provided. Children have plenty of choice. They have easy access to a varied selection of activities and resources. Younger children were given different options to help them decide what they could do, although some were able to express their ideas clearly. Many resources are at a low level. This helped children to identify what was available to support their decision making.

Children are able to make choices, express their needs and contribute in what they would like to do.

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

Children are relaxed and content in the care of their child minder. One child appeared tired and they sought comfort from the child minder, who instinctively responded. The child was placed into the pushchair where they fell asleep almost immediately. This demonstrates a good sense of security. Another child became unsettled and was not feeling well. The child was soothed with cuddles and reassurance from the child minder. If the child minder moved away from the child they became upset. It was evident she felt more secure with the child minder close by. Most of the time, children interacted with the child minder as they played. They chatted happily as they built a tower, sorted shapes and completed simple puzzles.

Children have a strong sense of security, they are happy and comfortable in the child minder's care.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Younger children are developing co-operation skills. Our observations were limited, as there were only two children present at this inspection. One child was asleep for part of the time and one attended a nursery session in the afternoon. For a short period, they played alongside each other nicely and occasionally interacted with each other. One child held out a toy to the other, inviting them to play. One of the children demonstrated her care for the other child when the sleeping child began coughing. She went along to check on the child with the child minder, placing her finger on lips to indicate she had to be quiet, so as not to disturb her.

Children show kindness and feelings for others and they are developing their co-operative skills.

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

Children engage in play-based activities that interest them. At this inspection, another registered child minder and her minded were present for a short time. The children were playing together, smiling and giggling. They bid a fond farewell to the other child minder and the child as they left, waving and saying “bye-bye.” Children spent most of their time enjoying free play with items that kept their attention. These included puzzles, music and reading books together. One child particularly enjoyed time together with the child minder, ‘making tea’ and playing with interactive toys.

Children enjoy a good variety of play and learning experiences.

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

Children are developing in confidence and learning through play. They persevered at completing simple jigsaws and problem solved using shape sorters. They benefit from outdoor experiences which introduce them to nature and the environment. On a walk through the park to school, a child enjoyed looking at the surroundings and they happily spoke to people as they passed by. Pre-verbal children are introduced to new vocabulary. As they played, the child minder gave a description of the things they did together and the child responded. For example, in role play the child minder said, “shall we have some more tea?” and the child pretended to get more. The child minder then went on to describe the cup and colour and as she pretended to drink it she said, “I have drunk it now. It’s all gone” The child repeated “gone.”

Children have a good variety of experiences that support their learning and development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder has a caring nature and considers children's needs carefully. She has many years' experience providing child care and this is evident in her patient and calm manner. Some policies and procedures are dated and require a review to ensure the current best practice is reflected within the documents. Suitable play and learning opportunities are planned for, taking into account children's interests.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder considers the children's health and well-being and has established policies in place to support this. Infection control is given high regard. Good personal hygiene is promoted and food surfaces are kept clean. The child minder encourages children to 'catch their cough' to reduce the risk of spreading germs. She demonstrated how to put a hand over the mouth each time the child coughed. One child was suffering with a cough and cold and the child minder supervised her closely. Medication consent forms are completed and parents are informed as to any dosage given. Accident records were not available for inspection. These had been filed away in the attic and were not accessible on the day. No accidents had occurred in 2019. The child minder told us she would ensure these were more accessible in future.

The child minder has a basic understanding of her role in safeguarding children. We discussed what actions she would take in certain situations and it was evident she would report any concerns. However, her knowledge regarding making referrals could be improved. We examined the safeguarding / child protection policy and found this was not specific to this service. Some references within the document were not correct. For example, it refers to an organisation which the child minder is not a member of, and to OFSTED instead of CIW. There was no information on the process to be followed if allegation was made against her. Some aspects of the policy are good and provide useful information. The child minder has an awareness of the Prevent duty and has added this information to her safeguarding policy.

The child minder carefully considers children's health and safety in practice but could improve her knowledge and the policies in place at the service.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder has a consistent approach with children. There are basic home routines and rules in place which children are familiar with. The child minder gives clear directions to children in a way they will understand. For example, she gave the child plenty of notice before it was time to go to school. This helped the child understand they would need to stop playing soon and have lunch. Consistent reminders were included in their conversation. This minimises any disruption and

disappointment when children cannot continue to play. A basic behaviour management policy is in place. The child minder used lots of positive intervention strategies praised good behaviour. This style of practice is not reflected in her policy.

The child minder promotes positive behaviour well but her behaviour management policy should be more reflective of her practice.

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

The child minder knows the children well and plans ahead to meet their individual needs. Information about each child, their preferences, needs, personality and routines is sought on admission. The child minder talked to us about the various children she cares for and it was evident she knows them very well. Weekly plans are in place in a very informal manner. This is because the child minder likes to follow the children's interests and make the most of good weather, by taking them outdoors. We saw from diary recordings, pictures and from speaking to the child minder that children are offered a good variety of play and learning experiences. Child developmental records are completed but not retained at the service. We saw an example of the type of progress sheet that the child minder completes. These are sent home for parents. It was difficult to assess the quality of this system and if the child's next steps in learning are being identified. The child minder indicated that parents may not want other people to see these records.

The child minder considers children's individual needs and uses their personal interests to plan for their learning. Records relating to this aspect of her service could be improved.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is safe, secure and suitable for minding. She has considered the needs of the children and purchased a variety of resources to support these. Routines for cleaning and monitoring the safety of the environment are well established.

Our findings

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

Children are cared for in a safe, clean and secure environment. There are written safety guidelines in place for observing risks inside and outside the home. Through our observations and discussions with the child minder it was evident she is safety conscious. We only identified one potential hazard which we discussed with the child minder. This related to hot drinks being taken in to the playroom. Whilst the drink was placed out of reach and/or held carefully, there is a risk that it could get knocked or spilt which could result in a burn to a child. The home is kept secure with doors locked. There are written safety logs for smoke alarm tests and practice fire drills. A fire blanket is stored in the kitchen and an annual gas safety check is undertaken. There were plenty of first aid supplies stored in the kitchen but a complete first aid box was not available. The child minder agreed that a new first aid box was required and indicated she would purchase one to ensure she has everything she needs in the event of an emergency.

The child minder is safety aware and receptive to feedback which may help improve the service.

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

There is plenty of space to meet the needs of children. Child minding usually takes place in the conservatory, situated off the kitchen. It is carpeted and has soft furnishing which create a cosy atmosphere. Easy access to the kitchen allowed the child minder to prepare snacks and meals with ease. We saw from an action plan that home improvements have taken place since the last inspection and are ongoing. Children can sleep in a travel cot or pushchair as requested by parents. The lounge provides a suitable quiet space for children who wish to relax and nap. Children have easy access to a downstairs cloak room, with toilet step and potty available to support younger children.

The child minder has carefully considered the children's needs and adapted areas of her home to suit these.

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

Children have access to suitable resources. We saw a good range of toys which were easy for children to access. The child minder plans a craft activity each week, which is undertaken in the kitchen. The garden is suitable for outdoor play and the child minder told us this is well used in the summer months. Specific resources for outdoor play are stored in a shed. These included ride on toys and sports equipment. We discussed cleaning routines and found the child minder undertakes this regularly. She told us she often includes the children by making it into an activity, as they like to use the warm soapy water to wash their toys. All of the resources we saw were in good clean condition.

The child minder has established good routines to monitor her resources and ensure their suitability.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder operates her service fairly well. She has a number of years' experience to draw upon. Parents are happy with the service they receive and it is evident the child minder is highly regarded. Some operational matters required improvements. The child minder is receptive to feedback and keen to develop the service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has a good vision for her service. She has established herself as a child minder in the area and built up a good reputation amongst the community. The majority of the National Minimum Standards are understood and adhered to. However, we identified some areas for improvement. The Statement of Purpose required updating. This was actioned immediately after the inspection. Children's records did not request information on religion and gender as specified in the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations. Policies and procedures require reviewing and updating to ensure they contain the most up to date, best practice and reflect the service provided. Records are usually maintained well. For example, registers of attendance and parental permission for additional activities. Appropriate insurance is in place, such as public liability and use of the car.

The child minder manages her services fairly well but can make some improvements to the paperwork.

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

Suitable self-evaluation systems are in place. The child minder has established methods for consulting with parents, gathering feedback from children and reviewing her practice, although these are not clearly included in annual quality care report. The quality of care report is overdue. The child minder explained this was due to taking time off child minding last year and gave assurance that she would undertake a quality of care review shortly. She has developed action plans for the service and we saw progress against these actions. A basic complaint policy is in place, outlining how parents can raise concerns. The policy requires some amendments and should include information regarding 'concurrent' complaints. The child minder was keen to hear our views as part of the inspection and demonstrated she valued recommendations which can help improve the service.

Systems in place for self-evaluation are appropriate for the service, although the quality of care review is overdue.

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

The child minder has suitable contingencies in place. Parents provide consent for her husband to care for the children in the event of an emergency. She does not employ any assistants but she works closely with other local child minder's who have supported her in the past. For example, the child minder took some time off and other child minders cared for the children, for a short time period before returning to their original contract. Resources are routinely checked and replenished. A list of resources available at the service is provided for parents. Disclosure and Barring Service checks are in place for the child minder and her husband.

Operational matters are managed well.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnerships have been established. Parents told us they receive plenty of information from the child minder. We saw examples of the information pack they receive. Records indicate the child minder works with the parents to identify the children's needs and provide suitable care. The child minder has established links with the local primary school and child care settings, where she often collects children's. She makes good use of local facilities and play spaces, which develop a sense of ownership in the community.

Partnerships 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

The following recommendations were discussed:

- Review the Safeguarding policy to include, how referrals will be made and the action to be taken if an allegation was made against yourself. Additionally, the policy should be more specific to the service;
- update safeguarding training;
- update the policies for the service. In particular, the complaint policy and behaviour management policy for the service;
- replace the first aid kit;
- the annual quality of care review should include the views of service users;
- developmental records for children should be retained at the service;
- consider ways of introducing the Welsh language to support children's learning and development and
- children's contracts should request information on their gender and religion;

6. How we undertook this inspection

We:

- spent approximately five and half hours with the child minder, including accompanying her on a school run;
- observed the child minder's practice and her interactions with children;
- spoke to the child minder about her service;
- reviewed all information held by CIW;
- reviewed parent questionnaires;
- examined a range of documentation including, policies, procedures, daily records, several children's files and other relevant records, maintained as part of the service;
- undertook a visual inspection of the areas used for minding, and
- provided formal feedback over the telephone on 7 February 2018.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Susan Shaw
Registered maximum number of places	5
Age range of children	0 – 12 years
Opening hours	7:30 a.m. – 6:00p.m.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	29 April 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	4 February 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?	<p>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. <i>This may be because the service is situated in a primarily English speaking area and the provider does not currently intend to offer or promote a Welsh language service.</i></p> <p>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>'.</p>
Additional Information:	