



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Elizabeth Rabbitt**

**Newport**



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## **Description of the service**

The child minder is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for 10 children under the age of 12. She is located in Newport and uses the ground floor and rear garden of her property for child minding. The language of the service is English.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children make some decisions about their play and have positive emotional attachments with the child minder and their friends. Younger children are sometimes active and positively engaged in play based activities but activity planning, observations and assessments to track younger children's learning are in their infancy. Following the inspection, some improvements to the environment and health and safety practices were made but risk assessments need further work. The child minder adopts a positive approach to behaviour management although older children's involvement in devising the rules is not consistent. Whilst the management of the service requires some improvement, the child minder has shown a suitable commitment to address the non compliance identified during inspection.

### **2. Improvements**

The child minder made some improvements regarding the environment, ensuring fire exits were clear and storage of toys were generally safe and accessible. Fire drills were introduced to the children with plans to complete these monthly. An attendance register was introduced detailing children's hours of attendance. The child minder stated that the risk assessments currently in place would be extended and those not in place, would be completed.

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

The child minder was not meeting her legal responsibilities relating to fire safety, safety records and attendance register, which were addressed following the inspection. We agreed a number of recommendations to improve practice and outcomes for children. These related to: records and documents; range of activities; observations, assessments and activity planning; the use of television; hand washing; policies and procedures; quality of care, and Welsh.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

In general, children express themselves well and are able to make a number of decisions about their care. Children are comfortable in the child minder's care and respond positively to regular praise and encouragement to recognise their achievements. Younger children sustain interest in some play experiences but are frequently distracted and seldom participate in messy play or sensory play activities. Older children behave well and happily engage in play that interests them and use different materials to develop their imagination.

## **Our findings**

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

Children make some choices and decisions because they are consulted about some aspects of their care and play. We heard the younger children being asked if they wanted to tidy away the books and get the jigsaws out, and what they wanted to do in the highchair while they waited for their lunch. The children are generally confident to express their need and feelings in a variety of ways. After school, the children chose what they wanted for snack from the selection provided. We also noted that the younger children's sounds, eye contact, hand gestures or questions were listened to and interpreted well by the child minder. She repeated back what the children were trying to say, modelling language and enabling them to confirm their preferences and feelings. The older children were fully aware of the options open to them, returning to the model they had started building before school with small constructions materials.

Children have a clear voice.

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

Children have a close bond with the child minder. They visit regularly for short visits prior to starting to help familiarise themselves with the routine, setting and other children. As a result, the younger children are comfortable and have positive emotional attachments with the child minder. We watched a child chat happily with the child minder as they played. When a child banged their head and became upset, a cuddle and lots of comforting words of reassurance enabled them to settle and return to their play quickly. The older children told us that they enjoy coming to the child minder's house. They smiled on seeing the child minder at collection time from school and shared news about their day. We also heard them happily chatting with the child minder during their play and talking about what they were making. Younger children's dignity is respected at nappy changing time because this is undertaken in private.

Good settling-in arrangements help the children feel secure, comfortable and relaxed.

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

Children learn to share and take turns during play and older children are self disciplined. When the younger children wanted to play with the same toy, calm, gentle

reminders about sharing helped prevent the behaviour from escalating. Their self esteem and confidence are positively encouraged through regular praise to recognise their achievements, such as “*Good counting*”. When a child finished the animal jigsaws, they cheered and proudly exclaimed, “*I made the pig, I made the cow and I made the sheep, yeah*”. They smiled with pride and eagerly clapped their achievement with the child minder. Younger children are starting to learn right and wrong because explanations are given most of the time. They also show some respect for the toys by helping to put them back in the boxes when requested. The older children were well behaved during the inspection and any quibbles were dealt with promptly.

Children interact appropriately and respond positively to regular praise.

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

Children enjoy some aspects of their play. After school we observed some older relax on the sofa to watch some television, while others initiated their own games. During the main part of the day we noted that the television was on in the background whilst activities were being undertaken. As a result, the younger children were frequently distracted. When looking at books with the child minder or playing generally, the children frequently lost interest and sat watching the television instead. This meant that they were not active or engaged in purposeful play experiences and were seen yawning and rubbing their eyes and face. However, after school when the television channel was changed for the older children, we saw the younger children positively engage and sustain interest in their play with the cars and ramp. We discussed our observations of the impact the television was having on children’s engagement in their play.

Children are not consistently engaged in purposeful play experiences and learning.

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

Younger children gain some new skills during play. These include hand-eye co-ordination, concentration, shape, pattern and position when threading objects and attempting different slot-in puzzles. A child named some of the numbers on the puzzle and responded to instructions to turn the pieces round to help them fit. However, the children seldom participate in sensory play experiences that help underpin their early learning. Older children generally follow their personal interests. They took on different roles and were keen to act out various scenes within their construction play, using their imagination and creativity well. We also observed other children happy to sit, relax and watch some television after their school day until they were ready to play. At mealtimes, younger children’s independence is encouraged some of the time to help them develop some self-help skills. We observed the child minder feed the children their lunch only giving them the spoon to feed themselves half way through.

Children’s independence and learning is generally encouraged.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

There are necessary health and safety policies and procedures in place and although some need developing, the child minder has adequate knowledge of most. Some improvements to health and safety practices were made following the inspection to help meet children's needs but risk assessments are incomplete. The child minder manages children's behaviour effectively, although engaging older children in the process of devising the rules for expected behaviour is not consistent. The child minder interacts well with the children during play but systems to observe, assess and plan for children's development needs improvement.

### **Our findings**

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

The child minder is sufficiently clear on her role and responsibilities in promoting children's health and safety. She has clear understanding of her policies and procedures regarding lost and uncollected children and sick child. Policies regarding outings, transporting children, safeguarding and medication lacked some detail. However discussions showed the child minder has suitable understanding in these areas. She has good awareness of the signs and indicators of abuse and clear knowledge of action to take with any child welfare concerns. However, her understanding of the Prevent Duty 2015 is less developed. This is a government strategy to help child care providers recognise signs of children being radicalised and drawn into extremism.

Clear explanations are given to help younger children learn about safe play and possible consequences of their actions. Practise of the fire drill now takes place monthly and a log kept of how the practise went. Following the inspection, sufficient improvements were made so that children had easy access to a drink at all times. The child minder follows suitable hygiene practices during nappy changes and encourages potty training positively. Hand washing is encouraged some of the time. After school we observed the older children wash their hands before snack but this was not consistent for the younger children throughout the day. Children's packed lunches are kept cool and fresh in the fridge and snacks provided are generally wholesome with a variety of yoghurts and cheese dippers on offer. Children also told us that they have biscuits and occasionally fruit.

Children's health and safety are promoted adequately, although some updates to policies and knowledge are required to support the child minder in her role.

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

There is a clear and well written Behaviour Management Policy that is implemented appropriately. The child minder is consistent and fair and uses lots of praise to

promote positive behaviour. She gives clear explanations to help younger children learn to manage their behaviour. We heard lots of reminders for them to share, “*There’s two, we can share...*” and “*Thank you (child), he’s sharing the toy with you, that’s kind*”. There was also good use of distraction and re-directing children to play with something else to manage and alleviate any behaviour from escalating. Observation of the child minder’s files highlighted that older children in previous years had helped to devise and write the rules for expected behaviour. The child minder confirmed that this practice had not been repeated for several years but indicated this would take place in the future.

The child minder celebrates positive behaviour and is consistent in managing behaviour, although engaging older children in the process could be considered.

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

Basic measures are in place to promote children’s learning and development. The child minder provides a suitable commentary of the younger children’s play and asks age-appropriate questions to support their speech and language development. They worked with the child minder to build an enclosure with the big building blocks for the lions, giraffes and elephants. The child minder introduced new language, such as ostrich, sea lion and hydrant to help extend their language skills. However, sand and water play only takes place in the summer when in the garden. Other messy play activities, such as painting, playdough or gloop to help develop and reinforce children’s early learning do not take place. There was no tracking of younger children’s progress or devising next steps to feed into any activity planning. The child minder told us she was not confident in this area. She explained that she had recently introduced an online assessment system to share photographs with parents. However, this was yet to be started and content added. Although older children can request some activities, basic activity planning has been introduced for a specific theme based around nature and wasp research. Some activities were highlighted, such as setting up wasp traps to identify different species, bug hotels and bird watching with questions and language to use. We noted that the Welsh language is not included during play and daily routines. However, the child minder stated that children celebrate St. David’s Day by eating Welsh cakes, dressing up and learning about the history of the festival.

The child minder lacks confidence in observing and assessing younger children’s learning and planning activities to promote their development but has adequate systems in place for the older children.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The child minder provides a secure environment that is spacious and provides different play areas inside for most children to use. Some improvements to safety were made following the inspection. However, risk assessments are weak and outdoor play needs to feature more strongly once the garden is tidied and planned maintenance work is completed. There are a wealth of toys and resources suitable for all the children attending and some improvements to the storage of these are underway.

#### **Our findings**

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

Adequate steps are taken to keep the environment safe. The child minder monitors the arrival and collection of children well and ensures the front door is locked and secured afterwards. Our observations of the school run and supervision in the house showed that safe practices are implemented appropriately. However, a review of the child minder's risk assessments for the premises, garden, use of the car and each type of outing need significant work to ensure they are robust. The child minder agreed to develop these. The child minder confirmed that delayed maintenance work on the garden will now take place in summer 2019 to ensure it is safe to use and the ground levelled for the trampoline. The 2017 quality of care review also outlined the inclusion of a covered area, raised beds for planting and guttering for water and ball play. We discussed being clearer on the use of the trampoline and having clear policies and risk assessments in place, taking into account manufacturers guidance and safety advice from organisations such as RoSPA. Appropriate insurances and gas safety certificates are in place and the child minder confirmed that the property had recently been rewired to meet current electrical standards. The child minder told us that she regularly reviews any accidents to look for any patterns and adapts her safety practices accordingly. Appropriate fire plans and a fire blanket are in place and obstacles in front of fire exits to the garden and sitting room were removed following the inspection.

The child minder provides a secure environment and appropriate supervision but risk assessments need further work.

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

The premises are warm and generally welcoming. The older children have free use of the conservatory as a playroom and are able to participate in occasional drawing and craft activities at the kitchen table. We noted that the younger children play in the spacious sitting room, which was warm and comfortable. All children and visitors are requested to remove their shoes before entering the sitting room, ensuring that the carpet is kept clean for the younger children to play on. Before and after school when



the older children are playing with small construction materials, the child minder ensures that the younger children do not access the playroom. This gives the older children space and opportunities to play with age appropriate toys whilst limiting any risk to the younger children. However, we also found that an arm chair was pushed across the entrance to the playroom throughout the rest of the day, limiting their free movement. The child minder confirmed that garden play for the younger children is very infrequent and currently work is needed to tidy it up and make it more inviting. However, the child minder makes good use of sing along groups, playgroups and soft play centres to offer children large physical play opportunities.

The child minder provides spacious play spaces inside which older children can access and maintenance work on the garden is planned.

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

There are a wealth of suitable toys and resources for children in her care. We observed a wide range of toys, games and play materials for children of different ages and abilities displayed in the playroom, in clear boxes. On visual inspection, these appeared to be clean and in good condition. The child minder also confirmed that there were many other toys stored upstairs, which she routinely rotated to provide children with different play experiences. However, many boxes in the playroom were stacked on top of each other or positioned in front of other boxes. This made it difficult for children to access what they wanted to play with. We watched the child minder have to move several boxes to get to the box of puzzles for the younger children. Following the inspection the child minder provided evidence that some re-organisation had taken place with big boxes on the floor and windowsills. We noted that the child minder set out three boxes of toys in the sitting room for the younger children to access that provided different play experiences. These included vehicles, various puzzles and shape sorters, animals, two ride on toys and some books, two of which were in Welsh. Although not currently used, the large trampoline in the garden and its safety netting were in good condition.

The child minder has a broad range of good quality and age appropriate toys and play materials that are routinely rotated and some steps are being taken to improve children's access.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

The leadership and management of the service is adequate, with improvements to policies and procedures and record and documents required. Current systems to monitor and evaluate quality and all aspects of the child minder's practice are not sufficiently robust. However, the child minder has shown a strong commitment to address many of the weaknesses identified. Partnerships with parents are sound although information shared could be improved.

### **Our findings**

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

The child minder is generally compliant because adequate improvements were made following the inspection. We discussed reviewing and updating her knowledge of the National Minimum Standards (NMS) and The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010. This will ensure her practice continues to be compliant and she provides a quality service for children and parents. An initial review of the Statement of Purpose found significant omissions in the information. Although some improvements were made to the document, further work is needed to ensure it reflects NMS 1.2 and regulations. We found policies and procedures were in place that contained basic information. However, following the inspection the child minder confirmed that she will update them and had plans to introduce a children's Complaints Policy in collaboration with the older children. A review of records and documents found that many were incomplete, not up to date or well organised. Accidents were recorded on the back of various children's records and did not contain all the necessary information and registers prior to September were not available to view. In addition, the register for September was mixed in with all the policies and procedures and other information so was not easily accessible. Evidence provided following the inspection showed that children's hours of attendance were being recorded but the month it related to was omitted. Whilst the children's information and contracts with parents required updating, the child minder stated she was addressing these issues to ensure all the necessary information was in place.

The child minder understands that improvements to the management of her service need to be continued.

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

The child minder undertakes basic self-evaluation of her service. She completed the CIW Self Assessment of Service Statement in 2016 and undertook a quality of care review in 2017. The document identified improvements to be made in the garden and how feedback from seven parent questionnaires was used to inform the report. Overall, the parents' feedback was positive. They thanked the child minder for accommodating their needs and that they were "*Very happy overall and (child) is*

*really enjoying himself*'. Whilst some parents requested more play and less television, another praised the child minder for supporting them with toileting issues. The child minder outlined some of the improvements she had made following the parent's feedback. However, some issues, such as use of the television, have not been taken on board and the annual report did not cover all aspects of the service or children's views. Nevertheless, cards we observed from children who had left the child minder's care in the summer thanked her "...for a wonderful time" and "...for being such an awesome child minder". The child minder has taken on board feedback from this inspection and shown a sufficient commitment to address the non compliance identified and develop some aspects of her practice.

The child minder is open to advice and feedback but systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the service need to be strengthened.

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

The child minder is suitably qualified and manages her time appropriately. The child minder follows children's daily routines well and ensures good time keeping when collecting children from various classrooms within the local school. The child minder ensures that her training is kept up to date. She updated her paediatric first aid in May 2017, food hygiene in May 2018 and safeguarding training in June 2018. The child minder is currently working towards a level 3 child care qualification to help extend her practice and knowledge further. However, she recognises the need to develop her Welsh language skills, as well as her confidence and ability to observe, assess and plan for children's ongoing learning and development. The child minder routinely updates her fitness check and is fully aware that her child will need to complete a Disclosure Barring Service check once they reach 16 years.

The child minder shows a sound commitment to training and developing her skills and knowledge further.

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

The child minder works with parents appropriately. She works closely with parents during settling to identify preferences and useful information about children's individual needs. Parents we spoke to told us they were happy and had good relationships with the child minder. They felt the information they received when they first started (several years ago) was useful. However, the Statement of Purpose provides only basic information about the service and policies and procedures are incomplete. As a result, parents stated they were not aware of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about their children's care. Contracts with parents are currently being updated to agree business arrangements and ensure the information included accurately reflects the care currently provided. Details about the children's day are shared informally through discussion on collection. Parents we spoke to told us they would like more information about their children and systems to share information about their children's progress and learning are yet to be introduced.

The child minder has established solid relationships with parents but the information shared about her service and children's learning and development could be improved.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Areas of non compliance from this inspection**

We notified the child minder that they were not compliant with Regulation 25 (c): Hazards and safety. This is because unnecessary risks to the health and safety of children have not been identified. We did not issue non compliance on this occasion because the child minder agreed to complete the risk assessments and send them into CIW on completion.

We notified the child minder that they were not compliant with Regulation 30 (1)(a) Schedule 3.6: Keeping of records. This is because the attendance register does not show accurately children's times of arrival and departure. We did not issue non compliance on this occasion because the child minder sent in a photograph of a new form being completed of children's daily attendance.

We notified the child minder that they were not complaint with Regulation 38 (1)(b): Fire precautions. This is because there was no adequate means of escape in the conservatory in the event of a fire or emergency. We did not issue non compliance on this occasion as the child minder provided photographs that the fire escape in the conservatory had been cleared to allow a quick exit in an emergency.

We notified the child minder that they were not compliant with Regulation 38 (1)(b) and Regulation 38 (1)(e): Fire precautions. This is because fire drills and practises are not completed regularly. We did not issue non compliance on this occasion because the child minder provided evidence that a fire drill had been practised with the children following the inspection and the new form created indicated a practise would take place on a monthly basis.

### **5.3 Recommendations for improvement**

- Review use of the television so that it is not a distraction to children's play and learning;
- ensure all children learn good hygiene routines, with particular emphasis on the younger children washing their hands before meal times and after toileting routines;

- review and extend policies and procedures, including outings, transporting children, safeguarding and medication to ensure they are detailed and reflect current practice and guidelines;
- provide daily messy play and sensory play activities for the younger children;
- introduce observations of the children's learning, assess their progress and learning to identify next steps and use the information gained to inform future activity planning;
- extend the Statement of Purpose to ensure all the necessary information is in place in line with regulations and National Minimum Standards 1.2;
- improve the systems in place to monitor and evaluate quality and all aspects of the service and develop methods to capture children's views and feedback about their care;
- devise a suitable system to record any accidents to children and ensure all the necessary information is in place, and
- develop the information shared with parents about the service, including policies and procedures, Statement of Purpose and ongoing information about children's progress and learning.

## 6. How we undertook this inspection

One inspector undertook a full inspection as part of the normal schedule of inspections. The inspection was completed in one visit totalling 8 hours. Evidence for the report was gathered through:

- Review of information held by CIW, including the last inspection report and Quality of Care Review report;
- observations of children's play during the day and after school;
- accompanying the child minder on the school run;
- observation of daily routines and interactions between the children and child minder and their friends;
- discussion with the children and parents;
- examination of the child minder's records and documentation, including register's, policies and procedures, risk assessments, Statement of Purpose and the children's files;
- visual inspection of play areas inside and outside, and
- information provided to CIW by the child minder following the inspection.

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	Elizabeth Rabbitt
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	3 months to 12 years
Opening hours	07:45 to 17:30 Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	24 February 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	10 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. 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:	