



Childcare Inspection Report on

Paula Creed

Blackwood



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from the family's detached property located on a modern housing estate. She is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to 10 children under the age of 12 years. The service operates all year round, from 7.00am until 6.00pm, Monday to Friday and flexible care is available including wrap around and holiday provision. It is an English speaking service with some incidental Welsh introduced through play.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Outcomes for children are good in relation to their well-being. They have established positive relationships with their peers and the child minder, and benefit from a good selection of play and learning experiences. The environment provides children with a 'home from home' experience and they have access to a good range of resources to promote their development. Leadership is satisfactory, but improvements are required in relation to record keeping elements of the service. The child minder is a nurturing, warm and enthusiastic practitioner and puts children's needs at the 'heart' of her service, although some documents require development.

2. Improvements

There were no recommendations made at the previous inspection. Following our first inspection visit the child minder developed the statement of purpose and devised a medication policy.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We identified that the registered provider was not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to the statement of purpose as it did not contain all the necessary information required. We have not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion as it did not impact on children and the provider took immediate action to address this matter.

We have made recommendations under the care and development and environment and leadership themes. These recommendations are discussed in the body of the report and are summarised in section 5.2.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are secure and settled in an environment they are familiar with. They enjoy a good selection of play and learning experiences to promote their development and they are building strong relationships with their peers and the child minder.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

All children are confident to express their views about the service. They responded quickly and enthusiastically when asked what they would like to do. They had control over their play throughout the inspection and focused on their preferred areas of interest. Older children told us that the child minder listened to what they have to say and considered their views when planning activities during the holidays.

Children have a voice in the service and are able to speak up to make their views known.

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

Children are secure and familiar with routines. We saw that a child sought out the child minder for comfort when they woke up and received prompt reassurance. We also noted strong bonds of affection between children across the age range and with the child minder. Furthermore, our observations showed that children were settled and happy. They explored their environment, were happy for the child minder to join in their play and expressed enjoyment in the different play activities they chose. We spoke to parents and they told us that their children were very settled and happy at the service.

Children are safe and happy in a home from home environment.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well with each other. They are learning to share and to consider the needs of others. We observed children playing in the home corner and sitting together to complete a craft activity. They shared resources, held hands and chatted to each other when eating their meal at the dining table. A young child was pleased to see older children when they arrived from school and was keen to spend time with them in the playroom. Older children were relaxed in each other's company and enjoyed spending time together after school.

Children are learning to socialise and develop positive relationships with their peers.

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

Children benefit from a good range of play experiences that are age appropriate and rewarding. They were active and curious learners and explored their environment safely and with confidence. Whilst in the playroom they enjoyed role play activities in the home corner and spent a period of uninterrupted play picking out vegetables and

fruit to prepare a pretend picnic. They enjoyed a craft activity to promote their fine motor skills and there were opportunities for them to draw and colour in. Older children told us that there are plenty of opportunities for them to follow their interests and during the school holidays they go to places that they enjoy.

Children benefit from free play activities which they enjoy and meet their needs.

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

Children are developing their self-help skills in line with their age and stage of development. They picked out toys in the playroom, and tidied resources away after they had finished playing with them. They fed themselves at meal time, took off their shoes and attempted to put on their jackets without help from the child minder. There were also opportunities for them to wash their hands with minimal assistance from the child minder. During play activities they were able to accomplish things for themselves and enjoyed the challenge of threading laces through small holes to make different designs.

Children have good opportunities to develop a range of skills in preparation for more formal education.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder places children at the heart of her service. This is a strong aspect of her practice and her priority is to offer children hands on support and attention to ensure that their time with her is enjoyable and interesting. The record keeping element of her service is not as strong and improvements are required in this area.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is aware of her responsibilities with regard to children's safety and health. We observed the school run and saw that effective measures were in place to ensure children's safety when collecting them from school. There was appropriate practice with regard to infection control and children were prompted to wash their hands before eating. There was a safeguarding policy and procedure, but it lacked detail in relation to recording and reporting of concerns, and contact details for agencies. The child minder offer snacks as part of her service, and whilst she had a healthy eating policy it did not fully adhere to Welsh Government's guidance on healthy food and drink. Additionally, we noted that although the child minder had medication records, there was no written medication policy. The child minder took immediate action to address this, and a written medication policy was in place by the time of our second visit.

The child minder has some good procedures in place to keep children safe and healthy but some documents would benefit from development.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder manages interactions in a positive way. She had a gentle and calm approach and treated children with kindness and respect at all times. This meant that children were relaxed; felt welcomed into the home and responded positively to her. There are basic house rules so that children are clear about accepted behaviour in the home. However, there was some confusion regarding the behaviour management policy as there was more than one version in the policy file. It was therefore difficult to establish which one was the most current and relevant.

The child minder supports children's social behaviour positively but clarity is required in relation to the behaviour management policy.

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

The child minder is a warm, motivated and enthusiastic practitioner who focuses on providing children with lovely play experiences. Whilst children had space to follow activities that interested them, she was readily at hand, asking them questions and supporting their learning. It was evident that she values the time that she spends with the children and told us that making sure children are happy and content is her

primary focus. She also goes over and above in some areas of her practice. For example, there have been occasions when, at the request of parents, she has accompanied children to appointments. Although the child minder offers children a good range of play experiences and knows the children in her care well, there was no evidence of activity planning and limited observations and assessments of children.

The child minder meets children's needs in a positive manner to support their learning, but planning records were absent.

3. Environment

Summary

Children benefit from a home presented to a good standard, with effective safety measures in place. The child minder has built up a good selection of different play and learning resources over time, so that children have a broad range of toys and equipment.

Our findings

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

The child minder has appropriate safety checks to ensure that the home is safe for children. There were safety gates in situ to restrict children's access to various areas of the home and the premises was secure. Records showed that appropriate safety checks had been carried out in relation to gas safety and fire evacuation drills. Furthermore, the child minder had a fire blanket in case of an emergency and mains connected smoke detectors. Unnecessary risks to children had been identified in relation to some areas of the service, but there was a lack of written risk assessments for school runs, outings and some activities.

The child minder has appropriate safety measures to promote children's welfare.

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

The layout of the home affords children with a good degree of independence and security. They are able to move easily from the living room to the dedicated playroom and toilet facilities as all of these rooms are located in close proximity to one another. There is a good standard of décor throughout, with comfortable furniture for children to relax and low level storage so that children can access resources easily. At the time of the inspection the garden which is situated to the front and side of the property was out of bounds to children as it was being renovated.

The layout and design of the home promotes children's independence and children benefit from a home that is suited to their needs.

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

The child minder has considered the needs of children in her care and a wide selection of resources is available. We saw that there was a plentiful supply of different toys and craft materials to maintain children's interest and curiosity. Equipment such as a role play kitchen captured children's imagination and they spent a considerable length of time playing with this resource. There was a good selection of small toys such as dolls and some cultural resources. Resources reflected the age range of children who attend the service and we saw reading materials and games suitable for older children, as well as a wide selection of toys for pre-school children.

The child minder has considered the needs of children and has a wide selection of different resources to promote their learning.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

Overall, there are appropriate record keeping systems in place and the child minder runs her service to a satisfactory standard. However, we identified that she was not meeting her regulatory requirements in relation the statement of purpose, but when informed of this matter the child minder took immediate action to address it. She was receptive to feedback given and keen to improve the management side of her service.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder's leadership of her service is not as effective as it could be. We found that the statement of purpose did not include all the information required by regulations and National Minimum Standards. There was a good range of policies in place; however, not all of them were dated, meaning that it was difficult to establish when they were last reviewed. The complaints policy included some timescales for dealing with concerns raised, but lacked detail and the role of CIW in the complaints process was not as clear as it could be. Examination of other documents showed that contracts contained necessary information and records of children's attendance were appropriately maintained. The child minder had also ensured that her public liability insurance and vehicle documents were up to date.

The child minder runs some aspects of her service appropriately but improvements could be made with regard to some documentation.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder reviews and monitors her service. A Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) has been completed and forwarded to CIW as required and documents showed that the child minder has reviewed her service in the past year. As part of this process she has consulted with children and parents via questionnaires. We saw that feedback from parents was very positive and indicated that they were highly satisfied with the service. The review of quality of care report contained appropriate information, although it lacked clear action planning and representation of parent and children's views in the report could have been stronger.

The child minder self evaluates and reviews her service on a regular basis.

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

The child minder runs this area of her service in an organised manner. She is mindful to plan ahead so that parents are not inconvenienced. This means that holidays are planned in advance so that parents can make alternative child care arrangements. There is a back up child minder to cover in emergencies. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks were up to date for all persons over 16 years of age who reside at the premises and training was up to date in relation to safeguarding, paediatric first aid and food hygiene, as well as recent training in relation to data protection.

The child minder manages her time effectively.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder has established strong partnerships with parents who use her service. We spoke to three parents during the inspection. They were all highly complimentary about her care of their children and acknowledged her enthusiasm and dedication. They also commented on their children's progress since attending the child minders service. We saw a number of thank you cards and comments included:

'Thank you for all everything you have done for us over the years.' Communication between the child minder and parents is good. There are conversations with parents when they drop off and collect their children and the child minder provides updates throughout the day, for example, via text messages. She offers a very flexible service and as stated earlier in the report, on occasions she has attended appointments with children if parents have been unable to do so.

The child minder has developed very positive relationships with parents who use her service.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Develop the safeguarding, complaints policies, produce one behaviour management policy and ensure that service documents are dated;
- review the healthy eating policy in line with Welsh Government guidelines for childcare services on healthy food and drink;
- develop planning records for children and extend observation and assessment records for children;
- develop risk assessments to cover all aspects of the service including school runs, outings and activities and
- ensure that the action plan is clearer in the next annual review of quality of care report and strengthen the voice of parents and children.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector visited the service over two days totalling approximately six and a half hours. As part of the inspection process we:

- Spoke to the child minder, children and three parents;
- observed care practice and interactions between the child minder and children;
- examined a selection of service documents including the policy file and contracts;
- completed a visual inspection of rooms used for minding purposes;
- considered information held by CIW including the previous inspection reports and
- fed back our findings 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

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| Type of care provided | Child Minder |
| Registered Person | Paula Creed |
| Registered maximum number of places | 10 |
| Age range of children | 3 to 11 years |
| Opening hours | 7.00am until 6.00pm, Monday to Friday |
| Operating Language of the service | English |
| Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 20 July 2015 |
| Dates of this inspection visits | 14 and 15 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? | This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's <i>'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'</i> |
| Additional Information: None | |