



Childcare Inspection Report on

Elaine Gater-Davies

Caerphilly



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from her home in Caerphilly, where she lives with her family. She currently has six children on roll and is registered to care for ten children under 12 years. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday between 7:15am to 5:30pm throughout the year. Children have access to the ground floor areas within the home. Care is provided through the English language, with the use of incidental Welsh. The child minder has a pet dog and cat.

Summary of our findings

Overall assessment

Children enjoy attending this service. They receive a good balance of play opportunities and are forming positive relationships. The child minder is responsive to their needs and she provides a variety of activities for them, including frequent trips out. The children benefit from a clean and tidy environment with resources easily accessible to them. Feedback from parents indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service. We made some recommendations in respect to the child minder's administration and appropriate storage of her fire blanket.

Improvements

There were no non-compliance issues raised at the child minder's last inspection. She has satisfactorily addressed the recommendations which were highlighted.

Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. However, we have set recommendations with regards to some of the child minder's record keeping and access to her fire blanket. These have been discussed in further detail at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are provided with a good range of opportunities that enhance their all-round growth and development, to reach their full potential. They are listened to and their ideas and contributions are valued. They are happy and engaged in activities and are forming positive independence skills in their play and development. They are developing sociably and learning to manage their own behaviour, to support their interactions and develop positive relationships.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are listened to and allowed to make choices and decisions. They select toys and activities that they want to play with and they let the child minder know when they need things, such as resources, food, drink and toileting needs. They speak freely to express themselves and they are listened to, supporting them to feel valued and confident to ask for things. For example, a child expressed that they didn't like their yoghurt and the child minder offered them an alternative food to eat. All children were made to feel included in discussions because the child minder asked each of them questions and encouraged them to join in. The children told us that they enjoy attending the service.

Children clearly feel that they have a voice and they are given the time and support to make choices and express their opinions.

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

Children have formed positive relationships with one another and with the child minder. They looked secure and content and they clearly felt at home. They confidently selected different activities, such as crafts, role play toys, lego and cars, helping themselves to what they needed. Their work and photographs are displayed on the walls, helping them to feel valued. They also each have a file of photographs of them engaging in different activities, which they take home. The children enjoyed sharing the photographs and they were a central talking point as the children enjoyed looking through them. Their cultural needs are also carefully considered. For example, the child minder is developing her language skills speaking Polish and Welsh, further promoting children's identity and sense of belonging. Children were fully engaged in activities and the child minder was available for help when needed.

The children have formed secure attachments with the child minder and this enables them to feel valued, safe and relaxed whilst in her care.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are at ease with one another and have formed close friendships. We saw them playing together and alongside one another, happily engaged in their chosen activities. Activities sustain their interests for sufficient time. We noted that when they interacted with one another and the child minder, they were respectful and used polite manners. The atmosphere was relaxed and the children were co-operative. They have developed good social skills according to their age and stage of development. As such, the child minder did

not need to intervene to guide them within their play. It was evident that established boundaries are in place that the children all know and follow.

Children are well behaved and have positive social interactions with one another.

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

Children are busy and engaged in activities within a layout that facilitates movement between well setup areas. They have good opportunities for free flow play and they choose between a good variety of toys and resources that maintain their interests. Their play is supported when needed and at other times uninterrupted, enabling them the freedom to enjoy their environment and to seek out the child minder when needed. For example, they approached the child minder for help to dress up in role play clothes and to involve her in play, such as playing hairdressers. At other times they were immersed in various activities according to their preferences. Some were role playing doctors and hairdressers, whilst others were etching pictures and playing with cars and lego. The children directed their play and freely chose from a good selection of resources. They make use of the garden and frequently go on trips out, giving them the benefit of plenty of exercise and fresh air. Trips out include to the park, library, soft play centres, fruit picking and attending play groups and sessions, such as musical and British sign language. When time permits, the children go on outings further afield, such as to the beach, butterfly farm, and splash park. When we chatted to the children about attending the child minders, they gave positive feedback about their time there. In particular, they told us that they like to see other children, play with the hairdressing play sets and make crafts.

Children enjoy the activities on offer and are engaged in their play, showing curiosity as they learn new things.

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

Children are confident in their surroundings. They know where things are and resources are organised in such a way that they can help themselves and be independent in their play. We saw children's good levels of independence accessing resources that they wanted to use, washing their hands at appropriate times and when prompted to do so, wiping their own noses, using the toilet independently, helping themselves to their meals and tidying things away when they had finished playing with them. They were also confident approaching the child minder for help and to ask her things. Children learn about healthy eating because the child minder encourages healthy options, such as fresh drinking water and fruit snacks are always made available to them.

Children are confident and independent learners.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder provides children with warm, safe and nurturing care. A strength of her service is the dedication to promoting children's independence and placing them at the centre of their learning and play. Her established boundaries and high expectations for acceptable behaviour are evident in children's positive social interactions, supporting them to form good relationships. The child minder is caring and she supports children in their day to day activities, to help them to continually develop.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is experienced in her role and has a good range of procedures in place for keeping children healthy. She renews her Disclosure and Barring Service Certificates as necessary. She also keeps up to date with food hygiene training, paediatric first aid and safeguarding training. As such, she is aware of her 'Prevent' duty, a responsibility on all schools and registered early years providers to have due regard to preventing children being drawn into extremism. The child minder provides fresh drinking water that is readily available and healthy snacks. Children bring their own packed lunches for meal times. Teeth cleaning is encouraged in the setting and the children each have their own tooth brush. The child minder plays a song for the children to clean their teeth to for the duration. 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 and separate drying facilities to help infection control. Fire drills are practised regularly and logged appropriately. There is a fire evacuation plan and procedure in place. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that they are appropriately recorded and monitored.

The child minder positively promotes children's healthy lifestyles.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Children are guided in their day to day play and learning, to follow guidelines of acceptable behaviour. These were clearly documented in the behaviour management policy and the child minder told us that the main rules are to be kind and to share. During the session, children were well behaved and the child minder did not need to intervene often to offer guidance, indicating that clear and realistic boundaries had already been established. There were occasions when she guided them to play safely. For example, when the children became excitable she warned them to calm and be careful. When they continued and fell over, she was on hand to offer comfort and reassurance. She asked another child to get a drink for the child who fell, supporting the children to develop empathy for one another and to show care and attention towards each other. This in turn benefits the children's social learning and relationships. We noted that the child minder was relaxed in her approach and she engaged in everyday conversations with the children, showing an interest in their day. She created an atmosphere that was calm and nurturing, enabling the children to feel relaxed and at home in her care.

The child minder is a positive role model to the children in her care, supporting their social skills and relationships with others.

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 for the children in her care. Children are central to their own learning, as they are included in the selection of activities and resources that they enjoy. For example, some of the children highlighted to the child that they were learning about Henry the 8th in school. The child minder incorporated it into her planning for the benefit of the children's continued learning. The child minder has a good understanding of the Foundation Phase. She records early years aged children's progress on observations sheets and their next steps for development. She also displays their targets on the wall, as a reminder for what each child is working on. The child minder carefully considers children's learning outcomes to plan a broad balance of activities for them following a theme. Activities include celebrating different cultural festivals, learning about healthy eating and road safety, weekly cooking sessions, story times and song time. The child minder also co-ordinates the children yearly raising money for their chosen charity. We noted that incidental Welsh and Polish is used in the setting during conversations. The children join in with frequent Welsh singing sessions and the child minder supports them to read and write in basic Welsh. The child minder also has plenty of books in Welsh and media displayed on the walls to promote children's use of the Welsh Language.

The child minder plans for children's development and assesses their learning to support them to progress.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced with equipment and furniture to enable children to play, learn and relax. Children are cared for in a home which is clean, stimulating and safe.

Our findings

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

The child minder has appropriate measures and procedures in place to maintain the environment in order to keep children safe. Daily visual checks, including a weekly house check list, are made of the premises to ensure that all areas are safe for children. A written risk assessment is in place, identifying the hazards and actions in each area. We discussed with the childminder expanding her risk assessments to include the household pets. Safety equipment is in place, such as smoke alarms and a fire blanket. However, the fire blanket was stored on a shelf in the kitchen. We discussed with the child minder ensuring that she follows the manufacturers guidelines to ensure its effective use if needed, by securing it to the wall and familiarising herself with the directions for use. The home is free from clutter and provides sufficient space for the number of children and age ranges cared for so that all the children can play and relax. Children have full use of the downstairs of the property and we saw them move freely from one area to another. Children also have use of the garden, which is safely enclosed. The child minder ensures that she supervises the children well whilst providing them with plenty of play opportunities. We noted her calm manner interacting with them, whilst also allowing a free flow of play activity to take place.

Procedures and equipment are in place to maximise the safety of children, but guidelines for storing the fire blanket need to be followed and the risk assessment needs expanding.

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

The child minder ensures that her home and garden are clean, secure and welcoming. Rooms are tidy, well decorated, bright and airy. Resources are within easy reach of the children in storage boxes, drawers and setup for their use. The garden is a secure and private space for the children to play in. There is a dining table in the open plan kitchen/living space, for children to enjoy craft and messy play and eat their meals and snacks together. There are sofas for the children to relax and a separate living room if needed. Children know where things are kept and they are able to independently access things of interest.

The child minding areas are suitable for children to play and learn in a relaxed and homely atmosphere.

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. Resources include craft materials, small world items, construction equipment, role play items and books. The child minder also has access to play materials that promote cultural awareness. The garden provides plenty of space and physical equipment for children to play and benefit from fresh air and exercise. There is

adequate storage in place as a shed houses the outside resources during inclement weather. The resources and equipment we saw were all clean and in good working order.

Equipment is all of a good standard and suitable for a home based child care service.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder has policies and processes in place to help her to operate her business effectively. We made a recommendation in respect to the Statement of Purpose. The child minder reviews her service and has evidence of self-evaluation to improve outcomes. The overall management of her service is good.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

All policies required for the child minding service are made available and signed and dated to evidence their annual review. A Statement of Purpose is in place, covering all aspects of the changes to the regulations and how the business operates, but needs expanding to include arrangements in place for dealing with emergencies and reviewing the policy. The child minder records children's accurate times of attendance on a daily register. We saw contracts that were shared with parents, setting out the expectations of both parties.

The child minder complies with the relevant regulations and meets the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care.

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

The child minder has a system in place to review the quality of her care and identify improvements. She annually reviews and develops her service, including seeking the views of parents and children. Questionnaires are handed out to the parents and children in preparation for compiling her report and they reflect a high level of satisfaction with the service. Comments from the parents included, "... looks after her like she is her own child. Extremely caring! ... does lovely things with the children throughout the year ... extremely approachable if you have concerns or worries. She helps in any way she can", and, "... never lets us down ... child speaks highly of the child minder". Comments from the children included, "she's nice ... it's fun ... I like the child minder". The highly praising comments evidence that both parents and children are happy with the service provided to them for multiple reasons. Our discussions with the minded children present and two parents collecting children further highlighted this. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place, but no complaints had been received about the quality of the service provided.

The child minder has a process in place to review her practice, including all service users' views on the quality of care provided, in line with the regulations.

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

The child minder does not employ any staff. Contracts are in place with parents and they are kept well informed of any planned holidays or absences, so that alternative child care arrangements can be made. The child minder renews relevant training certificates to keep up to date with best practise. We also noted that she is committed to attending training to update her skills and knowledge in other areas. Her training certificates demonstrate an interest in learning about how to best support children with additional learning needs. She

has a named emergency backup child minder to care for the children if needed, whom the children are familiar with.

The service is well organised and managed by the child minder to ensure that it runs smoothly and parents are clear of childcare arrangements.

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 to help her to collect important information regarding the children and to ensure 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. Furthermore, she told us that she encourages parents to attend toddler sessions so that their children become more familiar with her. This benefits the children settling smoothly with the child minder. It was evident from the paperwork completed that the child minder spends time gaining information prior to children starting, to gain a good insight into the children's needs and to develop positive relationships all round at an early stage. The child minder ensures that information is shared with parents, including policies and procedures and information about the children. We had the opportunity to speak to two parents and they gave positive feedback on the care that their children receive.

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

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

There were no areas of non-compliance noted at the previous 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:

- Update the Statement of Purpose to include arrangements in place for dealing with emergencies and reviewing the policy;
- expand the risk assessments to include pets; and
- follow the manufactures guidelines to secure the fire blanket to the wall.

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 four minded children in her care. The inspection was conducted in one day;
- observations of the child minder's interactions with the children were undertaken;
- we reviewed all information held by CIW;
- we examined a range of documentation, including, policies, procedures, record sheets, children's files and log sheets;
- we spoke with two parents; 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	Elaine Gater-Davies
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday, 7:15am-5:30pm throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	30 October 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	19 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: None	