



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Meriel Owen**

**Colwyn Bay**

**Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This report is also available in Welsh**



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## **Description of the service**

Meriel Kynaston Owen is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time. Child minding takes place in the child minder's home within a residential area in Colwyn Bay between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm from Monday to Wednesday. The child minder takes children to and collects children from a local school and preschool groups.

The child minder offers care through the medium of Welsh and English and is working towards the Welsh language "Active offer". She speaks Welsh fluently and some documentation is bilingual.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children are happy, settled and communicate confidently. Their well-being and self-confidence is promoted and independence encouraged. They interact well and they learn skills through play. The nurturing and experienced child minder provides a suitable play environment and guides children sensitively and meets their every need. The child minder gives the health and safety of children high priority. The environment is safe and suitable with good quality resources. She organises her service well and has helpful and positive relationships with parents, which ensure good outcomes for the children.

### **2. Improvements**

Since the previous inspection;

- the outdoor play area provides a wealth of experiences for the children on custom made activity wall boards, such as water play using guttering, rolling objects and using various fastenings;
- the childminder has updated her knowledge as she has attended courses on behaviour management and autism awareness and
- the child minder is able to share with parents what the children have done by taking many photos of the activities.

Within three working days of this inspection the child minder sent up to date copies of her risk assessments (including the date of the last fire drill) and her latest Quality of care Review.

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

It is recommended that fire drills are completed and recorded when new children begin attending.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Children have a strong voice and make choices confidently. They are able to communicate effectively. Children flourish because they feel secure and relaxed. They are learning valuable social skills. Children enjoy a wealth of purposeful experiences at this service, including outdoor play. Children are learning many concepts through play, including Welsh language skills and are becoming independent.

## **Our findings**

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

Children speak and express themselves confidently and communicate their needs.

Children expressed themselves well in Welsh or English and they were listened to and their choices respected. They made appropriate choices and decisions because they were aware of the options available, for example there was a range of toys to play with and books to read. They asked about where various play items were, which they had misplaced, and helped themselves to many toys such as dolls, their clothes, blankets and buggies. Children were confident to communicate because they knew their home language was given due consideration.

Children have a strong voice and they express themselves freely because their choices are respected.

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

Children feel safe, happy and are valued.

Children were settled and contented with the child minder, and were happy to play with her and each other. Strong bonds of friendship were clearly evident between the children and the child minder as they approached her to answer their questions or for assistance. They were relaxed and expressed enjoyment such as pretending to make a birthday cake for each other. Children were also developing relationships with each other as they role played going for a walk or going on holiday together. Children's crafts were on display giving them a sense of belonging.

Children consistently feel safe and are happy in an atmosphere of acceptance, which values them as individuals.

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

Children interact and co-operate very well with each other and the child minder.

Children co-operated well with the child minder, for example when she asked them to come for their nappies to be changed, they happily complied. Children interacted well with each other as they shared dolls and feeding bottles. They were becoming self-aware and learning to express what they needed such as asking for crayons and stickers to make cards. Children showed concern for each other and at one point we heard them asking “Are you ok?” to ensure they enjoyed their snack when eating their picnic.

Children actively experience positive interactions with each other and the child minder.

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

Children are engaged and interested in their play.

Children were highly motivated and engaged in their play and learning as they practiced writing and mark making skills. They used much language as they played along side each other and the child minder. They were learning about shapes and spatial awareness as they completed jig-saws. They enjoyed table top games such as a matching game and were eager to suggest more games.

Children enthusiastically enjoy their play and learning experiences.

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

Children have a good variety of experiences which promote their all-round development.

Children had a good variety of activities including freely chosen and self directed play, that enabled them to gain a good range of abilities such as pre writing skills when painting. We saw photos of children engaged with cooking, going for walks and playing in the park – all of which encouraged physical skills. Children had a secure relationship with the child minder which helped them gain confidence and overcome challenges. This was demonstrated when a child was unsure of getting paint on her hands and was reassured kindly by the child minder. Children were helped to develop skills to help them be independent such as putting shoes and coats on.

Children are developing effectively and consistently and are becoming independent.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

The child minder keeps children safe and healthy in a caring atmosphere. She manages interactions well, being a good role model and using positive strategies. She is professional and experienced; promoting children's learning through play, providing a range of activities and meeting children's individual needs.

### **Our findings**

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

The child minder implements policies and procedures which have children's well-being and safety at their centre.

There was an appropriate child protection policy in place and the child minder had the relevant contact details to hand. She was clear about her responsibilities if she had a concern about a child. Food and drink is supplied by parents and fruit used as a snack if necessary. The child minder had a current First Aid certificate which meant she was able to deal with minor injuries. Accidents had been recorded appropriately and parents had been asked to sign these records as confirmation that they had been informed. Children's health was also promoted as the child minder followed nappy changing procedures which avoided cross infection which we saw, including regular hand washing. The child minder has used the Infection Control Audit Tool kit and all areas were clean. Children were encouraged to wash their hands after going to the toilet and used their own towels to dry their hands. The child minder ensured children had opportunities to spend time in the fresh air. The child minder ensured children had opportunities to play in the fresh air as they played on the balcony whenever they wanted and we saw photos of outdoor play at the rear of the house. Discussion with the child minder showed that children would be safely evacuated in an emergency but there was no record of fire drills. We were later sent written records of the latest fire drill. Regular fire alarm checks were completed and recorded so that warning of a fire would be heard.

The child minder successfully keeps children safe and healthy.

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

The child minder uses positive strategies to manage interactions.

The child minder successfully managed interactions using positive strategies such as praise, encouragement and distraction and no unwanted behaviour was seen. She was able to manage interactions well according to the principles reflected within the policy. Children had fun with the child minder and they wanted to please her so they listened and co-operated with her. The child minder was a good role model in showing patience and respect and encouraged the children to say please and thank you. She has attended a behaviour management course and said that she found it helpful. The child minder was consistent and fair and praised children for being considerate as they included each other in their play.

The child minder manages interactions effectively.

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

The child minder provides a range of activities to promote children's development. She knows the children in her care very well and meets their needs.

The child minder was kind and nurturing and was sensitive, understanding children's preferences such as which fruit to eat as a snack as part of their pretend picnic. The child minder was confident and relaxed being experienced and having the knowledge to care for the children. She provided a sense of fun and enjoyment as they played board games together. Busy times were interspersed with times when children could relax as one child had a sleep. The child minder uses seasonal themes to provide craft activities and cooking such as Chinese New Year and Santes Dwywnen to promote kindness towards each other. The child minder provided a rich language environment, and was a good language model herself, using mainly Welsh and a little English with the children. For example, much language and vocabulary was taught through playing a lotto game. She understood the importance of learning through play and provided varied opportunities such as cars and garage, table top games and crafts.

We saw photos of children engaged in crafts such as making snowmen pictures. Children had parties, went on walks and enjoyed baking. The child minder carefully considered providing interesting activities as there was planning of some craft and special activities on weekly record sheets. Children's registration forms had all the information required to care for the children. The child minder knew the children well, and had gained valuable updated information from parents about their health and stage of development. This meant that she could meet their needs in detail such as knowing when they might want to sleep.

The child minder meets children's needs effectively and promotes their play, learning and development well.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

The child minder provides a secure and safe environment and observations and written risk assessments evidence she is aware of how to keep children safe. The environment is child centred and homely giving the children suitable experiences. The quality of the games, toys and resources is sufficient to meet the developing needs of the children.

#### **Our findings**

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

We found the premises are safe and records show the child minder regularly checks and puts measures in place to ensure safety.

The premises were secure with the main entrance locked and the outdoor area safely enclosed. A record of visitors was kept in the child minder's own records. Written risk assessments had been recently reviewed and updated which demonstrated the child minder was aware of the potential hazards and how to manage them. These included a gate at the top of the stairs. The child minder constantly supervised the children and ensured their safety. All areas were clean, tidy and well maintained.

The child minder keeps the premises safe and secure.

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

The child minder ensures there is sufficient space and suitable facilities.

The child minder made sure the environment was suitable to provide children with homely care. The environment was warm and child centred. There was ample space for the children to play with their chosen toy or participate in the activities in the playroom, which included an outside balcony, or at the kitchen table. A sofa enabled children to relax if necessary. The child minder used the environment flexibly, and even the landing was used as an area for play briefly. The toilet included a step for children to use the facilities independently. We saw the outside play area with many resources and photos of children enjoying the activities in the summer which included sand and water play.

The child minder actively ensures the suitability of the environment.

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

The child minder provides children with clean, quality toys and equipment.

Children had access to a wide range of good quality and developmentally appropriate play and learning resources including books and table top games. They were in ample quantity to ensure children had a good choice such as paper, writing and painting materials. Toys, games, equipment and the furniture were clean and suitable. We saw books and resources to reflect a wider society.

The child minder successfully ensures the resources and equipment are of good quality.



## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

The child minder is experienced and strives to provide a quality service. Self-evaluation is effective and improvements made considering all involved. Resources are managed well and the child minder ensures she has sufficient materials and on going support from other agencies. Partnerships with parents are effective for the benefit of the children and their families.

### **Our findings**

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

Leadership is organised and motivated, producing good outcomes for children.

The child minder provided an up-to-date statement of purpose that reflects an accurate picture of the service provided. The practice that we saw during the visit was consistent with the information in the statement of purpose. The child minder was confident and competent and she has considerable experience of working with children being a registered child minder for many years. Records were organised and easily accessed. The child minder ensured all legal requirements were met such as sharing information with us, and up to date public liability insurance.

Leadership is successful and organised.

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

The child minder has systems in place to evaluate the service.

The child minder produced an annual review of the quality of care for 2018, which included parents and children's views. These were obtained using questionnaires and children's pictures all responses were very positive about the service. The document identified areas for improvement such as continuing to upgrade resources and attend courses. Improvements had been made such as having more activities for children outside and improving the nappy changing process.

Effective self-evaluation takes place and improvements made as a result.

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

The child minder manages her service and is organised.

The child minder took her professional development seriously and ensured courses were completed regularly such as food hygiene and first aid. The safeguarding of children was ensured as Disclosure and Barring Service checks for all in the household who are over 16 years of age were current. The child minder had attended courses to extend her knowledge of child development such as Autism Awareness and Behaviour Management.

The management of the service is very effective.

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

The child minder has good working relationships with parents.

The child minder had written information from parents about the care of their child which was up to date. Parents and the child minder exchanged information verbally about their child's day. Photos were sometimes sent to the parents showing them what their children had enjoyed. Parents were very happy and in the returned questionnaires, we read many positive comments. Parents had noticed that the children are picking up Welsh words and phrases and children had drawn pictures of their favourite activities. Parents liked the nurturing environment provided.

The child minder understands the importance of working with parents closely to ensure children's needs are met.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

To consider recording fire drills especially when new children begin to attend.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. An hour's notice was given to ensure the child minder's availability. One inspector visited the service on 6 February 2019 from 13.00 – 16.15.

We:

- Inspected a sample of documents and policies;
- observed practices and completed observations to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care being provided by practitioners;
- spoke to the children;
- inspected the areas used and
- reported our findings to the child minder.

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

[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Meriel Owen
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	0 – 12 years
Opening hours	Monday to Wednesday 08.00 – 18.00
Operating Language of the service	Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	26 November 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	06 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?	Yes This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. The child minder speaks Welsh fluently and some documents are available in Welsh but some policies are only available in English.
Additional Information:	