



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Sharon Gardner**

**Cardiff**



**Date Inspection Completed**

11/06/2019

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<b>Ratings</b>	<b>What the ratings mean</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	These are services which are committed to ongoing improvement with many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice and innovation. These services deliver high quality care and support and are able to demonstrate that they make a strong contribution to improving children's well-being
<b>Good</b>	These are services with strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. They consistently exceed basic requirements, delivering positive outcomes for children and actively promote their well-being.
<b>Adequate</b>	These are services where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. They are safe and meet basic requirements but improvements are required to promote well-being and improve outcomes for children.
<b>Poor</b>	These are services where important areas for improvement outweigh strengths and there are significant examples of non-compliance that impact negatively on children's well-being. Where services are poor we will take enforcement action and issue a non-compliance notice

## Description of the service

The child minder is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for eight children from birth to 12 years old. She operates from her home in Llandaff, Cardiff. Her hours of opening are 7:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday during term time. This is an English language service with the use of incidental Welsh.

## Summary

Theme	Rating
<a href="#">Well-being</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Care and Development</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Environment</a>	Good
<a href="#">Leadership and Management</a>	Good

### 1. Overall assessment

Children experience an excellent standard of care. They are very happy and their needs are at the centre of the service. They are confident to explore, express their feelings and ask for help. The child minder provides numerous activities that are engaging for children and behaviour is very well-managed. Children benefit from a safe, well organised environment that encourages them to make independent choices. Leadership and management of the service is good and the child minder's vast experience and motivation to continually improve her service shines through.

### 2. Improvements

There were no recommendations made at the previous inspection. The child minder is continually striving to deliver a high standard of care.

### 3. Requirements and recommendations

We did not identify any non-compliance at this inspection and there are no outstanding recommendations.

## 1. Well-being

Excellent

### Summary

Children experience a very high quality, nurturing service which gives them a solid foundation for their learning and development. There is a relaxed, happy and comfortable atmosphere within the home and children are able to express their views and opinions freely whilst having fun and learning.

### Our findings

Children are very confident to speak up and make their wishes known. They freely choose play activities and ask for resources they would like. Their preferences, needs and feelings are well understood by the child minder and children make appropriate choices because they are aware of the options available to them. We saw children approaching the child minder confidently for assistance and their wishes were valued. For example, when a child asked if they could use the playdough, the child minder said "Yes of course, well done for asking nicely. What colour would you like to start with?" Children receive consistent, nurturing care and therefore feel very safe, happy and valued. They were familiar with the routine of the day, which was arranged to meet their needs. We saw children going to the child minder for comfort and reassurance and strong bonds were evident. Some children attend the service with their siblings, which also gives them security. Children have also formed friendships with other children and have a strong sense of belonging. For example, children wanted to show us the personalised stickers that the child minder has had printed with their names and favourite character on.

Children interact and co-operate well with their peers and adults, and younger children are learning to express their needs. We heard children regularly saying please and thank you and they were consistently praised for positive behaviour or being kind. Children waited patiently for their lunch and were pleased with the praise they received for taking turns and being helpful. Any minor disputes were resolved gently and quickly, resulting in a calm and relaxed atmosphere.

Children are active, curious learners and have access to plenty of activities and resources which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Children played alone with a selection of toys and were very content. Equally, we saw them happily playing and interacting with the child minder. For example, the children were pretending to sleep and laughed excitedly while she tried to wake them up. The children then copied her by doing the same with their cuddly toys. We also saw children completely engrossed in an activity where the child minder used a real log from the garden to stick 'speckled frogs' on and count them, while they sang a song about the frogs. This became even more fun when a real spider crawled along the log. Younger children benefit from frequent visits to toddler

groups or play areas to help them learn to socialise, take turns and share with children of a similar age.

Children are developing their confidence and independence. They are consistently encouraged to do things for themselves, they take pride in doing so and are given time to carry out their chosen activities and discover how things work. We watched children attempting to tidy toys away when they had finished playing and feed themselves. Children undertake a variety of different play activities designed to develop different skills; they are able to extend their play because the child minder is always on hand to provide assistance.

## **2. Care and Development**

**Excellent**

### **Summary**

The child minder has an excellent understanding of the developmental needs of children in her care. Interactions are extremely well-managed and there are effective strategies in place to promote positive behaviour and keep children safe. The child minder offers a variety of opportunities which support the children to develop a valuable range of skills.

### **Our findings**

There are robust systems in place to promote the health and safety of children. The child minder understands her responsibility to safeguard children, to monitor any concerns and refer to the appropriate authority if necessary. It was clear that safeguarding children underpins the child minder's practice and she gave us examples to support this. Her safeguarding policy is comprehensive and she also understands and has a policy regarding the Prevent duty, a government strategy regarding extremism and radicalisation. We saw a sample of accident and incident records which were all signed by parents. The child minder has a current first aid certificate and has updated her food hygiene training. She promotes healthy lifestyles by providing nutritious snacks and we saw her sitting and eating with children to encourage social interaction and positive role modelling. Regular opportunities for children to wash hands are embedded into the daily routines and the child minder ensures that children have daily opportunities for physical activity, such as running freely outside or using ride-on toys.

The child minder manages interactions in a positive and pro-active way. She has a comprehensive behaviour management policy which sets out the strategies used to support children's social development and behaviour. This was actively followed by the child minder, who supported children using praise and encouragement. Children were clearly used to receiving consistent messages. For example, we heard one young child reminding another child that they would need to tidy up when they had finished playing, which the child minder reinforced by telling the children that they were being so helpful. The child minder has high expectations of the standards of behaviour and skilfully and reassuringly ensures children understand what is expected of them.

The child minder has a weekly plan of activities and often follows events on the calendar. However, she told us that their plans are very much led by children's wishes, needs and interests as they develop. We saw evidence of a wide variety of activities undertaken which offer learning opportunities. For example, visits to places of interest, crafts, toddler groups, parks and marking a variety of celebrations. During a play dough activity, the child minder noticed that a child was losing interest. She asked the child if they would like the drum kit

out instead; as soon as they were given the drums and sticks, they became animated and it was clear that the child minder knows children's interests well. Foundation Phase 'flower charts' are used to track development and the child minder also keeps portfolios of children's memories and progress for each pre-school child. Daily diaries for young children are also used to support communication between the service and parents. The child minder described how she communicates with parents throughout the day by text/social media messages, which parents confirmed. Incidental Welsh was used during the inspection.



### **3. Environment**

**Good**

#### **Summary**

The child minder's home is safe, clean and well-decorated. Children have use of a designated play room, kitchen/diner, and downstairs cloakroom. Children also benefit from regularly accessing a well-maintained garden. Both indoors and outdoors are well resourced. Good attention is given to safety and security; the child minder ensures that children are well supervised at all times.

#### **Our findings**

The child minder is committed to providing a secure environment and she is fully aware of her responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of children. The environment is safe; the front door was kept locked throughout the visit, registers for children's attendance including times of arrival and departure were kept, as well as a record of visitors. We found that her home was well-maintained and all resources were in good working order. Appropriate car and public liability insurance was in place as required, as well as a gas safety check for the boiler. Fire evacuation drills and alarm tests are completed each month and appropriately documented. Suitable risk assessments are also in place and kept under review. The child minder's home is child friendly, warm and welcoming. The well-equipped playroom had been professionally decorated to be inviting to children and the room added to the children's sense of belonging at the service. The garden is easily accessible from the house and the outside shed is filled with resources for children to play with, such as ride on toys and games. The child minder has suitable chairs to allow children to eat meals together. There was also a highchair and a small table and chairs available for younger children. The home benefits from good natural light and the storage for resources is at a suitable height for most children to access independently. Resources and toys are well organised. The downstairs cloakroom is clean and fresh and children have use of a stool to reach the sink and a toilet training seat if required. Individual cloths are used to reduce the risk of cross contamination after hand washing. Children of varying ages have access to a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources, both indoors and outdoors. Indoors, we saw children enjoy playing with age appropriate toys which promote their all-round development, including sensory toys, pushchairs, a toy kitchen and books. The child minder told us that she regularly cleans the toys and immediately discards anything that is broken. Activities provide very good opportunities to develop children's skills whilst maintaining a homely environment.

## 4. Leadership and Management

**Good**

### Summary

The child minder manages her service well. She is motivated, competent and open to new developments as a means of promoting positive outcomes to children and their families. Partnerships with parents are very strong.

### Our findings

The child minder's vision for the service is shared in her statement of purpose. We found that it contained the required information but it needed updating slightly to reflect the role of CIW in complaints. This was done immediately. A variety of relevant policies and procedures for the service are in place and following our visit, the child minder developed a review sheet to help keep her organised when she reviews documents. We saw that parents are provided with information prior to their children starting, to enable them to make an informed choice about using the service. The child minder has a good understanding of current best practice relevant to the children in her care. We looked at a sample of records including children's contracts, which contained good quality information. Discussions with the child minder showed that she uses CIW website and her umbrella support group if she has any queries and to keep up to date with changes.

The child minder is reflective; she seeks feedback on her own practice and understands the importance of effective evaluation and planning for improvement. She consistently completes an annual review of her service which includes feedback from parents and children. We saw numerous 'thank you' cards from parents which included comments such as "Words cannot express our gratitude for the love, patience and support you have given us!" A complaints policy is in place, although no complaints have been received. This has since been updated to clarify the role of CIW in complaints.

The service is managed successfully. The child minder maintains orderly records of her qualifications, training and DBS certificates for herself and her husband. Documentation and records gathered at the time children are registered help her to plan her service well. The child minder does not employ an assistant. She told us that she has an emergency back-up plan in place with another child minder in case of an emergency or unforeseen situation. The child minder also has a good network of support with other local child minders; they meet regularly for children to play and they share good practice between them. The child minder manages her time well and plans around the children's needs.

Partnerships with parents are mutually respectful and effective. Parents are provided with relevant information needed to make informed choices about the care of their children. The child minder works well with parents to tailor settling in arrangements to children's and

parents' needs and speaks with them daily to ensure their needs continue to be met. Parents we spoke with gave positive feedback, such as saying that the child minder "Is perfectly on board with the needs of my child", "I don't have enough good words to say about her" and "She is always outstanding. She's been consistently at that high level. There should be more Sharon's in the world." Parents also confirmed that the child minder gives them plenty of reassurance daily about their children's welfare so that they are completely reassured.

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

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

None.

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

There are no outstanding recommendations.

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

This was a full inspection, undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections:

- One inspector completed one visit to the service; the inspection was unannounced, although the child minder's availability had been established in advance. In total we spent approximately five and a half hours at the service;
- we observed the children's play and daily routines;
- we observed children's engagement and interactions with their peers and the child minder;
- we reviewed information held by CIW;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the premises;
- we spoke to children throughout the day and four parents;
- we looked at a range of records including children's contracts, the statement of purpose, several policies and procedures, accidents/incidents records, fire drills and
- we provided feedback to the child minder by telephone following the inspection.

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	Sharon Gardner
Registered maximum number of places	Eight
Age range of children	Birth to 12 years
Opening hours	7:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday during term time
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	15 October 2015
Date of this inspection visit	11 June 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. 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: None.	

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