



Childcare Inspection Report on

Sarah Bridgeman

Cardiff



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Description of the service

The child minder is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to 10 children under the age of 12 years. She is a well-established child minder who operates her business from the family home in Thornhill, Cardiff which she shares with her husband and adult son. The service runs Monday to Friday from 6.30am to 5.30pm and is provided through the English language.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children enjoy attending this service and they are relaxed and comfortable in the child minder's home. They are encouraged to lead active lifestyles, walking instead of using the car and eating healthy snacks. The child minder is responsive to their needs and provides a variety of activities for them, including frequent trips out. The children benefit from a clean and well-maintained environment with plenty of resources. Feedback from parents indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service. We made some recommendations in respect of the child minder's administration of her service.

2. Improvements

The child minder has achieved the areas highlighted during the last inspection. These were acquiring a copy of The Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 and the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Day Care from April 2016 and attending a Food Safety training course.

3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no non-compliance issues identified at this inspection. We made some best practice recommendations during the inspection which are summarised in section 5.2 towards the end of the report.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children are able to make choices and are encouraged to express themselves. There is a relaxed atmosphere within the home and children have good play opportunities to help them progress and have fun. Their individual needs are met by a child minder who makes efforts to provide a solid foundation for their learning and development and to keep them safe.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children speak or express themselves well and can communicate their needs in a variety of ways. We saw that the child minder understood their preferences and needs and this took precedence over the daily routine. Children approached the child minder confidently to chat or to ask for comfort. The child minder encouraged children to choose what they wanted to play with and they were familiar with the choices available. Children we spoke with told us they are regularly asked what they are interested in and what they would like to do next. Children were listened to attentively and given time to respond verbally or non-verbally to make their wishes known.

Children's right to express themselves freely and make independence choices is encouraged by the child minder.

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

Children feel safe, happy and valued as they receive consistent, nurturing care. We saw that they were familiar with the environment and with routines, which helped them feel content and happy. For example, they knew when it was time to go to the kitchen for a snack or to put their shoes on before going outside. Strong bonds were evident and children felt valued as they were listened to and their opinions were respected by the child minder. A parent we spoke with told us that knowing that their child is safe and happy gives them "Complete peace of mind".

Children feel safe and happy with a child minder they have a positive relationship with, in an environment they are familiar with.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are at ease with one another and have formed close friendships. Children were positively interacting with other children, the child minder and us. They showed us what they were doing and wanted us to see their toys. Younger children were beginning to consider others feelings and with a little support they were sharing and

taking turns, such as when choosing books. We noted a relaxed atmosphere with co-operative children. The children have developed good social skills according to their age and stage of development.

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 enjoy and are engaged in their play and can also relax during quieter times. They have access to plenty of activities and resources which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Throughout the visit there was a balance of both self directed and adult directed play available for the children to choose from. Children at times played alone with a selection of toys and were content. Equally, we saw them happily playing and interacting with the child minder. The younger children benefit from regular visits to toddler groups, the library or play areas to help them learn to socialise, take turns and share with children of a similar age.

Children enjoy a range of play and learning experiences and benefit from accessing community facilities regularly.

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

Children engage in appropriate learning activities and enjoy their experiences. They choose from a range of activities and were eager to use their imagination. For example, a young child made us 'cups of tea and cake' in their 'café' and talked about what they like to eat. We also saw young children listen intently as the child minder explained why she was chopping up an apple for them to eat. We saw photographs of children engaged in various activities, such as baking Easter cakes, bark stencilling and making lady birds. Children focused on specific tasks, such as listening to a story, making sounds of the animals they saw in the book and answering questions. A parent told us about the different experiences their children have, such as attending a sports day organised by the child minder and her colleagues.

Children enjoy the range of play and learning opportunities available to them.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is nurturing, she enjoys her work and has many years of experience in this field. She has established suitable systems and procedures in order to offer a beneficial service to children in her care. The child minder knows children well and supports them in their day to day activities, to help them to reach their full potential. Some improvements are required to develop incidental Welsh, planning documentation and development tracking.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder understands her responsibilities in respect of keeping children safe and healthy. She demonstrated a sufficient knowledge of the signs of abuse and neglect, the procedure to record and where to seek advice if she has concerns. We saw a child protection policy which included relevant telephone numbers and reference to the Prevent Duty. This is a government strategy to help identify children who may be drawn into extremism and radicalisation. The child minder implements good practice in relation to healthy lifestyles and snacks (parents provide their children with meals) to improve outcomes for children. For example, she ensures the children are physically active daily and fresh fruit is always available. The child minder has a current first aid qualification and a first aid kit is kept replenished in the home. The child minder has booked a place on a course to renew her First Aid training before it expires in November 2018. We saw that children are provided with paper towels to dry their hands, to reduce the risk of cross contamination. A medication policy is in place and we noted that medication is only given with prior written permission from parents.

The child minder keeps children safe and healthy as a result of her knowledge and the systems she has in place.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder models good behaviour by being polite and respectful to children and working in line with her behaviour management policy. We observed her using soft tones, listening to the children and using positive language appropriate to individual children. We saw that the child minder interacted well with the children and encouraged them to cooperate with each other. She was involved in the children's play which helped teach the children to behave appropriately and consider the feelings of others. For example, when two children both wanted to be on her lap, she encouraged them to be kind and reassured them that they were both important to her and would have a turn each. Our discussions also indicated that she considered the age, developmental stage and learning needs of children and understood that these factors can affect children's behaviour. We heard the child minder praising children for

good manners and behaviour and she gently ensured children understood what was expected of them.

Children benefit from a child minder who is a good role model and supports their social development through positive reinforcement.

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

The child minder plans for and provides a suitable 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. The child minder told us that she gives parents a daily verbal update and completes a daily diary which is used as a communication aid with parents. We saw that the child minder tends to plan activities for the children in line with events on the calendar, such as St David's Day and Halloween. However, as she has recently devised a new system to document planning, we were unable to see how this works in practice on this occasion. She also told us that she plans to record children's development by using journals. There was a large emphasis on free play and doing things she knows different children like. Children have opportunities to explore diversity and other cultures by having access to multicultural toys and resources and by celebrating a variety of cultural events such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. We did not hear any incidental Welsh is used during the inspection, but the child minder indicated that she is keen to implement some basic Welsh words and phrases.

The child minder has a good understanding of children's needs but there is scope for development in terms of planning and development tracking.

3. Environment

Summary

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

Our findings

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

The child minder is committed to providing a safe environment for children and she is fully aware of her responsibility in relation to the safety and welfare of children. We found that her home is well maintained and all resources were in good working order. The security of the premises is well maintained. The front door was kept locked throughout the visit, a record of visitors was maintained and registers for children's attendance were kept in a daily diary. Appropriate insurance for the home and car was in place and an annual gas safety check had been undertaken as required. We saw that accidents and incidents are recorded and a template is in place for pre-existing injuries should this be required. Fire evacuation drills had taken place and were recorded, although some essential information was not included. The child minder completes a general risk assessment checklist of the home every month and she told us that she also carries out a daily visual check to ensure play areas are safe. A written risk assessment was also in place; however, it was unclear when it was last reviewed. We accompanied the child minder on foot during a school run and saw how she effectively manages risk in practice, for example, asking a child to walk on the inside of the pavement and stay close, although a risk assessment for this or for outings was not recorded.

The child minder is safety conscious and has some appropriate systems in place to promote children's safety. Risk assessment documentation needs further consideration.

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 stored in an under stairs cupboard and a selection is brought out each day. The child minder told us that she asks children what they would like out and ensures they have plenty to choose from. Children have use of the lounge, kitchen/diner, garden and an upstairs bathroom. The garden is accessed via the kitchen/diner, which is a secure and private space for the children to play in if they choose. There is a large dining table in the kitchen for children to enjoy craft and messy play and eat their meals and snacks together.

The child minder provides an environment which is suitable, clean and safe for children's needs.

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

Children of varying ages have access to a range of good quality, developmentally appropriate play and learning resources. These are plentiful to ensure children have variety and choice. Resources included musical toys, role play items, cars/trains, arts and craft materials, dolls, pushchairs, tents and a play kitchen. We also saw photographic evidence of a number of creative activities undertaken using a wide selection of different crafts and materials. We noted that all resources were well maintained. The child minder told us that she regularly cleans the toys and immediately discards anything that is broken.

The child minder ensures there are good quality resources and equipment available that support and encourage the children's skills and development.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder has policies and processes in place to help her operate her business and she is motivated and experienced. She reviews her service and has evidence of self-evaluation to improve outcomes for children. Partnerships with parents are very strong.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has a vision for the service and this is shared in her statement of purpose, which contained the required information. A variety of relevant policies and procedures for the service are in place, although we did not see a settling in policy. 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. Not all documentation was clearly dated so it was not possible to confirm when they were last reviewed. 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 relevant information. The child minder was aware of new data protection legislation and had registered with the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to storing personal data.

The child minder delivers a consistent standard of care to children and has systems and procedures in place to support her to run her business.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder is reflective; she seeks feedback on her own practice and understands the importance of evaluation and planning for improvement. She has completed an annual review of her service and explained to us how she gathers children's views on an ongoing basis to improve her service; however, this good practice was not evidenced fully in the report. The child minder routinely seeks feedback from parents. We saw questionnaires completed by parents and a number of 'thank you' cards from families she has worked with. One parent wrote "You exceeded our expectations. I would choose you again in a heartbeat." The child minder told us that she likes to chat to parents on a day-to-day basis to ensure they feel welcome. Parents confirmed this, telling us that the child minder gives them plenty of reassurance about their children's welfare. A complaints policy is in place, although no complaints have been received.

The child minder consistently evaluates her business to ensure that children experience an improving service. This could be more fully evidenced.

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

The child minder manages her time and service effectively to ensure that it runs smoothly.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnerships with parents are mutually respectful and effective. The child minder speaks to parents daily and has an informal settling in policy which is tailored to individual needs. She told us that she benefits from a good network of fellow local child minders who offer support to each other. We saw evidence that they meet regularly for children to socialise, celebrate events on the calendar and they share ideas and good practices with each other. Parents receive regular verbal feedback and ongoing updates about their children from the child minder.

The child minder understands the importance of working in partnership to ensure that children experience the support required to meet their individual needs.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

The following best practice recommendations were discussed:

- Embed planning system and progress development tracking;
- document a separate risk assessment for school transport and outings;
- expand details and views of parents and children in the quality of care review report;
- expand details in fire drill records;
- document a settling in policy;
- date all documentation to evidence that reviews are undertaken and
- develop the use of incidental Welsh.

6. How we undertook this inspection

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

- One inspector completed one unannounced visit to the service for approximately four and a half hours, to observe children and the care they receive;
- observations were carried out indoors to capture evidence of children's engagement and the care provided;
- we reviewed information held by CIW, including SASS parts one and two;
- we undertook a visual inspection of the areas used for minding;
- we accompanied the child minder on foot during a school run;
- we spoke to all children present and three parents;
- we looked at a range of records including children's records, statement of purpose, some policies and procedures, accidents and incidents records, attendance registers 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

7. About the service

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| Type of care provided | Child Minder |
| Registered Person | Sarah Bridgeman |
| Registered maximum number of places | 10 |
| Age range of children | Under 12 years |
| Opening hours | 6:30am – 5:30pm |
| Operating Language of the service | English |
| Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 17 November 2014 |
| Dates of this inspection visit(s) | 19 September 2018 and telephone feedback on 25 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: None | |