



Childcare Inspection Report on

Tracey Frost

Meifod



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Description of the service

Tracy Frost operates a child minding service from her family home in the village of Meifod in the county of Powys. She is registered to care for a maximum of 10 children under 12 years of age. She employs two assistants. When working alongside the assistants, the maximum number of children to be looked after must also, not exceed 10. The service is mainly provided through English, however care is also offered through the medium of Welsh, providing choice, depending on the first language of the children. The service is currently not working towards the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children are happy, well cared for and have their needs met at this service. The child minder and assistants are enthusiastic and passionate about delivering quality child care to children from the local community. The children are provided with a secure foundation for their learning and development. The indoor environment offers a range of opportunities for children to be creative, play and learn. The rear garden and visits in the local area provides children with daily opportunities to benefit from fresh air and develop their physical skills. The child minder is committed, well organised and manages her service well. There are very good communication systems in place with parents, who are extremely satisfied with the service provided.

2. Improvements

The service actively participates in events in Meifod as a community, for example, since the last inspection they won 'best hanging basket made by pre-school children', 'most points gained for crafts' and first prize for the 'best pre-school float. Improvements had also been made in relation to record keeping, reviewing policies and procedures, and completing children's individual records, in particular their learning journals.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The service is compliant with the Child Minding and Day Care Regulations (Wales) 2010 (regulations) so there were no requirements made at this inspection.

We have made recommendations in relation to enhancing children's wellbeing, elements of the environment and some record keeping.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children's well-being is promoted; they enjoy their time with the child minder and her assistants. They are able to forge strong bonds with the child minder and friendships with each other, enabling them to feel comfortable and secure. The child minder and assistants know the children very well and their attempts to communicate with them are well understood; as a result they receive warm, responsive and attentive care. They enjoy a good range of inspiring activities both from the home and out and about in the local community.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are confident communicators.

We saw across the age range of the nine children present, on both inspection visits, children were confident to make requests as they knew they would be listened to. They were listened to attentively by the child minder and her assistants; their different ways of expressing their needs were valued. For example, three of the younger children indicated in their way that they wanted to go outside. The child minder understood their request and happily took them out to explore the broad range of outdoor resources. We saw two other children upon seeing the fun being had, confidently moved from the play room into the rear garden, choosing where to play. The child minder chatted with the children and helped them make decisions about what they wanted to do, whilst giving suggestions for activities she knew they would like. She followed their lead and facilitated their play. One of the assistants responded to a child who preferred to stay indoors to concentrate on finishing their craft activity. Another assistant also responded to three older children who asked to play in the new outdoor space at the front of the premises which had a mud kitchen and slide.

Children are listened to and receive good responsive care which gives them confidence and encouragement to speak up.

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

Children are secure, settled and relaxed with the child minder and her assistants. They approach them with ease and are reassured with care and affection.

We saw children, many of which had been in the care of this child minder since they were babies, had forged strong bonds of attachment with her and were very happy. They approached her easily for reassurance and enjoyed lots of individual attention, smiles and cuddles. They had also developed a very good relationship with the child minder assistants

and enjoyed involving them in their play. Children were praised and spoken to with positive language in their home language; this gave them a sense of security. Children were familiar with the daily routine both in a term time day and in a slightly more flexible day during the school holiday, we saw that were settled and content as a result. One parent commented in their CIW questionnaire; “ *My (child) loves going to Tracy, her and her team care for my child as if he was one of their own*”. Another parent commented. “ *My (child) has been coming to Tracy and her staff for 8 years, the peace of mind I get knowing the high quality, safe and secure care she receives is worth such a lot, superb place and fantastic staff*”.

Children are provided with positive care enabling them to feel safe, happy and valued.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children are learning about their own feelings and those of others.

Children played happily together and alongside each other. They showed affection for each other, the child minder and her assistants. Lots of cuddles, hugs and kisses were seen. They cooperated well with the child minder’s occasional requests to, for example, be gentle with others and take turns with the toys. During craft work, children shared the coloured bendy straws and play dough, to make their individual spiders. One child proudly showed us they could use scissors, and offered to help one of their friends. Children played appropriately with the resources and enjoyed social occasions such as morning snack, lunch time and high tea. There was a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Parent questionnaires show that they feel their child interacts well with others.

Children interact positively with each other in line with their age and stage of development and respond well to the child minder.

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

Children are curious and excited by the play based activities and themes available to them.

During both visits children were excited about the activities planned for them, telling and showing us the range of Halloween themed crafts they created, this included decorative bunting, spider hats, and extraordinarily carved pumpkins complete with spaghetti hair, which they had helped to prepare and had been cooked and dyed with food colouring. The ‘touch tray’ provided a sensory experiences as children had to touch and feel the whole parts of the pumpkin such as the seeds and flesh. We saw toddlers enthusiastically squishing the various elements. One child became silent and concentrated as they heard a bird of prey in the distance; the child minder asked the child would they like to go to the woods soon to leave the food for the birds and wild animals to eat. They all cheered. Children then invited us to look at photographs of their visits to the woods which involved a variety of activities around their Winnie the pooh, theme, they played pooh sticks and ate ‘honey butties’ they had made for a snack. The child minder fondly recalled that ‘they

couldn't resist eating the butties before they got there". Children confirmed they had collected leaves, acorns and pine cones for their autumn display. We saw all of the children were very engaged in their play and spent time on their activities in line with their age and stage of development. One child asked for their favourite story in Welsh, other children enjoyed singing nursery rhymes, a baby bobbed about to the rhythm. The child minder told us how the children sometimes enjoyed visiting cafes and shops and the learning opportunities these experiences brought.

Children enjoy their learning through varied, very interesting and age appropriate play opportunities.

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

Children's all round development is promoted.

Children were given a multitude of opportunities to develop independence and learn new skills. For example, they put on their own aprons to paint and coats to play outside with limited support. They were confident and happy to play on their own and self direct their play. We saw a child in the home corner with a selection of cooking utensils and imaginary food items carefully choosing what to make for dinner. Another child was seen filling a jug with pumpkin seeds to feed the birds. The activities provided and the interactions they enjoyed engaged the children and promoted their learning. They were helped to develop their independence through activities appropriate to their age and stage of development as well as for routine tasks. For example, several children were able to access the toilet with limited support, a foot pedestal was in place for them to reach the sink and wash their hands. The child helper of the day set the table and handed out drinks. Children could access fresh water from their drink bottles independently and could easily help themselves to the resources. After play they knew the routine, we saw all children helped to tidy up.

Children are being provided with a appropriate learning opportunities to develop their independence.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder is aware of how to keep children safe as she has a good understanding of her policies and procedures and has attended relevant training. The child minder promotes healthy practices. She and her assistants manage interactions with considerable patience and kindness. Activity planning is individually tailored to children's needs and development; this enhances children's learning through inspiring play experiences.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder has a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy.

The child minder is highly committed and understands her role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and promoting healthy life styles. Safeguarding training has been attended by the child minder and one of the assistants, the child minder confirmed that the second, recently appointed assistant, is booked on the next available course. However, in the meantime during her induction, safeguarding and health and safety matters had been covered. This was confirmed when we also spoke to the assistants about safeguarding, they told us the correct procedure they would follow if they were concerned about a child in their care. The child minder is confident regarding the procedure for recording and reporting any concerns about children's welfare. She had completed training on the Government's 'Prevent Strategy' which is recent legislation designed to protect children from radical and extremist views. As we arrived we removed our outdoor shoes and kept them off during both visits, the child minder said this was unnecessary despite crawling babies around the premises. In order to protect the health of babies we recommended that the child minder considers implementing a policy and procedure to ensure outdoor shoes are not worn in areas used by crawling babies. We also saw the procedure for nappy changing during the first visit and noted this was not fully in line with the Public Health Wales (2014). We recommended that the child minder review the nappy changing procedure with her assistants in order to reduce the risk of cross infection and respect the dignity and privacy of the child. When we saw the nappy changing procedure during the second visit this fully met requirements. Food hygiene training has been attended and from our discussion we could see that the child minder follows appropriate procedures for preparing and storing food and keeping the kitchen area clean.

The child minder is aware of the appropriate procedures for administering medication and suitable forms to record medication were completed appropriately. Paediatric first aid training is up to date, and the child minder and one of her assistants had also attended various health related courses. The child minder told us that she ensures the children benefit from physical play and we saw children being active outdoors in the fresh air during both visits. Children confirmed that they are able to enjoy going outside when they want to. We could see from their daily diaries and activity planning that they often go out for local walks in the surrounding countryside and they can enjoy playing in the garden and visiting

the local park. Regular fire drills had been conducted and recorded to help children and one of the assistants know what to do if they had to leave the premises in an emergency. However, we recommended that the recently appointed assistant and new children to the service should at the earliest opportunity, participate in a fire drill. By the second visit it was confirmed that this had taken place. From our discussion and review of relevant policies it was clear that she follows appropriate procedures when out and about with the children and trips are risk assessed.

The child minder and her assistants are consistently keeping children safe and are dedicated to improve outcomes for children.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder manages interactions with sensitivity and kindness.

The child minder and her assistants were good role models. They had a patient, calm and gentle manner with the children which promoted positive behaviour through appropriate strategies. They spoke gently, clearly and patiently with each child and used distraction to good effect. There was a relaxed and happy atmosphere throughout the visits. We heard lots of praise and encouragement; children received very good levels of individual attention. The child minder and assistants helped them to engage with each other and we could see they enjoyed each others company. They were also given space to play alone if they wished.

The child minder uses her knowledge successfully to promote positive interactions and provides care which enables children to develop their social skills and consider the feelings of others.

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

The child minder has a good understanding of children's individual needs and promotes their development and meets their needs in a timely manner.

The child minder demonstrated a sound understanding of the Foundation Phase principles, planning themes which interested the children and which provided them with the opportunities to work towards their developmental outcomes. We sampled five children's individual learning journals which detailed up to date observations of children's development. These records outlined their progress towards the intended outcomes and even included a photographic keepsake for their parents, of their child's progress through play and learning activities. We recommended for children under 2 that the child minder completes a written daily communication book, as all daily feedback is currently verbal. We observed the child minder and assistants enthusiastically delivered a stimulating range of activities during the visits, whilst also giving very supportive care to promote children's

development and all round confidence. The child minder and assistant followed the children's lead and extended their play through skilful support. We heard them chatting with the children, using appropriate language to help children develop their learning. The child minder used incidental Welsh with the children to promote their understanding of the Welsh language, one of the assistants who is Welsh first language conversed fluently with children in their home language, we observed children enjoying some quite time being read to in Welsh and English.

The child minder successfully promotes children's development and has the skills and knowledge to meet their individual needs.

3. Environment

Summary

Children benefit from a child centred and welcoming environment. There is a very good range of quality and suitable play resources which meet their interests and promotes their development. Overall, the home is safe and suitable for children, however on the first inspection visit we observed the child minder did not ensure potential unnecessary risks to children had been identified as the main entrance to the premises was not secure.

Our findings

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

Overall, the child minder ensures that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. We saw comprehensive written risk assessments for the home and garden showing that hazards had been considered and how to mitigate risks. Safety measures were in place such as safety gates from the dining area / kitchen to the stairs. However, during the first visit we observed that the front door was not kept locked, which potentially prevented children exiting the premises unsupervised and eliminating the risk of unauthorised persons entering. We brought this to the immediate attention of the child minder and recommended that the child minder ensures the front door is kept locked and the key fixed to the wall so there is no risk of children leaving the premises. The child minder took immediate action and locked the door. During the second visit we observed this procedure was met including the key hung out of the reach of children and a doorbell had been fitted.

We saw that written procedures are maintained to respond to an emergency or fire and our discussion with the child minder showed that she is clear of what she would do if such an event were to occur. However, it was evident that the newly appointed assistant and some children had not had the opportunity to participate in a fire evacuation drill. There were records of general maintenance being carried out, including the gas boiler check. The back garden is safe and secure.

In the main, the child minder implements suitable measures to ensure her home is safe.

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

The child minder provides children with sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.

The child minder ensured that her home and garden was well maintained and provides a comfortable, clean and welcoming space for the children. Child minding mainly takes place on the ground floor, children play in the main playroom and kitchen / dining room. Children could access the toilet and hand washing facility independently. The family sitting room is used by school age children to have quiet time to relax and complete homework. Sleeping children use an upstairs bedroom with a travel cot and individual bedding. The playroom environment is particularly child centred, furniture was appropriately sized and of good

quality and suitable for their age and stage of development. The entrance hall has personalised coat pegs and room for children to hang their belongings. There is a self registration sticky backed strip with children's individual photographs which helped them have a sense of belonging; an informative notice board for parents was displayed. In the main playroom, books in English and Welsh were attractively displayed and accessible, we saw children helped themselves to picture books and could look at these as they relaxed on the sofa or floor cushions. Toys were within their reach on low level storage, they had pictures and words to help children recognise the contents so they could easily find the resources they wished to play with. From the playroom, there is easy access to the garden which provides a safe area for them to play.

The environment is child centred and homely so children feel secure and have a sense of belonging.

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

The child minder ensures that children have access to a good range of resources and equipment that are of high quality and suitable to their age and stage of development.

Resources and toys were of good quality and suitable for the age and development of the children. The toys and resources also included a range of natural based resources to help children practice using their senses. We saw an extensive record of visits in the countryside of their local community which significantly promoted children's learning and sense of fun. Current themes were displayed along with the craft making items children had created. The child minder told us she rotates the toys to maintain children's interest and regularly invests in new resources as their interests change. Equipment such as highchairs and pushchairs were of good quality and suitable for the ages of children attending.

The child minder invests in good quality resources which meet the needs and interests of the children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder manages her service appropriately; she is motivated and keen to provide a service which benefits the children in her care. Overall, paperwork is well organised and parents can be clear about how the service operates. They are kept well informed about their child's progress, achievements and daily activities.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder manages her service appropriately.

The child minder has ensured detailed and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place, they were reviewed and current, and are shared with parents. The statement of purpose is shared with parents and overall gives an accurate picture of the service. There are plans for the child minder assistant's to work alone on occasions, this is permissible. However, we did recommend that additional information is included in the statement of purpose regarding times when her assistants would be working alone with the children, for example when attending local play groups, on school drops off and collections, and when using the newly acquired play space to the front of the premises.

The safeguarding policy was suitable and outlined the steps to be taken if the child minder or her assistants were concerned about a child in their care. The policy included the contact numbers for the local authority and safeguarding team. Contracts are discussed and shared with parents and very clearly set out the expectations of both parties, and permissions are sought for activities such as taking photographs and seeking emergency medical treatment. The operational plan shows the service is well organised and includes plans to develop the service.

The service is well organised and managed effectively.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder has a system in place to review her service.

An annual written review for parents was available which included the views of parents and those of the children. A complaints procedure is in place; the child minder has not personally received any complaints about her service.

The child minder has evaluated her service and implements improvements to ensure she continues to provide a very good service to help secure better outcomes for children.

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

The child minder manages resources appropriately.

The child minder has many years experience working with young children. One of her assistants has extensive experience in the care and education of young children and holds a Level 3 qualification in child care and development. The child minder and one assistant had a current qualification in first aid which was appropriate for the age of children being cared for. We viewed the staff file for her two assistants, the files evidenced they contained all the required information to meet compliance. For the longer standing assistant, this included a formal appraisal and regular supervision. An induction process had been undertaken for the newly appointed assistant and she was booked on the next available first aid and safeguarding training. The child minder had ensured that she, her husband and daughter over the age of 16 and her assistants have up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates. Registers show that she operates within the conditions of her registration. This allows her to care for a maximum of ten children. There are suitable contingency plans in place in the event of an emergency, which are shared with parents, and we could see that the child minder has good systems in place to give parents ample notice of plans such as annual leave.

The child minder has effective systems in place to ensure a safe and reliable service to parents.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder has positive partnerships with parents and engages well within the local community.

We spoke to six parents, they told us how happy they were with the care provided by the child minder and confirmed they felt communication is very good and they are kept well informed of their child's progress.

We subsequently received eight detailed CIW parent questionnaires, these gave comprehensive information about all aspects of the service and unanimously confirmed they had complete satisfaction about how their children are being cared for and that their well being is promoted. Our discussions and records show that each child's needs, likes and dislikes are understood before they start at the service and records of each child's personal details, such as health needs and allergies are kept. Detailed daily diaries, photographs and discussion with parents are used to share information with them about their child's day and the activities they have enjoyed.

There are very good communication systems in place with parents and the child minder understands the importance of working in close partnership with them to promote children's well being and development.

The child minder has built positive partnerships with parents and the local community to secure outcomes for children.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- All areas of the environment are secure at all times to avoid children exiting the premises unsupervised and to eliminate the risk of unauthorised persons entering;

- when working with an assistant:
 1. parents need to be informed,
 2. the Statement of purpose must include the following information,
 - a) details about the assistant, checks undertaken and qualifications / experience etc,
 - b) description of roles and responsibilities,
 - c) details of the types of activities where children will be left alone with an assistant,
 - d) explanation as to the numbers of children allowed with the assistant – refer to National Minimum Standard 15,
 - e) assistants, if left alone must have a relevant first aid qualification;

It is also recommended that parents sign an agreement that assistants can be left alone with their children, her insurance company is informed, and valid care insurance is in place should the assistants transport the children.

- complete the All Wales Infection Control Audit and apply the findings of this audit including the recommended nappy changing guidance;

- consider implementing a policy and procedure for ensuring no outdoor shoes are worn in areas used by young babies;

- complete a daily record/communication book for children under 2 years;

- complete a daily child minding diary to record the days events such as food served, activities and outings.

- ensure that all new children and assistants experience a fire evacuation drill at the onset of joining the service .

6. How we undertook this inspection

We undertook a full unannounced inspection as a result of an anonymous concern.

One inspector visited the service on Monday 15 October 2018 between the hours of 14:00 – 16:45. The same inspector conducted a further semi announced visit on Wednesday 31 October 2018 between the hours of 12:00 – 15:30.

We:

- Inspected a sample of documentation, policies, two child minding assistant files, and five children's records;
- observed practice;
- inspected the areas used, toys and resources;
- spoke to the children, six parents, the child minder and two child minding assistants, and
- provided feedback to the child minder.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Tracey Frost
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Opening hours	7:00 am – 18:00pm Monday - Friday
Operating Language of the service	English and Welsh
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	12 July 2018
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	15 October 2018 and 22 October 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?	No. This is a service that partially offers a bilingual service but it is not working towards providing an 'Active offer' of the Welsh language.
Additional Information:	