



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Claire Jones**

**Mountain Ash**



**Date Inspection Completed**

17/09/2019

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## **Description of the service**

Claire Jones is registered to provide a child minding service for up to six children under the age of 12 years from the family home in Mountain Ash, which she shares with her family. Her husband is her assistant. The service known as 'Claire's Cubs Child Minding Service' offers flexible care options including part time and wrap around provision, Monday to Friday, all year around. It is an English speaking service with incidental Welsh introduced through play. The family have a pet dog.

## **Summary**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children are happy and settled in a 'home from home' environment. They have a positive relationship with the child minder and enjoy their play opportunities. The child minder plans for a good range of play and learning experiences and identifies children's learning needs to support their development. The environment is suitable overall, providing children with an inviting indoor area for play and learning, but attention is required in relation to the outside space. Leadership is effective with good systems in place to support the smooth running of the service.

### **2. Improvements**

Records of accidents include parent signatures and the child protection policy has been up dated to include information on Prevent. The child minder is undertaking a Level 5 childcare qualification to improve her knowledge.

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

We have made recommendations under the care and development, environment and leadership themes. These are outlined in the report and summarised in section 5.2

# 1. Well-being

Good

## Summary

Children are settled and comfortable in a home environment that is familiar to them. They have a positive relationship with the child minder and gain pleasure in the play opportunities available to them.

## Our findings

Children are able to speak up and make their needs known. They are able to make independent choices around what they want to do in relation to their play activities. The children present had emerging language skills, but they were able to express themselves using basic language and gestures. They spoke up confidently when asked if they would like second helpings at snack time, which was promptly actioned by the child minder, and made their wishes known in relation to their play choices.

Children are happy and comfortable in the care of the child minder. They are familiar with the home environment and explore with confidence. A child coped well when they woke up from a sleep and responded positively to soothing words and reassurance from the child minder, cuddling up to her before playing. They explored the living room, picking out resources of their choice, moving from one activity to another with ease. We heard children babbling to themselves when playing and chatting happily to the child minder.

Children are beginning to understand the needs of others and interact appropriately with their peers in line with their age and stage of development. Children present during our inspection were very young so sharing, turn taking and co-operating are emerging skills. We found that they played well alongside each other, showed respect for the toys they were playing with and sat appropriately at the table to eat their snack. During table - top activities they shared play dough and a child showed good manners saying 'ta' to the child minder when given more fruit.

Children benefit from a good selection of play and learning activities and enjoy the opportunities they have to play alone and alongside the child minder. A child enjoyed playing with conkers, picking the conkers up and handing them to the child minder. They enjoyed putting together wooden sections to make a cake and placing candles on and off the cake pieces. During an activity with play dough, they enjoyed manipulating the dough and smelling its scent.

Children are developing their independence in line with their stage of development and have opportunities to practice their skills. We saw children exploring their environment with confidence and choosing resources independently of the child minder. They picked out items from the table to play with, such as conkers and cut up their fruit at snack time.

## 2. Care and Development

Good

### Summary

The child minder is aware of her responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy and has appropriate systems in place to support this. She plans for a variety of play opportunities to support children's development and assesses their progress.

### Our findings

The child minder interacts well with children, manages interactions appropriately and the behaviour management policy sets out the strategies she uses. One strategy identified in the policy is 'time out', which the child minder told us she prefers to call 'thinking time.' She discussed the circumstances when this strategy is used, but the policy does not provide a sufficient explanation of this approach. There was no need for intervention because children behaved very well, but the child minder used praise effectively to promote children's self – esteem throughout our visit.

The child minder understands her role in relation to children's safety and health needs. She does not provide hot meals, but healthy, nutritional snacks are available and there is a healthy eating policy. Water is available to keep children hydrated, there is up to date information on children's specific dietary requirements and an appropriate medication policy setting out procedures for administering of medication. There are infection control procedures in relation to intimate care and hand washing to ensure best practice and the child minder explained to a child what she was going to do before changing their nappy. She recognises her role in the child protection process and her responsibility to record and report any concerns she may have to relevant authorities. There is an appropriate child protection policy and procedure, as well as pre-existing injury records. Documents we examined in relation to child protection were appropriately completed and shared with parents. There is an outings policy and the child minder told us that she has high visibility jackets for children to wear during trips out.

The child minder promotes children's play and learning needs effectively and responds appropriately to their needs. Planning and development records are well organised and children's progress is recorded. There are development booklets for 0 – 3 year olds, and work journals which are shared with parents. Planning records indicate a wide range of play and learning activities to support children's development and records we inspected referenced cultural celebrations. We observed good engagement with children, including questioning to support children's emerging language skills. Prior to our arrival, the child minder had made play dough, using cinnamon to scent it, and children were encouraged to smell the dough when playing with it. She sat at floor level with the children whilst they played and was readily at hand to support them if required.

### **3. Environment**

**Adequate**

#### **Summary**

Child minding operates from the ground floor of the child minders terraced home. Different areas are set aside for play activities and the kitchen and downstairs toilet facilities are well appointed. Internally, the home is maintained to a good standard, but externally improvements are required.

#### **Our findings**

Overall, the child minder has suitable systems in place to ensure that the home is safe for children, but some issues need addressing. There is an up to date gas safety check, smoke detectors are in situ, fire evacuation drills take place at suitable intervals and there are safety gates to prevent children's access to certain areas of the home. There are risk assessments for the premises, activities, outings and use of the vehicle, but checks of the outdoor area are not rigorous enough. We found that a barbecue canister had not been risk assessed and was accessible to children. The pet policy states that the bottom section of the yard is checked regularly to ensure that it is clean and free from dog mess; at the time of our inspection, this was not the case. The child minder told us that normally there is a daily check of the garden, but children had not used it because trips out had been organised. She agreed to address the issues outlined.

The home is suitable for the care of children and provides a comfortable, welcoming space. It is in good decorative order and thoughtfully laid out with specific areas for quieter activities, messy play and small play activities. Toys are stored at a suitable height for children making most resources easily accessible so children can select their own toys. The kitchen and downstairs toilet facilities are easy for children to access thereby promoting their independence. In the entrance area, there is a parent noticeboard with information about the service and the home benefits for appropriate natural light and sufficient space for children to play comfortably.

The child minder has a good selection of developmentally, age appropriate play and learning materials. There are resources to stimulate children's curiosity of the natural world including natural materials such as pine cones and conkers, as well as recyclable materials and wooden toys. The child minder is phasing out plastic equipment and is focusing on increasing the range of natural resources for children to play with. The furniture is comfortable and suitable for relaxation and alongside a small table and chairs there is a larger dining table suitable for older children. There are cultural resources including Welsh books, alongside sensory toys.

## 4. Leadership and Management

Good

### Summary

The child minder has good systems in place to support her business and documents and records are well organised. She monitors and reviews her service in order to plan for improvements and from evidence provided to us, she has a positive partnership with parents who use her service.

### Our findings

The child minder runs her service effectively and paperwork is organised and easily accessible. The statement of purpose sets out her service and the facilities she offers, so that parents are able to make an informed decision about its suitability for their child. However, the document does not reflect the current staff arrangements at the service. Documents we viewed were up to date and organised effectively with a good range of policies reflecting the service provided. Contracts and information on minded children is stored appropriately and there is current public liability insurance.

The child minder has a system to review, monitor and evaluate her service. She consults with parents and children as part of this process and their views form part of the annual review of quality of care report. There is an action plan for development of the service and we saw that plans include the child minder completing a Level 5 childcare qualification (with monitoring visits by an assessor) and the introduction of new resources.

The child minder has effective systems in place to support the management of her service. She has current paediatric first aid, child protection and food safety training and undertakes additional training to keep abreast of practice issues. There are current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all persons over the age of 16 years who live on the premises. Her husband is her assistant, and until recently there was another assistant supporting the child minder. We saw that appropriate records were in place in relation to checks as to their suitability of assistants. The child minder notifies parents about any planned holidays so they can make alternative childcare arrangements.

There are established partnerships between the child minder and parents who use her service, as well as with RCT network. We spoke to one parent during our inspection and they were very complimentary about the child minder's service and the care she provides. Service questionnaires showed positive feedback from both parents and children with comments such as '*wide range of activities*' and '*[ ] has loved her time in Claire's Cubs and I know [ ] will miss everyone.*' Parents receive newsletters to keep them abreast of themes, topics and planned holidays. There are monitoring visit from RCT network officers, who review her service and provide guidance and support to develop it further.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

- Review the behaviour management policy regarding the rationale for use of 'time out' and the circumstances in which it will be used;
- update the statement of purpose to reflect current staffing arrangements at the service;
- risk assess all equipment kept in the garden, such as the gas canister and limit children's access to such equipment and
- ensure that the outdoor area is clean and suitable for children to use at all times and that the service operates in line with the pet policy.



## 6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full, unannounced inspection, which also addressed a concern raised about care practice and procedures. It involved one inspector visiting the service for approximately three and a half hours. The methodology used to gather evidence for the inspection included:

- Speaking to the child minder, two children and one parent;
- observation of care practice and interactions between the child minder and children;
- examination of service records and documents including the policy file, contracts and safety records;
- a visual inspection of the home and
- examination of information held by CIW including the previous inspection report, notifications and concerns.
- We fed back our findings to the provider at the end of the inspection visit.

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	Claire Jones
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	0 – 4 years
Opening hours	7.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	30 June 2017
Dates of this inspection visit	16 September 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	The child minder is part of RCT network.
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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's <i>'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'</i>
Additional Information: None	

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