



Childcare Inspection Report on

Clare Wilkinson

Abertillery



Date Inspection Completed

16/12/2019

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Ratings	What the ratings mean
Excellent	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
Good	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.
Adequate	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.
Poor	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 to provide home based child care for up to ten children under 12 years of age. She operates her service from her home in Aberbeeg on the outskirts of Abertillery. The child minder employs one assistant to support her with the running of the service. Child minding takes place on the ground floor of her home. Children can enjoy outdoor play in an enclosed patio area. The service operates from 7am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and from 7am to 4pm on Fridays. This is an English language service. However, the use of Welsh is encouraged to help promote children's learning.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Care and Development	Adequate
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Adequate

1. Overall assessment

Children feel secure and "at home" at the child minders. They have formed warm relationships with the child minder, her family and assistant. The child minder is motivated to provide a range of activities which meet the children's interests and to promote their well-being. The home is safe, child centred and comfortable, with a range of good quality resources to enhance children's development. Overall, the child minder promotes children's health and welfare. However, some training requires renewal. In the main, she manages her service appropriately, and is keen to implement improvements to secure positive outcomes for children.

2. Improvements

- The garden has been extended and new outdoor resources provided including a water tray, more ride on vehicles, a larger mud kitchen and more suitable table and chairs for drawing and eating outside in the warmer weather;
- the child minder has introduced tooth brushing with children to encourage healthy habits, and
- more activities are provided to promote children's independence.

3. Requirements and recommendations

Some minor areas of non-compliance were identified at this inspection. These were addressed during course of the inspection. We made some recommendations to improve the service. These are discussed within the report and those outstanding following the inspection are highlighted in section five.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children make good choices and are happy to express their feelings and views. They feel valued and comfortable with the child minder, the assistant and her family. They are motivated to create their own play and enjoy a good range of activities and experiences.

Our findings

Children have a voice at this setting and express their needs freely. They make decisions about their care, play and activities, and follow their own interests successfully. For example, they find the resources they wish to play with easily and are confident to talk with the child minder about what they would like to do. They make choices about what they eat, such as what to put in their sandwiches, and where to play. They enjoy good support from the child minder and assistant.

Children are very comfortable and relaxed at the child minder's home. They have developed a close relationship with the child minder, her family and assistant. They enjoy lots of affection and attention. They enjoy chatting with the child minder and assistant and are confident to share any concerns they may have. They move around the areas used for minding easily, and know the routines well such as to wash their hands ready for lunch. They have places to put their belongings, and the areas used for minding are child friendly and well organised with lots of good quality play resources. This helps them feel "at home" and gives them a sense of value and belonging. Parents wrote in their reviews for the child minder "*[My child] loves going to Bobl Bach and has formed a lovely relationship with [the child minder] and her family*", and "*my child feels safe and secure being with [the child minder]*"

Children enjoy their play experiences and are involved in their activities. For example, they took lots of care decorating their cakes and had fun in the home corner, taking the child minder's food orders and serving her. They were proud of their letters to Santa and their craft work in their Christmas bags. Parents comments show they "*take part in loads of fun activities*" which they enjoy such as "*puzzles, drawing and reading*".

Children take part in a good range of activities to help promote their self-help skills and which help them to manage everyday tasks for themselves. For example, they regularly make their own sandwiches and are learning to put on their own jumpers and shoes, with very good support from the child minder and assistant if needed. They know where their play resources are kept and like to help put them away when they have finished playing with them. These activities help to promote their confidence and self-esteem.

2. Care and Development

Adequate

Summary

The child minder provides responsive and supportive care. She knows the children well and supports their play and learning. Overall, the child minder promotes children's health, well-being and welfare. She is aware some training requires updating, including first aid.

Our findings

Overall, the child minder promotes children's health and welfare. She attends safeguarding and child protection training regularly, and is aware of the procedures for recording and reporting any concerns about children's welfare. The child minder encourages children to develop healthy habits in relation to, for example, food, oral hygiene and hand washing. However, children did not always use individual hand towels. The child minder addressed this following the inspection. The child minder is aware her food hygiene training requires refreshing and she had not undertaken an audit of infection control measures using the All Wales Guidance on the Infection Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings, both of which would help ensure her practice in this area remains up-to-date. The child minder is aware of the appropriate procedures for administering medication and completes forms to record any medication given appropriately. Accident records show suitable first aid is administered when required. The child minder is aware her first aid training has expired and has booked to attend a course in January 2020. She told us she is currently completing an online course to refresh her knowledge as an interim measure.

The child minder uses appropriate strategies to help children manage their feelings. She is very familiar with the usual behaviours associated with different ages of children and manages the usual minor disputes in a relaxed and fair manner, taking account of each child's needs. She promotes their self-confidence by giving them lots of time and encouragement to succeed with tasks such as putting on their shoes. There is a routine to the day with which children are familiar and the child minder gives children plenty of notice of any changes coming up such as getting ready for lunch or going to school.

The child minder promotes children's development and well-being. She knows the children well and responds sensitively to their needs and wishes which helps them feel secure, confident and valued. For example, she recognises when they are tired and helps them go to sleep in line with their routine. The child minder treats children with dignity and respect. For example, she listens attentively to their views and values their ideas. However, children's nappies are not always changed so as to protect their privacy. The child minder provides a good variety of activities and experiences to help support children's progress. One parent commented "*The child minder offers lots of outdoor play, which [my child] loves, these include play in the garden, visits to the park, woodland walks and water play.*" The child minder uses observations of children's play to track their development. However,

these observations are not always recorded regularly enough, and records do not always show how the activities planned will promote the next steps in children's learning. The child minder follows the children's lead and supports and develops their play very effectively to promote their learning. For example, the child minder joined in with their role play and engaged with them while they decorated their cakes, naturally supporting a range of skills. The child minder works closely with parents to support children with specific additional needs. She encourages children's social development very well. For example, she regularly sits and eats with them during meal times and told us children who attend after school often eat their evening meal together with her family. Each year she holds a Christmas party for all the children who attend which gives children a sense of value and helps them develop friendships.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

The areas used by the children are comfortable and welcoming and provide them with good indoor and outdoor spaces to play and learn. Resources are age appropriate and of good quality. The child minder ensures the home is safe and secure.

Our findings

The child minder ensures children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. There are comprehensive written risk assessments for all areas of the home used for minding which show hazards are considered and risks are mitigated as much as is reasonably possible. Suitable safety measures are in place such as safety gates at the bottom of the stairs and kitchen door, and the front door is kept locked. There are records of general maintenance being carried out, including safety checks of the gas boiler and wood burner. During the inspection we noted the child minder's dogs share the same garden area as the children. The child minder ensures this area is cleaned prior to the children going outside. However, this could potentially impact on the children's ability to access the area easily, freely and safely. The child minder agreed to provide a separate area for the dogs and updated the statement of purpose to reflect this change.

The child minder's home is spacious and child friendly. Children can move freely around the downstairs rooms used for minding which include a large living/dining room and conservatory/playroom. The playroom is naturally lit with large low level windows and gives children easy access to the enclosed back garden. The layout of the home encourages children's independence. For example, the downstairs bathroom means children can easily manage their own personal needs, and toys and resources are set out so they can find what they want to play with easily. Children currently sleep in the living room in pushchairs or a travel cot. We discussed using a separate area as this would provide a more peaceful space for the sleeping children and more room for the children who are awake. One parent commented in their report for the child minder: *"Lovely home and lovely garden where kids can play and plant flowers along with all other activities."*

The child minder has a good variety of toys, games and books. She invests in new resources regularly in order to meet the needs of the different ages and abilities of children attending. For example, over the past 12 months the child minder has provided a new home corner, more wheeled toys, a larger mud kitchen and water table. Children have access to good quality furniture and equipment. For example, comfortable sofas to relax on and a large dining room table to enjoy meals and art and craft activities together. There is a high chair for the babies and appropriate sized chairs for the older children. However, younger

children were struggling to reach the table when sat on the chairs; the child minder agreed to provide booster seats to support their needs more effectively.

4. Leadership and Management

Adequate

Summary

Overall, the service is suitably run and managed. Shortfalls identified in relation to documentation were addressed during the course of the inspection. The child minder is keen to develop her service and ensure that experiences for children are positive. Parents can be clear about how the service operates and are kept well informed about their child's progress, achievements and daily activities.

Our findings

The child minder focuses on children's needs and works closely with parents to support their child's well-being. She promotes children's safety and overall ensures children are safe when out and about. For example, car seats are used for transporting children. However, a suitable outings policy should be provided which includes how child:adult ratios will be maintained when transporting the children and during outings. Effective procedures are in place for recording children's attendance. However, a record of which adult was caring for children each day was not being maintained. This was addressed during the inspection. The child minder strives to create a positive and warm atmosphere where children feel valued and secure. The necessary records are well organised and overall are maintained in line with the National Minimum Standards and regulations. We did note that the required information for one child had not been recorded. This was addressed during the inspection. Incident records are maintained. However, these are not always kept so as to ensure confidentiality in terms of the children involved. The statement of purpose, policies and procedures are shared with parents and give them a clear picture of how the service operates. Suitable contracts are discussed and shared with parents, and the appropriate permissions are sought for activities such as taking photographs and seeking emergency medical treatment.

The child minder has effective systems in place for gaining children and parents' views of her service. For example, children's views are sought about the activities for example by encouraging them to give a "thumbs up, down or middle", through observations and consulting parents. She uses these views constructively to plan for improvements which benefit children and includes parents' views in the report. Reviews we saw show parents are extremely positive about the care their child receives and that they value the service the child minder provides. The child minder has plans to develop the service over the following year. However, these are not recorded. We discussed sharing the report and development plans with parents so they can see how the service is improving and that their views are valued.

The child minder employs an assistant to support her with the running of her service. Overall, she follows appropriate recruitment procedures so she can be assured the assistant is suitable to work

with children. However, she had overlooked the need to obtain a declaration of health. This was addressed during the inspection. The child minder had undertaken a suitable induction with the assistant to include safeguarding so they could be confident of their role. The child minder and assistant work very closely together and discuss for example, ideas for activities and how best to support the children. We discussed documenting both the induction and meetings to evidence good practice. The assistant feels very well supported and has worked with the child minder to produce a training plan to support her professional development.

The child minder works closely with parents to promote their child's well-being. Suitable forms are used so each child's preferences and care needs are understood before they start at her service. This ensures the child minder can put appropriate plans in place to provide suitable care. The child minder uses a variety of methods to ensure parents are kept up-to-date with their child's experiences and routines. For example, through informal conversation when they deliver and collect their children, and through written daily diaries, particularly for the under twos, which parents value greatly. The child minder sends messages and photographs throughout the day to give parents regular updates and uses social media to keep parents up-to-date with upcoming events, topics etc. One parent commented, "*there is always great communication between us.*"

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure observations of children's play are recorded regularly and that records show how the next steps identified link with activities planned;
- provide an outings policy, to include arrangements for transporting children to and from school;
- update food hygiene training and undertake an audit of infection control measures using the All Wales Guidance on the Infection Prevention and Control for Childcare Settings;
- ensure nappy changing takes place so as to ensure children's privacy;
- consider providing a sleep area separate from the main play area;
- provide additional equipment to support children to sit comfortably at the table;
- share plans for improvements and the quality of care review report with parents and include children's views;
- maintain records of children's existing injuries and ensure incidents are recorded confidentially, and
- record meetings and the induction process held with the assistant.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection brought forward as a result of a concern received by Care Inspectorate Wales. We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We considered the history of the service to assist with planning this inspection;
- the inspection was carried out by one inspector and took place over two part days;
- we observed activities and interactions between the child minder and the children present, and accompanied the child minder on a school run;
- we looked at a range of records and documents including contracts, the statement of purpose, children's records, records of attendance and policies and procedures;
- we viewed the parts of the premises used for child minding, looked at risk assessments and took account of the safety measures in place;
- we spoke with the assistant to gather their views and reviewed a number of reports from parents provided to the child minder, and
- we spoke with the child minder about how she ran her service and her plans for the future.

Our findings were fed back to the child minder at the end of the inspection.

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	Clare Wilkinson
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	6 months up to 12 years
Opening hours	7am to 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday 7am to 4pm, Friday
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	8 March 2019
Dates of this inspection visit	9 and 16 December 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: The child minder employs one assistant	

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