

Childcare Inspection Report on

Siobhan Smart

Cardiff



Date Inspection Completed

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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 was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in October 2018. She provides home based child care for up to six children under 12 years old. She operates from Monday to Friday providing a flexible service to meet the needs of families including school holidays. She lives in Cardiff and provides an English language service with a little Welsh used within activities.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	METADATA_WEB
Care and Development	METADATA_CAD
Environment	METADATA_ENV
Leadership and Management	METADATA_LAM

1. Overall assessment

The child minder provides a consistent, caring and cheerful 'family style' service, which includes lots of good practice. She gives children choice in their activities and encourages them to express themselves and develop their self-help skills. Children are happy and enjoy their time with her; she knows the children well and affection is freely given. She ensures they have fun with her while promoting their play, learning and development and children benefit from a healthy lifestyle. The child minder provides a safe and child friendly environment and children have access to an appropriate range of experiences and resources. She holds relevant child care qualifications and experience of supporting children in schools and is keen to undertake additional training. She keeps a satisfactory range of policies and procedures to support her business.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection since registration.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations to develop the service and improve outcomes for children. These included some revision to record keeping and paperwork which is noted within this report.

Summary

Children's views are encouraged by the child minder and children are made to feel welcome and at home and have formed good relationships with her. They are able to develop their self-help skills and undertake activities which build their confidence and self-esteem. Children enjoy a variety of activities both at the child minder's home and on outings in the wider community.

Our findings

Children are comfortable in their care although they have been attending for a relatively short period of time. We saw a younger child's attempts at words were encouraged, repeated and reinforced by the child minder. This was clearly in line with the child's individual stage of development. Children chose what they wanted to play with from the range available. We saw a child playing imaginatively with some aeroplanes. They chatted about being a pilot and sent directions over the 'radio'. Another child enjoyed rolling a ball in a toy with a system of chutes. They then indicated they wanted the musical play mat, which we were told was a favourite with the younger child. We observed them happily stamping on the musical mat to explore the sounds it made. Play is mostly self-directed and children played together and separately, following their imagination, as appropriate for their age range. We saw a child enthusiastically dancing and singing to music and songs with lots of coordinated actions they had learned.

Children enjoy each other's company in this service and we observed them learning to share and help others. We observed them enjoying the company of the child minder's own children and playing games together very much in a family context. During the inspection children all received warm close attention and they received lots of praise from the child minder which enhanced their self-esteem. Children were comfortable asking for anything they needed and showed an appropriate level of independence and a sense of being 'at home'. Their independence is encouraged appropriately for their age and stage of development, such as helping to tidy toys away.

2. Care and Development

METADATA_CAD

Summary

The child minder uses her knowledge and experience caring for children to inform her practice. She applies a 'home from home' approach to her service. The child minder treats children with warmth and respect and has realistic expectations of them. Appropriate routines for hygiene and safety are carried out. The child minder is aware of how children in her care are developing. She provides activities that she knows the children will engage with and will promote their learning and development.

Our findings

Children benefit from the mostly effective procedures the child minder uses to keep children safe and healthy. She is able to identify children at risk and has the confidence to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures. She understands the requirement to renew the Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate for herself and her partner as necessary. She is registered with the local authority in terms of safe food provision and had completed food hygiene training to improve her knowledge and skills. The child minder provides all food for children and follows a healthy eating approach which takes account of any individual dietary requirements. Drinks of water are available to children at all times. Effective accident, incident and medication recording systems are all in place and the child minder is clear about what action to take in the event of an emergency. However, no fire drills have been practised and the smoke detector checks have not been recorded. We saw satisfactory practice in place for nappy changing arrangements, although there was no policy and procedure in place for this.

The child minder is cheerful, clear and firm with children, explaining next steps as needed. She described her weekly routine which includes mostly child-led free play opportunities and experiences at home with some visits to stay and play sessions and walks in parks in the local community. Outings are effectively planned to take account of children's sleeps and the school runs as well as their age and stage of development. She communicates with other child minders in a closed social network group to share and swap ideas for play and activities.

Children's progress and development are currently monitored in informal systems only. The child minder has begun to keep individual care diaries for younger children which are shared with parents along with verbal information. There was a whiteboard in the play room displaying proposed activities. These included den building and making board games and the child minder told us these had proved very popular with the children. However, the child minder has not started to plan regular focused themed activities which she can use to observe and record children's progress and development to use in planning for their next steps in play and learning.

Summary

The child minder maintains satisfactory systems and routines to ensure that her home is clean, safe, secure and child friendly. Children are given an appropriate range of resources and experiences that support and enhance their learning and development. The child minder provides an environment in which children can learn, play and relax safely and takes steps to minimise risks to children, while enabling them to develop their independence.

Our findings

Children benefit from care in a safe environment. The child minder carries out a daily visual risk assessment in addition to the formal recorded risk assessments of the premises. Appropriate daily cleaning routines are carried out throughout the play space and we were told that planned regular deep cleaning takes place. The front door was kept locked during the inspection and safety gates are in place at the stairs and kitchen to ensure children's safety. We saw the first aid kit and fire blanket available in the kitchen for use in an emergency. Clean, hygienically maintained toilet and hand wash facilities are on the first floor, which older children may use independently, although separate towels to reduce the risk of cross infection were not provided. The child minder maintains relevant insurances and an annual gas safety certificate for her home. There are appropriate arrangements in place to maintain confidentiality within the service, which is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). There is an e-safety policy and procedure in place which covers children's access to, and use of, the internet, mobile phones and computer games. All parental consents are in place for children who may attend community group sessions and any outings with the child minder. The child minder is in the process of buying a seven seater car for outings further away.

The child minder's home is welcoming and furnished comfortably, enabling children to relax and play. The main play spaces are the separate play room and family living room. Children have access to an appropriate range of toys and resources such as vehicles, construction toys, books, small world and home corner and role play equipment. There is no children's access to the kitchen. Babies' sleeps may be in a lie back pushchair on the ground floor. There is no use of the family's garden, although children have opportunities for being outside because they walk to local parks most days. The Welsh language is introduced within some activities and books.

4. Leadership and Management

METADATA_LAM

Summary

The child minder runs her service so that it meets the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care (NMS) and relevant regulations. She has several years' practical experience working with children and seeks out additional training opportunities to ensure that outcomes for children are positive. She has developed positive partnerships with parents and keeps them informed about their child's well-being and progress.

Our findings

Leadership of this service is effective. The child minder is organised and keeps her paperwork in a clear and accessible system. Parents are given the information they need and the policies and procedures for the service are effective and shared with parents. However, we found that the child protection policy and procedure did not fully comply with the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care. The child minder is aware she needs to provide a complaints procedure for older children when they may use her service. Currently she cares only for children under eight years of age.

Children's outcomes are enhanced because the child minder takes a reflective approach to her work and is aware that she now needs to complete the first annual review of her service. She is clear about what it will cover and will include parents' and children's views. She has set herself some achievable targets for improving her service in the near future. These include increasing some resources and to consider how the family garden can be made ready for use in her service. The child minder has considerable experience working with children with additional needs. She has links with the local authority who may from time to time, arrange for her to care for children within registered numbers. She has recently undertaken training such as 'let's get talking', 'mini talkers, mini explorers', cooking with children, play and development and family links. She has booked a refresher course on safeguarding children and is considering a level five child care qualification.

Parents are given verbal, but not written, information about their child's activities, food and personal care during the day and the child minder works closely with them to ensure their children's needs are met. We observed a relaxed and chatty handover at the end of the day. The child minder offers the Welsh Government's 30 hours free child care to families. Initial settling in processes work well and a parent said that their child happily runs in each day. They told us that they had used several child minders over time with their older children and would always "*Recommend Siobhan - brilliant*". Another said the child minder is "*Really good; home from home*".

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We made the following recommendations:

- complete the first annual review of service;
- ensure the safeguarding policy and procedure refers to the documents noted in NMS 20.2;
- develop a complaints procedure for any older children attending the service to use;
- provide a nappy changing policy and procedure;
- develop a system to record observations of children's development and how they are used to plan next steps in their learning and play;
- carry out and record fire drills and record smoke detector checks; and
- provide hygienic hand drying facilities for minded children.

5. How we undertook this inspection

This inspection was announced at very short notice and undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. The inspector visited the service for approximately five and a half hours. We gave feedback of our findings to the child minder at the end of the visit. There were four children under twelve years of age present during the inspection including the child minder's own children. Evidence for the report was gathered using the following methodology:

- We looked at the range of paperwork the child minder keeps about her service – including policies and procedures, risk assessments, contracts, children's records, accident records and safety certificates;
- we observed the children interacting with the child minder and choosing their activities;
- we spoke with children and their parents; and
- we spoke with the child minder about how she runs her service and her plans for the future.

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

www.careinspectorate.wales

6. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Siobhan Smart
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	Under 12 years old
Opening hours	7.30 – 18.00 five days a week including school holidays
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the first inspection since registration on 31 October 2018
Dates of this inspection visit	14 October 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 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information: none	

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