



Childcare Inspection Report on

Sarah Lewis

Cardiff



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Description of the service

The child minder operates her service from her home in Cardiff, where she lives with her family. She currently has 12 children on roll and is registered to care for ten children under 12 years at any one time. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday between 7:30am and 6:00pm throughout the year. Children have access to the ground floor areas within the home. Care is provided through the medium of English.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Children enjoy attending this service and they are well cared for. The child minder thoughtfully plans a good variety of activities for them, including frequent trips out. Her home is clean and tidy and there is a good supply of resources and equipment in place, which are maintained to a high standard. Parents gave positive feedback about the service provided to them. However, some administration improvements need to be made to ensure the smooth operation of the child minder's business and to meet the regulatory requirements.

2. Improvements

There were no non-compliance issues identified at the child minder's previous inspection. She has satisfactorily addressed all recommendations that were set. Further improvements that she has made since then include completing her level 3 training in Children's Care, Learning and Development. She has also purchased further resources, such as puzzles, board games, role play costumes and craft materials.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We have advised the registered persons that improvements are needed in relation to records Regulation 6 {Schedule 1 part 2] (19) (a) (b).in order to fully meet the legal requirements. This is because as there was no current DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check for a household member who resides in the property. A notice has not been issued on this occasion, as there was no immediate or significant impact for children using the service. We expect the responsible person to take action to rectify this and it will be followed up at the next inspection.

1. Well-being

Summary

Children receive a good range of play opportunities that enhance their all-round growth and development. Their ideas and views are prioritised, enabling them to feel valued and happy in their environment. They are developing positive social and independent skills, as expected for their age and stage of development.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Children are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions. We saw them confidently communicate with the child minder to ask for things, such as drinks, food and to use the toilet. They also asked the child minder for help within their play, when needed. They choose the toys that they wish to play with and the planned activities are optional. They were enabled to make themselves heard and understood, because the child minder paid attention to them and showed interest in what they were doing and saying. As such, we saw natural every day conversations evolve between the children and the child minder, demonstrating that the children felt at ease.

Children communicate their needs within an environment that nurtures their opinions.

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

Children enjoy attending this service. We observed them happy and relaxed in the care of the child minder and they told us that they like spending time there. They receive responsive care, helping them to feel valued. For example, when a child alerted the child minder to feeling hungry, they were offered different options and chose a fruit snack. The child minder tailors the food to their tastes. When the after school children arrived, some had pitta bread and humous instead of sandwiches. We saw the children receiving positive feedback, promoting their self-esteem. They have formed secure attachments with the child minder, enabling them to feel safe when looked after by her. They have a sense of belonging because the environment is a welcoming and homely space for them to enjoy and relax.

Children feel happy and safe in a service where they are valued and appreciated.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact positively with each other and they respond well to the boundaries set by the child minder. For example, they tidied toys away when prompted to do so and followed guidelines for using polite manners, such as saying please and thank you. They have formed close relationships with their peers in the setting, as well as with the child minder. We saw them playing co-operatively with one another and chatting warmly together, intermittently laughing and enjoying each other's company. They also prompted conversations with the child minder and enjoyed her feedback and interaction with them. We saw that they are well behaved and they know and follow the expectations of the child minder.

Children have developed good skills to enable them to have positive social experiences.

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

Children engage in play based activities and have fun. They are able to explore their environment freely and access toys of interest to them, which promote their development. Many of the toys and equipment are accessible to them on child height shelving in labelled boxes. We saw that play and learning is mostly child led and the child minder is alongside for help and support when needed. When a child chose to look at books, the child minder joined in reading a story to them. The child asked questions and the conversation reminded them of a day out to the beach. A discussion evolved with them sharing their memories and relating it to parts of the story. At other times, the children joined in with a planned activity making mother's day cards. They enjoyed making their own hand prints and writing positive statements that related to their mother's. They shared their cards with us with pride and appeared to enjoy adding the finishing touches to them. The children also experience trips out, including to local parks, play groups, the library and meeting up with other child minders, developing their play and learning in different social contexts.

Children enjoy a good range of toys, resources and opportunities, which maintain their interest.

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

Children are progressing well as independent learners. They receive plenty of unstructured play, which encourages their natural curiosity to explore. The child minder and the setup of the environment enables them to do things for themselves. For example, a good range of toys and equipment are accessible to them and we saw them help themselves to what they needed. We saw them tidy away toys after themselves when encouraged to do so. According to their age and stage of development, they access the things that they need with a high degree of independence, such as going to the toilet unaided, putting their shoes and coats on and feeding themselves meals and snacks. They are confident to approach the child minder for help when needed, demonstrating they recognise their own limitations and they know when to ask for support to further their independence.

Children are developing independence skills at an age appropriate pace.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder ensures that all required policies and procedures are in place, as well as updating her training needs, to maximise children's safety. She has a skilled approach to supporting and managing children's interactions, to help them to develop positive relationships. We saw that she also provides them with varied play, learning and development opportunities, including trips out.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is experienced in her role to maximise the health and wellbeing of the children in her care. We noted that relevant permission forms are in place and signed by parents, for things such as emergency medical treatment. A child protection policy is in place. However, we discussed with the child minder including the process to be followed if an allegation is made against her or a member of her family. A separate policy is in place detailing the Prevent duty of care, a government strategy to help protect children from extremism. We viewed up to date certificates that the child minder has received in safeguarding, paediatric first aid and food hygiene. We saw that she provides healthy snacks for the children and fresh drinking water is made available to them at all times, to keep them hydrated. Appropriate hygiene routines are in place to promote children's good health. These include the child minder wearing an apron to prepare food and encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times using liquid soap. Fire drills are practised and recorded routinely, ensuring that all children receive an opportunity to participate and learn about fire evacuation procedures. We viewed the child minder's accident/incident/medication records and noted that the majority of them are appropriately recorded. However, we noted two accident and incident records that had not been signed by parents to evidence that the information had been shared with them. This was discussed with the child minder and she agreed to monitor the recording of the forms more closely.

The child minder promotes healthy lifestyles, but some administration areas need addressing.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

Children are guided in their day to day play and learning, to follow clear and realistic guidelines for acceptable behaviour. These are clearly documented in the behaviour management policy. We did not observe the child minder needing to intervene in children's play, as they play respectfully with each other and manage their own behaviour well. She offered them occasional safety reminders, such as to sit carefully on chairs. We also saw her guiding the children to show care and respect towards one another through every day social exchanges. For example, she prompted them to acknowledge when one of their peers were leaving. The children responded by saying good bye and taking the time to wave and hug each other. The child minder was calm and sensitive in her approach, providing a positive role model to the children in her care. She offered positive feedback, encouragement and praise and created an atmosphere that was calm and nurturing.

The child minder has a skilful approach to supporting children to develop positively in their interactions.

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

The child minder provides a good range of activities to meet the children's individual needs. She is aware of the Foundation Phase curriculum and records children's progress in line with this. She completes development and observations record sheets with links to the areas of learning. She also identifies children's next steps for development to plan for their specific needs. From discussions with the child minder and observations of her practice, she has a good understanding of how to support children to learn in a natural and playful way, covering all areas of the foundation phase. We observed her introduce learning concepts during children's play. For example, she introduced the Welsh language naming colours, as well as using incidental words and phrases. We also noted that she has resources to reflect Welsh culture, including books, media on the walls and games, promoting children's Welsh language skills.

The child minder is able to identify and care for children's individual needs within an environment that fosters their well-being and learning.

3. Environment

Summary

The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced with equipment and furniture to enable children to play, learn and relax. They are cared for in a home which is well maintained with good quality resources for them to use. Areas are risk assessed, but the written records need developing to capture more detail.

Our findings

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

Children are safe because the environment is kept secure and risk assessed. However, we discussed with the child minder including greater detail on the written recordings of these. A recommendation has been made in respect of this. A daily check list is in place to make sure that all areas used for child minding are safe. The front and back patio doors were kept locked. Smoke alarms are in place and routinely checked to ensure that they are in good working order. A fire blanket is secured to the wall so that it is easily accessible. Mandatory annual safety checks are completed on all gas appliances, with the most recent certificate dated expiry 13 February 2020, ensuring that all appliances are safe to use. We also observed the child minder paying close attention to the children to supervise them, whilst also providing them with a safe degree of freedom to explore their environments.

Children benefit from a safe and welcoming environment, but the risk assessments need expanding.

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

The environment is homely and well setup for a child care service. The rooms are decorated well and furnished to provide areas for children to use comfortably. The layout of the space and furniture promotes children's independence. There are child height tables and chairs for them to sit at, as well as a dining table and chairs for them to sociably enjoy eating snacks and meals together and complete table top games and arts and crafts activities. Toys are accessible on shelving that they can reach. The living room provides an extra space for children to play and relax in, setup with sofas and resources stored in toy boxes. It is also available to use as a separate space for older children to play and relax away from younger children, if needed. The garden has plenty of outdoor play equipment that supports and challenges children's independence and physical skills. They are stored in the garage alongside further resources for indoor use, which the child minder told us she rotates according to the children's interests.

The child minding areas provide a suitable environment for children to play, learn and relax.

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

The child minder has a good range of resources to promote children's development and keep them engaged and stimulated. Toys and resources are well maintained for children's use and any broken equipment is removed and replaced. There are plenty of opportunities

for younger and older children, as there are resources to cater for all age ranges, including role play items, books, games, construction and craft/mark making materials.

Resources and equipment are of a good standard and variety to support children's learning in all areas.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The child minder has policies and procedures in place to help her operate her business. She updates her knowledge through undertaking appropriate training, reviews her service annually and has completed a quality of care review. However, she needs to make some improvements to the overall management of her service with regards to some administration processes.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The child minder has in place all required policies and procedures for managing her business. Copies are provided to parents. We viewed the statement of purpose and found that it contains all of the relevant information. Children's accurate times of attendance are recorded on individual sheets for each child. We saw evidence of contracts that have been shared with parents, setting out the expectations of both parties. We also viewed the child minder's current Disclosure and Barring Service checks, which were in place for herself and her husband. However, a DBS check had not been completed for her daughter aged over 16 years. This is a serious matter and the child minder is non-compliant with the regulations, as DBS checks must be completed every 3 years for all household members over the age of 16 years. During our inspection, the child minder took immediate action to address this matter by telephoning to obtain the appropriate forms to complete the DBS check. Therefore, we have not issued a non-compliance notice on this occasion.

The child minder has policies and processes in place to operate her business, but she needs to make some improvements to ensure that she is consistently meeting the relevant regulations across all areas.

4.2 How effective is self-evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder annually reviews her service to identify improvements. A Quality of Care Report has been completed for 2017-2018, identifying strengths and development points for the service. Service users' views evidence that they are happy with the service provided to them. Some of the parent's comments include, "...child always looks forward to coming and enjoys spending the day with you. Always comes out happy", "you listen to what we like as parents", "you care about my child as if they were your own", "you provide a lovely, relaxed and easy going setting, which is ideal for me and the family", and "... friendly, warm, reliable, safe environment". Some of the children's comments include, "I love playing with the loom bands" and "I enjoy playing games ...". The child minder has identified in her report improvements that she would like to make, evidencing that she is mindful about providing a good standard of child care. She plans to purchase further resources to provide the children with more role play dressing up clothes, crafts, board games and puzzles. We had the opportunity to speak to two parents about their experiences. They gave positive feedback about the child minder's communication with them, and the progress that their children are making. A complaints procedure is in place, but no complaints had been received.

The child minder is self-reflective and gathers service users' opinions to review and make improvements to her service where necessary.

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

The child minder manages her personal training needs and resources well. She does not employ any staff. We saw that she has current public liability insurance in place. She has completed up to date required training to carry out her role, as well as her level 3 diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development. Parents are kept well informed of any planned holidays or absences, so that alternative child care arrangements can be arranged. The child minder uses two back-up child minders in emergencies, who the children are familiar with. She has appropriate procedures in place for meeting the necessary standards and providing a reliable service to parents.

The child minder is experienced in her role and she attends relevant training to meet the needs of children in her care.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

Partnership with parents is promoted by the good systems and processes in place. The child minder uses appropriate child record forms and contracts to help her to collect important information regarding the children and to ensure that there is clarity about the service provided. Settling in sessions are offered when children start, to ensure that the child minder can meet children's needs and parents understand the service provided. It was evident from the paperwork completed that the child minder invests time gaining background information on the children prior to them starting, to support positive relationships all round. The child minder ensures that appropriate information is shared with parents on an on-going basis. This includes the use of 'WhatsApp', an online messaging service, and daily diaries to share photos and information about children's daily care tasks and activities. However, accident and incident forms are not always consistently signed by parents, evidencing that they have seen them and are aware of their contents.

The child minder communicates effectively and works closely with parents to support their children's well-being.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

At the last inspection, we notified the child minder that the service was non-compliant because her Statement of Purpose did not include all details required by the Child Minding and Day Care Regulations (2010). At this inspection, we viewed the child minder's Statement of Purpose and found that it had been updated to include all of the required information.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to develop the service and improve outcomes for children, we discussed the following matters with the child minder. They should:

- amend written risks assessments to include identified risks, hazards and any actions taken;
- ensure that parents' signatures are always obtained on accident and incident forms, to evidence that the information has been shared with them; and
- update the Child Protection policy to include the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against the child minder or a member of her family.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled inspection as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

- One inspector undertook one visit to the service and spent time with the child minder and five children in her care. The inspection was conducted in one day;
- observations of the child minder's interactions with the children present;
- we reviewed all information held by CIW;
- we examined a range of documentation, including, policies, procedures, recording sheets and children's files; and
- 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	Sarah Lewis
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	7:30am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	3 August 2016
Date of this inspection visit	26 March 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 through the medium of Welsh. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's ' <i>More Than Just Words</i> ' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Additional Information:	