



# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Claire Nicholls-De Freitas**

**Swansea**



**Date Inspection Completed**

25/11/2019

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<b>Ratings</b>	<b>What the ratings mean</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	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
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Adequate</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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

Claire Nicholls-De Freitas has been registered as a childminder since 2008. She is registered to care for a maximum of ten children under 12 years of age at any one time. Her husband, Antonio De Freitas is her assistant. The care is provided from 8:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday, from her family home in Pontardawe. Care is primarily delivered in English, with some basic Welsh and Portuguese used. She does not provide the 'active offer' in relation to the Welsh language.

## Summary

Theme	Rating
<a href="#">Well-being</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Care and Development</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Environment</a>	Excellent
<a href="#">Leadership and Management</a>	Excellent

### 1. Overall assessment

Children experience high quality care and support. They settle well and thoroughly enjoy their time with the child minder, assistant and other children. Children benefit from an excellent range of play and learning experiences and are developing well. The child minder provides a stimulating environment with a broad range of good quality toys and activities that encourage children to explore and learn. The environment is safe, secure, and well maintained. The child minder runs her service extremely well. She is very organised and her record keeping is meticulous. The child minder works in close partnership with parents to ensure that the children's needs are identified and supported.

### 2. Improvements

Since the last inspection, the child minder has registered her husband as her assistant, which has allowed them to provide an excellent service to working parents.

### 3. Requirements and recommendations

There were no requirements identified at this inspection.

We made some recommendations which are detailed at the back of this report.

# 1. Well-being

Excellent

## Summary

Children express themselves well and have excellent opportunities to make decisions about their play and activities. They feel safe and very happy in the child minder's care and have strong bonds with the other children. Children interact very well; they have lots of fun in their play and eagerly participate in a wide range of exciting activities that support their learning. They have excellent opportunities to develop independence skills and do things for themselves.

## Our findings

Children make effective choices, are listened to and express their views confidently. All children have opportunities to choose what they want to do because they have easy access to a wide range of toys and resources. They chose their activities and moved freely between the kitchen/diner and playroom. Children decided if they wanted to play alone or with others. Children chose which chair they wanted to sit on for snack, and the colour of their cutlery. Children enjoy a good choice of healthy, appetising food, a choice of milk or water at meal times and are able to help themselves to cups from the cupboard if they are thirsty in between. They ate heartily at their own pace; they asked for more and received it. Children express their opinions confidently and decide what they want to do.

Children feel safe, valued and are very happy. They have a sense of security and belonging because they are very familiar with the environment and the routines. Songs played at different times, such as 'Time to tidy up song' and 'Busy Feet' where children went to the cupboard to get their coloured circles. Children's artwork, along with their own house rules, were displayed in the kitchen/diner. Children are settled and relaxed; they moved confidently from one area to another and knew where to find their favourite things. We saw that the children felt valued because they were listened to, took part in activities that they really enjoyed and were praised their efforts, achievements and good manners. We heard *"Did you do that by yourself? Awesome"* and *"This is looking good guys"*. Children have very strong bonds of affection with the child minder and assistant, for example we saw children being picked up and cuddled, and another child giggling when playing with the assistant.

Children are learning the importance of sharing and cooperating with others. They played well together for their age range; for example when two children were working together to build a wooden tower. They listened when the child minder reminded them to play nicely and share. Children 'helped' the adults to rearrange the table and benches for snack. Children sat together to eat at the table, passed the plates and cups around at snack time and naturally used good manners, for example they said 'please' and 'thank you' without being prompted. Children interact very well with each other and with the child minder and assistant. We saw the children being 'chased' by the 'tiger' (child minder) and the children all run screaming into living room.

Children enjoy free play as well as exciting and structured adult-led activities. They are able to follow their interests as they have free access to a wide range of toys and resources. Children were fully engaged in the activities they had chosen and they sustained interest for a long period. Children sang, giggled, squealed with laughter and jumped with joy as they played and danced to Busy Feet. Children experience squirty foam and clapped their hands until all were covered in foam. Children thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. Children experience many opportunities to think, explore and be independent. They benefit from a good variety of activities, which keeps them engaged and stimulates learning. Children often do things for themselves. They are encouraged to tidy toys away, use the bathroom independently, to take off shoes and coats and to feed themselves with minimal support. We saw that children learned as they played because they answered questions about the foam telling the child minder whether it was getting bigger, if it was cold, and what it feels like. Opportunities to develop are excellent.

## 2. Care and Development

Excellent

### Summary

The child minder is very caring, motivated, enthusiastic and responsive to children's needs. She is effective in keeping children safe and promotes healthy lifestyles. She consistently manages children's behaviour in a very positive way, with a strong focus on celebrating children's achievements to promote their self-esteem and confidence. The child minder has an excellent knowledge of the children's needs and preferences and provides a wide range of activities to help them to learn and develop.

### Our findings

The child minder has a very good understanding of her responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. She has attended child protection training and is very clear about how to report concerns. She also encouraged children to put their worries onto a 'Worry monsters' sheet for example if they wanted peace and quiet. The child minder keeps her first aid box stocked and her first aid training was up to date, as was the assistants. She ensures accident and medication records are completed and countersigned by parents. We saw that parents had given written consent for policies and procedures, emergency first aid, plasters, and visits etc. A pet policy included the dog and chickens. The child minder promotes a healthy lifestyle through preparation of nutritious snacks. On the day of our visit the children had a choice of humus, carrot sticks, cheese cubes, peppers, blueberries, raspberries, and breadsticks, and a home cooked meal of soup and bread; she is registered with the Food Standards Agency. The child minder and assistant encourages good hygiene practices, for example; children were asked to wash their hands before snack and handwashing signs were displayed. When a spoon dropped on floor, it was changed for another and when the child minder wiped a child's nose she washed her hands afterwards. She followed safe procedures for nappy changing, ensured privacy for the child, and had sought parental permission for the children to be showered if necessary. The Designed to Smile programme is part of the everyday routine and the child minder is part of the Healthy Sustainable Preschool scheme. The child minder promotes physical activities promoting an 'outside classroom' where children spend time outside enjoying woodland and canal walks, messy welly walks, and 'Busy Feet' activities inside. The child minder gave safety messages to the children, for example when children were playing rough and tumble on the kitchen floor, she said "*Gentle play please, we're not on a soft floor are we, where would be a good place to do that?*" and told the children that they could not eat the squirry foam. The child minder follows effective procedures to keep children safe and healthy.

The child minder and assistant manage behaviour effectively. They modelled good manners and were calm, polite and relaxed. They listened and gave children plenty of time to finish conversations and activities and encouraged children to ask questions, explore and learn. The child minder used positive language; she said praised a child, and said *lovely*

*apologising*, when a child bumped into another child. The child minder asked the children if they wanted milk or water to drink, and prompted the children to use manners when answering. She has a behaviour policy, which refers to the house rules, for example; 'no fighting', 'we do not push', 'if you need help don't be afraid to ask', and 'try to help someone's frown turn upside down'. The child minder manages behaviour consistently and effectively.

The child minder knew the children in her care very well. She was aware of each child's needs, likes, dislikes and routines, for example, any dietary needs, the activities and food they enjoyed; and if they needed a nap during the day. The child minder has long term planning in place, which includes: Halloween, Children in Need, World Science Day, Anti Bullying Week, Diwali, list of world celebrations, and Forest School to name a few. Stages of pencil grip are displayed in the kitchen for parents to see. Children with additional needs are welcomed and integrated as much as possible, and their needs are met very well. The child minder provides learning opportunities through a wide variety of exciting and fun activities. On the day of our visit the adults and children played with the squirry foam, and the children were asked about the texture, and when they added trains to the foam, were asked if the foam made them go slower or faster. The adults asked the children constant questions when playing for example about the different lengths of train tracks and which piece should go where. We saw many fun photographs on 'Munchkino's' media page. The children had been to see 'The Snow Dragon', 'The Gruffalo' , 'Room On The Broom', and 'What The Ladybird Heard' and enjoyed visits locally to see live theatre. We heard the child minder ask questions to help children develop their knowledge of the world, language, colour recognition and counting skills in both English and Welsh, and the assistant uses some Portuguese words and phrases. Children develop their communication skills through good discussion with the child minder, who asks appropriate questions, extending their learning, for example, *"Who's going to help me with the plates?, how many do we need?, can you count how many we need, (4), well done can you get 4 cups for me please, can you put them out for everybody"*. The child minder has raised children's awareness of different cultures through celebration of different festivals and saints' days. The child minder has an excellent knowledge of children's individual needs and supports their play, learning and development effectively.

### **3. Environment**

**Excellent**

#### **Summary**

Children experience an excellent variety of play and learning opportunities because the child minder creates an inviting and stimulating environment indoors and outdoors. The child minder ensures the environment is safe, secure and very well maintained. She identifies risks and hazards and minimises or eliminates them to ensure children's safety. The premises are very suitable for the needs and age range of the children, and the lower level of the house is dedicated to caring for children. Resources and equipment are very good quality and enrich children's all round learning and development.

#### **Our findings**

The child minder ensures children are cared for in a safe, clean, secure, well-maintained environment. She had carried out comprehensive risk assessments, to promote children's safety and identify hazards and control measures. She has a health and safety policy, including cleaning and sorting broken toys, and a garden equipment policy. The external door to this level was not kept locked, in line with the Foundation Phase to allow children free flow into the garden. We saw a record of visitors; annual gas safety certificate; appropriate insurances and fire drill records. Accident records indicated only minor issues and did not raise any concerns about the safety of the premises. The child minder uses effective procedures to keep children safe.

The child minder provides a rich environment for play and learning. Children can move around freely between the playroom, the open plan kitchen/dining area and cloak room/shower room which provides plenty of space for them to play, learn, eat and relax. The play areas were well set out for children, with most toys and resources within easy reach to encourage choice and independence, and some of the items higher up were labelled to allow children to ask for them. There was suitable furniture and equipment including a comfortable settee in the play room and tables and chairs with booster seats, high chairs, benches and low level table and chairs in the bright and colourful kitchen/dining area. Children have direct access to the outdoor area, which promotes their physical development and knowledge of nature, although outdoor play was not seen on this visit, due to the weather. The child minder provides a highly suitable, very stimulating, child friendly environment.

The child minder provides an extensive range of good quality toys and resources that stimulates children's curiosity and supports their learning and development. In the playroom, we saw children playing with a large wooden train track with magnetic trains, and there were shelves of toy boxes with some pictures of items such as Peppa Pig, construction box, play kitchen, dolls cot and potties, books, and dressing up. Messy play took place on the floor of the kitchen, such as when the child minder put the tuff tray of

squirty foam in the middle, or on the kitchen tables. The child minder had a science and discovery cupboard, magnets, telescopes, arts and crafts, puzzles, games, sensory lights and pirate ships in the lower kitchen cupboards. Outside there was a mud kitchen, farm shop, slide, small climbing frame, and a number of ride on toys , We saw that various cultural events and festivals were planned and celebrated throughout the year and there were some toys and books to reflect diversity and a multi-cultural society. All the toys, resources and equipment were clean and in very good condition. The child minder had a triple buggy, travel cot, five booster seats, high chairs and slings for younger children. The child minder has effective systems in place to check and replace toys and equipment that are broken or no longer suitable.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

**Excellent**

### **Summary**

The child minder manages her business extremely well and ensures all documentation is up to date and very well organised. She consistently and effectively evaluates the care and service she offers, and takes into account the views of children and their parents. The child minder keeps her training up to date and she has excellent relationships with parents.

### **Our findings**

The child minder strives to promote good outcomes for children. All records were readily available and very easy to navigate because they were very well organised. We saw a detailed statement of purpose which provides an overall accurate picture of the service she provides, however does not have her address or terms and conditions. The child minder's policies and procedures were reviewed regularly, well written, easy to understand and focused on the needs of children. She had a confidentiality policy, and a procedure for allegation of abuse, which included the option to suspend her service if there was an allegation against her. A Prevent Duty policy and print out for childcare providers was available in her file. Contracts were up to date and children's records were fully completed. She was registered with the Information Commissioners Office and individual records refer to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The child minder's management and administration is organised and effective.

The child minder understands the benefit of self-evaluation to drive improvements in the service she offers. She had devised a quality of care report in June 2019, and sought the views of parent using 'Survey Monkey', which showed very positive comments from parents, and asked questions about her weaknesses and opportunities. The child minder sought children's views through questionnaires, which contained very good feedback. This included questions such as, is there 'anything to make you even happier', 'something you enjoy doing 'and' improvements' where answers included 'Stay longer' The child minder has not received any complaints or concerns since registration. The child minder has effective systems for evaluating the quality of the service and making improvements, which benefit the children.

The child minder manages the resources relating to her business exceptionally well. The child minder demonstrated a very good understanding of the regulations and national minimum standards and she complies with her conditions of registration. The records of the children's attendance indicated that the child minder ensured the age range and numbers met the national minimum standards at all times, whilst working alongside her assistant. Her core training in food safety, child protection and paediatric first aid was up to date. The records for public liability insurance, car documents, heating certificate and the child minder's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check were all available for inspection and up to date. The child minder had information relating to her assistant, which included his, DBS, and all other supporting documentation, with the exception of a photograph. He had

completed his Homebased Child Care qualification, and both adults had attended numerous courses such as first aid, 'Introduction to supporting children with transition training', 'Dynamix Welsh workshop' and online 'Prevent' training.

The child minder works very closely with parents to identify and meet children's needs. She has a parent's portfolio, with 'welcome' in many languages. She has introduced yoga, and mindfulness and is part of the 'Breast feeding welcome scheme'. The setting focuses very strongly on the outdoor environment for example den building. She links the outside play to the Forest School process providing children with opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and wellbeing through hands on learning experiences and play through nature. The child minder has excellent parental reviews on a well-known child care media site, as well as many complimentary thank you cards. She keeps parents well informed about events through her social media page which includes vast amounts of information and photographs on her service. The child minder has cloth nappies and slings to provide to parents if they wish to try them before they purchase them. During our visit, a local shop keeper arrived to ask the children to colour in Christmas cards for a charity event. The child minder has developed excellent partnerships with parents and the community.

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

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

None

### **5.2 Recommendations for improvement**

We recommended that the child minder:

- Adds her address and terms and conditions to the statement of purpose; and
- adds a recent photograph to the assistants file.

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a short notice announced inspection, due to two failed visits, and undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections. One inspector visited the service on 25 November 2019 for just under 4 hours.

- We spoke to the child minder and her assistant;
- inspected the areas used by children;
- observed children with the child minder and assistant at home;
- viewed the child minder's social media page;
- looked at a sample of documentation and policies as detailed in this report; and
- gave feedback to the child minder on 28 November by telephone.

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 Nicholls-De Freitas
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	0 – 12 years of age
Opening hours	8:00am – 5:30pm
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	25 February 2016
Dates of this inspection visit	25 November 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?	<p>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 children who use, or intend to use the service. We heard some incidental Welsh and saw children had access to Welsh resources.</p> <p>We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government’s ‘More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh Language in social care.’</p>
Additional Information:	

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