

# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Sarah Mathias**

**Tenby**



**Date Inspection Completed**

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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

Sarah Mathias is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) as a child minder. She provides care to a maximum of ten children aged from birth to 12 years. The service is open from 6:30am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. The service is provided predominately through the medium of English but a significant amount of Welsh is also used.

## 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>	Good

### 1. Overall assessment

Children receive highly individualised care from an experienced and passionate practitioner. The child minder provides nurturing, individual care and promotes children's development extremely well. They are cared for in a highly suitable environment which is kept under review to provide children with stimulating learning opportunities. The child minder manages her business well and builds strong partnerships with parents.

### 2. Improvements

Since the previous inspection of this service, the child minder has moved to a new property in Pembrokeshire and has made improvements to the existing indoor and outdoor environment to make it more interesting and stimulating for the children in her care.

### 3. Requirements and recommendations

We made some recommendations relating to the policies and risk assessments. These are detailed at the back of this report.

# 1. Well-being

**Excellent**

## **Summary**

Children are extremely happy, confident and well-settled with the child minder. They are excited by their play activities and they have excellent opportunities to develop their skills. They interact very well with each other and successfully learn to respect each other's preferences and needs.

## **Our findings**

Children are extremely confident that their voices will be listened to. They were able to choose their own play, follow their interests and confidently ask for help when it was needed. For example, a child who had a particular liking for shoes was able to try these on and there were resources available in the outdoors for children who preferred quiet activities to boisterous activities. When a child asked for some flowers, they were lifted up to show exactly what they wanted, choosing the yellow petals to put in their play dough.

Children are very well settled with the child minder. Children who had only been attending for a short time were happy and relaxed in her care. For example, children stretched out their arms for a cuddle and snuggled up to the child minder when they were tired. An older child chatted very happily and openly, sharing their news and thoughts with the child minder.

Children interact very well with each other and with adults, showing consideration and excellent behaviour. For example an older and younger child played a word search game together at their own levels. The older child gave support to the younger child and the younger child listened well when the child minder explained that he would need to wait to change the game to be fair to the older child. Children used good manners, such as asking, "Please may I ..." when they wanted something.

Children enjoy their play enormously. They were extremely engaged with activities during our visit and talked with excitement about other activities they had done. For example, a child mixed red and blue plasticine to make what he called a 'Spiderman ball'. He proudly showed the child minder the ball, then hid it, presenting it again, saying, "I made it for you!" Children delighted in telling us about finding snails in the garden and making a bridge from branches and a walkway from planks.

Children develop their individual skills very successfully in the child minder's care. For example, they developed their communication skills very well through lots of talking with the child minder, singing and looking at books. Children counted confidently, including a child under two who had a go at counting in Welsh. Children had regular opportunities to do things for themselves. They fed themselves independently, put their own bibs on and tried to solve problems, asking for help if it was needed. For example, when a young child wanted to take a laced shoe off, the child minder showed her how to pull the lace, which she then did successfully. Parents commented that their children had made excellent progress with the child minder.

## **2. Care and Development**

**Excellent**

### **Summary**

The child minder is an experienced, enthusiastic and motivated child care professional. She provides consistent, positive care to the children and plans very effectively to develop their individual skills. She effectively keeps children safe and actively promotes a healthy lifestyle.

### **Our findings**

The child minder is passionate about providing individual care and she adapts activities so that children can succeed and develop their individual skills. The child minder could tell us in detail about the children in her care: their preferences, their personalities, their skills and the way they learnt. She found out lots of information about the children before they started attending and made careful and detailed observations of their learning which showed a deep understanding of child development. She gave every child individual attention and met their needs effectively. She placed a strong focus on what children could do and used this to develop the skills that children found more difficult. For example, she used sticks in sand and pipettes in water to develop children's fine-motor skills where they had difficulty holding a pencil. The child minder planned in detail for the long and short term and she identified next steps for the children's learning. She incorporated basic Welsh language into planned activities and the daily routine, such as regular counting in Welsh.

The child minder uses excellent behaviour management strategies. She gave very clear explanations to the children at their level and responded consistently and positively to demonstrate wanted behaviour. For example, she encouraged children to think about the feelings of others. She reminded a child that another child might be sad if they had to stop playing their game and that it was good to be patient. She gave consistent reminders to be kind, to share and to speak nicely to each other.

The child minder is well-qualified and experienced and strives to continually improve her practice. She had worked in child care for over twenty years, as a child minder and in day care services. She kept her necessary training up to date but also regularly completed online training and participated in webinars to extend her knowledge and share ideas with other professionals. She showed enthusiasm and commitment to her role as a child minder and for improving children's skills and well-being.

The child minder effectively keeps children safe and healthy. She provided healthy snacks to the children and encouraged regular outdoor play. She followed good hygiene procedures for nappy changing, food hygiene and encouraging children to wash their hands regularly. The child minder supervised the children well and conducted regular fire drills.

### **3. Environment**

**Excellent**

#### **Summary**

The child minder provides a highly suitable environment to the children both indoors and outdoors. She provides a broad range of resources and interesting play opportunities. She adapts the environment to suit children's needs and preferences and ensures that it is very safe and secure.

#### **Our findings**

The child minder provides a spacious, stimulating environment which is designed to meet children's needs effectively. There was a large, open-plan play space that children could explore freely which was well-resourced with accessible play opportunities. The child minder had also provided a separate area for older children where they could have their own space and safely play with toys which were unsuitable for younger children. The child minder also provided a quiet space for children to sleep undisturbed and ensured that all children had clean, individual bedding. The toilet was easily accessible to children and they had easy access to resources which supported them to use the toilet and wash their hands independently, such as a step and individual towels on pegs labelled with the children's names.

The child minder provided an excellent range of stimulating resources that were highly suited to children's stages of development and their preferences. She constantly reviewed the resources that she provided and ensured that the inclusion of 'real-life' objects was a significant part of the resource provision. For example, the child minder had introduced loose parts such as curtain rings, wooden discs for threading and materials such as wool to use to cover shapes. The child minder stored resources at a low level where children could access them independently. Where resources were not visible, they were well labelled with cards showing the Welsh and English words and a picture. She also had an abundance of extra resources in the garage which older children could access independently and that the child minder could use to rotate toys to sustain children's interest.

The child minder adapts the environment and resources to suit children's preferences. For example, she had noticed that children had naturally gravitated to play in one area of the garden and had ensured that they had resources in that area to dig and explore. Where a child was particularly fascinated by dinosaurs, the child minder had purchased wooden eggs which were referred to as dinosaur eggs and which the child used for their imaginative play and for fine-motor skills activities. The child minder provided multi-sensory resources in the indoors and outdoors and changed these to fit with the theme. For example she had provided a range of resources in a tough tray linked to the story of The Three Little Pigs, such as dried spaghetti for straw, pieces of wood and small world play figures.

The environment is very safe and secure. The door to the service was kept locked and there were safety measures in place such as stair gates. She kept a record of all visitors to the

service. The child minder reviewed the risk assessments for the environment but had not dated them



## **4. Leadership and Management**

**Good**

### **Summary**

The child minder manages her service efficiently. She keeps appropriate records and gives parents detailed information about the service. Policies are generally very suitable. She reviews the service effectively and builds very strong partnerships with parents.

### **Our findings**

The child minder organises her business efficiently. She kept records in line with regulations and managed the number of children that she looked after to ensure that she met the conditions of her registration and national minimum standards. She had written an informative statement of purpose which was an accurate reflection of the service. She had a number of policies in place which were mostly suitable and child-centred. However, the child minder had not provided information in her complaints policy about how children could make a complaint and at times, the child minder's documentation referred to English frameworks and guidance rather than Welsh ones. She was aware of this and intended updating documentation in the near future when she had easier access to ICT equipment. The child minder had originally provided some out of date policies to CIW but the correct ones were forwarded to us prior to the completion of this report. However, there was a separate policy regarding the process if there was an allegation against the child minder and this was not referenced in the child protection policy.

The child minder reviews her service and efficiently plans for improvements. She kept many aspects of her service under regular review. For example, she invited parents to meet with her regularly to review their contract and to discuss children's progress and well-being. She ensured that her necessary training, as well as insurances were updated as needed. The child minder's most recent quality of care report identified clear targets for improvement. She kept up to date with developments in child care and she had registered the business with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

The child minder forms strong partnerships with parents. She sought detailed information about their children and communicated regularly with parents in a number of ways. As well as detailed daily diaries for younger children, the child minder also provided a home-setting book. This accompanied resources that were sent home for children to use where they had shown a particular interest or were practising a particular skill. The child minder also provided lots of information to parents via daily discussions, social media and individual messages. Parents were incredibly happy with the service provided, strongly agreeing that the service was well run and describing the child minder as excellent.

## **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 should:

- Further update the child protection policy to ensure that all the necessary information is available in one clear policy;
- update the complaints policy to include the arrangements for children to raise a complaint;
- review the policies for the service and ensure that all parents have access to the most up to date versions of these and
- date risk assessments when they are reviewed.

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

This was a full, unannounced inspection undertaken as part of our normal schedule of inspections.

One inspector visited the service on 8 August 2019 for approximately six and a half hours.

We:

- inspected a sample of documentation and policies;
- observed children's engagement and the care being provided by the child minder;
- spoke to children, parents and the child minder;
- read two CIW questionnaires completed by parents and other feedback provided by parents to the child minder and
- provided feedback by telephone to the child minder on 15 August 2019.

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	Sarah Mathias
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Birth to 12 years
Opening hours	6:30am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	17 December 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	8 August 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 is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.
Additional Information:	

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