



Inspection Report

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Abertillery



Date Inspection Completed

15/12/2020

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About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered places	6
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	28 February 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	Manual Insert 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. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Governments 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in Social Care.

Summary

This was a full inspection of the setting; however, we did not consider each theme in detail. One inspector made an announced visit at short notice, whilst another inspected information submitted to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) electronically and communicated with the child minder through phone calls.

Children are settled and happy at this setting. They enjoy a good range of activities and have positive relationships with the child minder and other minded children. The child minder keeps children safe and relatively healthy by putting into practice her policies and procedures. There are ongoing refurbishments at the premises; however, it is still a clean, welcoming and nurturing environment. Outdoor areas are used well and support children's play and learning. The child minder has a clear understanding of the care she provides and manages the environment and resources well. She has completed an outstanding disclosure and barring service check and met recommendations made at the previous inspection in relation to record keeping and the care of children. English is the main language of the service; some children currently attending speak Welsh.

Well-being

Children have a voice, and are settled and happy. They are listened to, and their individual needs and well-being are always considered. Children take turns in conversations and contribute their own ideas when playing. We saw them confidently making choices and decisions about when they play, and what they do, and have opportunities to express themselves. For example, after making Christmas cards, we saw children wanted to find items they needed to play 'cafes'. They found all they wanted for their role-play ideas to develop their idea and extend their play.

Children enjoy playing alongside others and are confident and happy to approach the child minder for help, or to play. We saw children have a good sense of belonging, as they know the daily routines well, and are comfortable to sit and relax in each other's and the child minder's company.

Children are very independent in their play and learning; but will discuss what they are doing and ask for help when they need to. They answer open-ended questions asked by the child minder, which encourages them to think about what they are doing. This stretches their imagination and helps with their development. For example, children's language and mathematical skills can improve during role-play activities when they use notebooks and money to take orders. We saw children adding up orders for food and count with their fingers. Children are not afraid to have a go, even if it means making a mistake as they enjoy plenty of praise and encouragement.

Care and Development

The child minder has a good understanding of how to keep children safe. She has undertaken safeguarding and first aid training and has policies and the necessary procedures in place to support her in her role. We recommended the child minder familiarises herself further with the new 'Wales Safeguarding' application and reviews her list of contact numbers should she need to report any concerns. We also reminded her that all persons over the age of sixteen years living at the premises, or staying overnight must evidence their suitability through completing a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check. The child minder confirmed she lives on her own at the premises.

The child minder promotes hygiene practices appropriately to ensure children's safety, with regular hand washing and cleaning in place. A paper hand towel dispenser has been fitted in the downstairs bathroom as the need for individual towels was identified and recommended at the last inspection. We discussed how healthy lifestyles are promoted, and then recommended the child minder reviews further healthy snack options with the children and parents.

The child minder interacts positively with children. We saw she has a lovely warm manner and caring approach, which promotes children's good behaviour. She encourages children to be polite and well mannered. The calm environment the child minder creates, and the interest shown in the planned play activities, helps the children focus and work well together. The child minder told us she has house rules and rewards the children for good behaviour and good listening.

The child minder supports children's learning and development successfully, by providing a good range of interesting activities, suitable for their age and stage of development. She plans for seasonal celebrations and special events, using online resources to develop play activities. When asked how she knew children were happy with the activities she provides, she replied 'they run in in the mornings and are often reluctant to leave in the evening'.

Previous recommendations to maintain records of children's development and daily activities have been met. We were told written records are now kept for younger children, which include the 'This Is Me' booklet. With older children, the child minder told us she sends photos and messages to parents via social media applications.

Environment

The child minder ensures children have safe areas in which to play which are spacious, bright, welcoming, clean and well maintained. Safety certificates for the log burner and the new central heating system are available. Fire evacuation drills are evaluated regularly. The child minder has identified the need to have more lighting to the front of her premises as there are steps up to the premises. Risk assessments for the setting have been reviewed and there are specific Covid-19 risk assessments in place to help deal with the current pandemic. A new boiler and radiators have recently been installed in the premises. However, some work has not been fully completed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There is a lack of heating in the outdoor playroom and exposed pipework in the porch. The child minder told us there are plans in place to address these issues once the pandemic has eased. For that reason we have not issued a priority action (non-compliance) notice on this occasion as there is no immediate or significant risk to children using this service as they can use other rooms comfortably and safely.

The child minder continually makes improvements to the indoor and outdoor environments to enhance children's experiences. They mainly uses the front room and downstairs bathroom, although an outdoor playroom has been built onto the back kitchen and an artificial grass area with mud kitchen has been provided to the front of the premises. To the rear of the premises a pergola provides shelter in wet and sunny weather. The child minder has provided portable hand sanitising stations, and soap and paper towel dispensers were fitted following the last inspection. A step is in use for smaller children to reach the sink independently.

The child minder has plenty of play and learning resources to encourage children's play and development. However, she restricts the amount of resources brought into the living area on a daily basis. This is because most resources are stored in the outdoor playroom and they are rotated and cleaned regularly to ensure they are clean and hygienic. Children do access these resources independently.

Leadership and Management

The child minder runs her setting satisfactorily; she has a good understanding of the care she provides. However some crucial aspects of the management of her setting, such as evidencing her suitability to work with children, is not handled well. The child minder completed an overdue disclosure and barring service check as a result of this inspection. A previous application for a check was not followed through and remained incomplete. We inspected some policies and procedures and the statement of purpose, and found they reflect the service and current practice well. A specific policy related to the Covid-19 pandemic is in place and is regularly reviewed as guidance changes. Improvement is needed in relation to having written records for incidents and more formal registers that include arrival and departure times, in preference to notes in a diary. Most information is currently passed to parents using text messaging and social media applications, which are not suitably accessible for inspection.

The child minder plans well for the future and is keen to make improvements, for example she completed First Aid training as part of a networking group prior to lockdown and has developed an outdoor playroom and further facilities in the garden. Grants have been applied for to purchase additional portable hand wash stations and outdoor lighting. The building of the outdoor playroom has played a crucial part in the running of this service as it allowed children to be cared for in a well ventilated area during the summer and provides storage during the winter.

The child minder lives and works alone and has at times used friends and family members to assist her. This was discussed with the child minder who has since this inspection informed CIW she will use registered child minders living close by to act as relief/emergency child minders should the need arise.

The child minder has further developed relationships with parents, Care Inspectorate Wales, the local authority and support organisations. Working with others has ensured children receive quality care and the child minder is well informed of changes in regulation, standards and guidance. Links with parents have been improved with the use of social media applications, where photos are shared with them in times when entry into the child minders home is restricted. The child minder has further developed her use of information technology and has successfully used the CIW online portal to send notifications. The child minder is very pleased with the way in which parents have responded to the changes implemented due to Covid-19 and welcomes any feedback.

Areas for improvement and action at the previous inspection

Regulation 6(3)(a)(i) The child minder must renew her police check (DBS) with CSSIW

Achieved

Where providers fail to improve and take action we may escalate the matter by issuing a priority action (non-compliance) notice.

Areas where immediate action is required

None

Areas where improvement is required

Work on the new central heating system must be completed as soon as possible.

Consideration must be given as to how healthy eating can be promoted further.

Registers must be completed in more detail and include the children's full names and time of arrival and departure.

The child minder must ensure that appropriate written records are available for inspection, sending messages to parents via social media and messaging applications are difficult at times to evidence and/or access.

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

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