



Childcare Inspection Report on

Joanne Stephens

Monmouth



Date Inspection Completed

06/03/2020

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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 operates her service from her home in Monmouth, where she lives with her family. She currently has 13 children on roll and is registered to care for eight children under 12 years at any one time. Child minding is offered Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 6:00pm throughout the year. Children have access to all ground floor areas of the home. Care is provided through the medium of English, with the use of incidental Welsh. During our inspection visit there were three minded children present under the age of eight years.

Summary

Theme	Rating
Well-being	Good
Care and Development	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

1. Overall assessment

Children attending this service are settled and very happy attending. They have formed close relationships with the child minder, as well as each other. The child minder is highly responsive to them and plans a good variety of activities to meet their all-round needs. The environment is clean, tidy and well-maintained to ensure high standards of safety. A good variety of resources are in place to cater for mixed ability and aged children. There are many areas of good practice, because the child minder is proactive and reflective to develop her service.

2. Improvements

Since the last inspection, the child minder has attended relevant training beyond the requirements of the Child minding and Day Care Regulations, to widen her knowledge and skills. She has also expanded resources, including replacing a large trampoline that was in situ with a smaller sized version, more suited to younger children. A large climbing frame with swings and a slide also takes its place, which the child minder told us the children have great enjoyment from using.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made one recommendation with regards to a required policy. This is highlighted in further detail at the end of this report.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children are developing age appropriate skills to communicate their needs and make themselves heard. They are all happy for periods away from their parents and settle well in the care of the child minder. Interactions between children are mostly positive, but sometimes they need guidance as expected for their ages and stages of development. Children enjoy their play at this service, and they are making good progress in all areas.

Our findings

Children have good opportunities to voice their opinions. They choose the toys and resources they want to use, and activities planned by the child minder are optional for them to join in with. They ask the child minder for help when needed and let her know how they are feeling. For example, when a child slipped on the floor, they approached the child minder for comfort and reassurance, which helped them to feel calmer.

Children are happy and settled. They respond positively to the care and attention they are given and approach the child minder to engage in informal conversations. They separate well from their parents and are familiar with the routines of the setting. We observed children sitting together for snack and lunch times and group activities, including singing together. They coped well with daily routines such as hand washing, taking off their shoes and coats on arrival at the home, and tidying resources away when they had finished playing with them.

Children are developing friendships with one another, with occasional support needed to assist them to consistently manage their interactions. For example, a child was encouraged to share when they took a toy from another, helping them to develop their social skills, empathy and kindness. They respond positively to the guidance offered to them, because they are gently corrected and distracted with other activities, enabling them to learn and move on from their mistakes.

Children are central to their care, as their play is directed by their own ideas. Their development naturally unfolds during self-directed activities, as they help themselves to what they want, and the child minder is alongside them for support. When they arrived back from the nursery commute, they all wanted to play in the garden. They enjoyed physical activity taking turns on the trampoline, climbing the outdoor equipment and role playing in the mud kitchen. Indoors they continued role play games, benefiting from the freedom to immerse themselves in make believe games uninterrupted. At other times they chose to join planned activities, such as learning to use sign language during song times, in Welsh and English.

During group activities, learning concepts evolved from general discussions and we heard the child minder and children chatting about the fire evacuation procedures, which they were clearly familiar with. The children also benefit from emotional and wellbeing activities, such as mindfulness (a form of meditation) and visualisation relaxation activities. They have recently written about what they are good at and their positive statements will be displayed on the wall. As part of the activity, they also made stress balls out of seeds and balloons, and positively re-labelled them as “squish balls”.

Children are independent and learning new skills in line with their age and stage of development, such as using the toilet unaided. They are making steady progress to do things independently but recognise and accept support and assistance when needed. For example, we saw them ask the child minder for help within their play to climb the steps to the slide and be pushed on the swings.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

The child minder has a good understanding of safeguarding and has implemented effective processes to minimise any risks to children in her care. She has a skilful approach to managing children's behaviour to support them in their interactions. She also has a very good understanding of the Foundation Phase, which she uses to plan a good variety of opportunities for children's all-round learning needs.

Our findings

The child minder considers the health and wellbeing of children in her care and has robust policies and procedures in place to support her practice. For example, we observed routines for disinfecting surfaces before and after nappy changes, as well as hygienic disposal of dirty nappies in a bin kept outside. The child minder provides all meals, snacks and drinks with plenty of healthy options. We saw children eating apple slices for a late morning snack and at lunch time they had cheese, bread, grapes and yoghurts. Fresh water is made accessible to them at all times in separate drink containers, for them to identify which is theirs. Accident, emergency and fire procedures are in place. The child minder practices regular fire drills with the children, to ensure that they all receive sufficient practice of evacuating the building in the case of an emergency. We viewed the child minder's accident, incident and medication records and noted that they are appropriately setup and include all relevant detail.

The child minder interacts well with children in her care. She gives positive feedback, encouragement and praise and creates a warm and calm atmosphere. She is attuned and responsive to children's needs. We saw her offering a child their dummy and rocking them to sleep in her arms, recognising their need for sleep. At other times, she responded to the children's need for cuddles and reassurance when small disputes occurred within their friendships. She was nurturing in her responses and able to gently guide the children to make positive choices in their interactions. Her high expectations for behaviour are underpinned by positive strategies reflected in her detailed behaviour management policy.

The child minder promotes children's play and development outcomes well. She has a good understanding of the Foundation Phase and plans varied activities to cover all areas. She employs an assistant and works closely to share the planned activities, including writing them in her diary for a point of reference. Her planning centres around seasonal activities and festivals. For example, recently she setup St David's day activities with the children, which included making daffodil handprints. She also runs local play groups involving organising creative and sensory opportunities, which she does within her child minding hours. Furthermore, she plans trips out for the children, including to local parks, woodland walks and to a community garden, which she helped to setup and continues to manage. She has

been approved to run forest school activities, further benefiting children's creative development and outdoor experiences.

The child minder knows the children well and integrates learning concepts, linked to their next steps for development during their chosen play ideas. Progress records are accurately maintained, recorded on observation sheets. These are shared with parents via email for them to track their children's progress.

3. Environment

Good

Summary

The child minder's home is welcoming and well-resourced with equipment and furniture to enable children to play, learn and relax. The environment is regularly risk assessed to maintain good safety standards.

Our findings

The child minder takes good precautions and maintains the environment to maximise children's safety. The premises are secure, doors are locked, and keys are kept out of reach from children, but accessible to the child minder. Public liability insurance has been obtained and is not due for renewal until 15 March 2020. Robust written risk assessments identify hazards and actions for all areas of the home, garden and outings. Daily visual checks are also made to all areas used, to ensure they are safe for minded children. Safety equipment is in place to protect children, and includes a fire blanket, smoke alarms, fire guard and a stair gate leading into the kitchen. Annual safety checks are completed on all gas appliances, ensuring that they are safe to use.

The child minder ensures that the environment is suitable to the needs of all minded children. Her home is free from clutter and kept tidy. The main reception room is used to store toys and resources. They are accessible in toy boxes on low level storage, as well as setup for use. Under the stairs a quiet reading/relaxation area has been created, with a bookshelf, bean bags and under the stairs lighting to create a tranquil atmosphere. There are also sofas for resting. The open plan kitchen and dining area has a further sofa for resting and an adult size table and chairs for children to eat meals, snacks and complete tabletop activities. We observed children sociably gather there to eat their lunch, which the child minder joined in with. There is plenty of space for older children to play separately from younger children if needed, because additionally there is also a conservatory that can be used. Toilet facilities are on the first floor, decorated in Harry Potter theme adding a sense of fun to children using the toilet and sink. We noted that suitable hand washing, and drying facilities are in place to protect children from the risks of cross infection, because liquid soap and paper towels are in use. Appropriate aids are available to help children, such as a step for access to the sink.

The child minder has a good supply of resources to promote children's development and keep them engaged and stimulated. The variety includes resources such as role play items, crafts, books, construction equipment and games, appropriate for the full age range of minded children. The child minder also has Welsh language books and media displayed on

the walls to promote children's experiences of the language. The resources and equipment we saw were all clean and in good working order and the child minder told us that she has more stored in the attic, which she regularly rotates.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Summary

The child minder has effective and well organised record keeping systems to support her business. She understands her responsibility to monitor and evaluate her service and she has completed a quality of care review. Parents feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the service.

Our findings

Leadership of the service is very effective. The child minder fully meets the Child Minding and Day Care Regulations for running a child care service and complies with all of the National Minimum Standards. All required policies and procedures are in place and annually reviewed. However, the child minder's uncollected child policy, within her safeguarding policy, had a typo and only referred to the procedure to follow for non-attendance. The child minder agreed to amend this straight away. The remainder of the safeguarding policy includes all of the required information, including details of the 'Prevent' duty, which is a government strategy to help protect children from extremism. We viewed the statement of purpose and saw that it covered all aspects of the regulations and how the business operates. Children's attendance times are recorded.

We viewed Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) and found that they were in place for the child minder, and all household members over the age of 16. The child minder completes mandatory and additional courses to keep up to date with skills and knowledge, and her certificates were available for inspection. Training that she has recently attended includes paediatric first aid, food hygiene, safeguarding and supporting children's emotional development. She has also completed her level 5 higher apprenticeship in leadership and management in children's care, learning and development. She is dedicated to attending further training opportunities, with the next one planned for March 2020.

The child minder is aware of her responsibility to monitor and evaluate her service every year. She completed a quality of care review in September 2019, which included positive feedback from parents and children about communication, activities, and outings.

The child minder has good processes to develop close working partnerships with parents. She meets with them prior to children starting, to help her to collect important information regarding their needs, and to ensure that there is clarity about the service provided. Contracts and assessment of children's needs forms are completed, including the expectations of both parties. Relevant permission forms are in place and signed by parents, to ensure that they consent to things such as emergency medical treatment. The child minder offers flexible settling in sessions according to parents and children's requirements. She updates parents 1:1 during drop off and collection times and via a closed Facebook page that they have

consented to. She also completes daily diaries for under school aged children, to share information about their day including care tasks and activities.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non-compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

In order to develop the service further and improve outcomes for children, we discussed the following matter with the child minder:

- Ensure that the uncollected child policy accurately reflects the procedure to be followed in the event of a child not being collected from child care.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a scheduled inspection as part of our normal programme of inspections. One inspector undertook one visit to the service and spent time with the child minder and three minded children in her care.

We used the following methods to gather evidence for this report:

- We reviewed all information held by CIW prior to our visit;
- we viewed all parts of the premises being used for child minding purposes,
- we observed the child minder's interactions with the children present;
- we spoke with children about their experiences using the service;
- we spoke with the child minder about how she operates her business;
- we examined a range of documentation, including, policies and procedures, risk assessments, contracts, accident, incident and medication records, attendance records, safety certificates and training certificates; 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	Joanne Stephens
Registered maximum number of places	8
Age range of children	0-12 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday, 8:00am-6pm throughout the year
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	11 January 2017
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	06 March 2020
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: None	

Date Published 31/07/2020

