



Childcare Inspection Report on

Sonia Sprake

Buckley



Date Inspection Completed

19/08/2019

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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

Sonia Sprake provides her child minding service from within her family home in Buckley, where she lives with her partner and two children. The child minder provides her service Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 8am – 5pm, Thursday 9:30am – 5pm and Friday 8am – 2pm, closing for bank holidays and Christmas. Care is provided for children under 12 years and she is registered to care for no more than 10 children at any one time. English is the main language used.

This is a service that does not provide the Welsh Language 'Active Offer'.

Summary

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

1. Overall assessment

Children are settled and enjoy being in the care of the child minder and taking part in activities that support their learning and development. The child minder keeps children safe and promotes elements of a healthy lifestyle. She manages interactions well and is a good role model for the children. Planning of activities allows children to follow their interests and develop a range of skills. The child minder completes risk assessments to ensure potential hazards are managed well. The environment is spacious and equipped with suitable good quality resources. The child minder manages her service well and uses self evaluation to make improvements to the care she offers. She keeps her core training up to date and develops partnerships with parents so information can be shared.

2. Improvements

This is the first inspection since returning to child minding and no improvements were identified. However, major redevelopment work was being completed on the premises, which should have a positive impact on the children and the care they receive.

3. Requirements and recommendations

We made recommendations relating to care and development, the environment and leadership and management.

1. Well-being

Good

Summary

Children have choices and make decisions about the care they receive and how they spend their time. They are relaxed and feel safe in the care of a child minder they have developed a positive relationship with. Children interact well and are learning to understand the needs and feelings of others. They enjoy playing and taking part in activities that support their learning and development.

Our findings

Children were expressing themselves confidently. They knew their ideas and needs would be responded to by the child minder, which led to the children knowing their opinions were listened to and valued. Children were moving around the environment, choosing what they wanted to do and where they wanted to play. For example, one child was sitting at the table doing activities, another child chose to put their coat on and play outside, even though it was raining. Children were given choices relating to the care they received. For example, they were given an option of milk or water to drink at snack time.

Children were relaxed and felt contented in the care of the child minder. They were confident and happy to talk to us and wanted us to be involved in their play and the activities they had chosen to do. Children wanted to show us the different areas they used for their play, showing how they felt secure and proud of their environment. Children knew the routines they needed to follow. For example, after washing their hands they sat outside at the table, poured themselves a drink and waited for their snack. Children had developed a positive relationship with the child minder and were happy to go to her for comfort, support or to play alongside.

Children were using the resources and environment cooperatively. They were beginning to understand the needs of others, which was evident as the children moved around, knowing that others were there and they had to be aware of them. Children shared resources, with very few reminders from the child minder, showing they were learning to understand the expectations. For example, the children were happily playing in the sand pit, making sand castles together. Children respected the resources, using them appropriately and putting them away when they had finished playing.

Children were all fully engaged in a play activity they had chosen. They enjoyed playing together, alongside the child minder or alone, focussing for a suitable length of time for their age and stage of development. For example, one child was having immense fun playing alone outside. They were pretending to look for pirates and kept coming inside to update us on how many they had found. They knew the child minder was available if they wanted her to join them, as she showed interest and enthusiasm in what they were doing.

Children had access to a suitable range of resources that supported their learning and development. Children knew what items were available and asked for those they knew were stored elsewhere. For example, a child wanted to do a writing activity and they asked the child minder to get their individual folder out, as they knew there were activities in there they wanted to do. The child was very proud of their achievement when they completed one of the activities, which involved identify the number of animals. They were keen to share it with the child minder and us. Children were confident to attempt things for themselves, sometimes taking measured risks. For example, a child enjoyed climbing up the steps and rope ladder then walking across the wooden bridge outside.

2. Care and Development

Good

Summary

The child minder implements positive and effective policies that help ensure children are safe. Routines in place are generally effective in promoting a healthy lifestyle and regular opportunities are provided for children to be active and get fresh air. The child minder models good behaviour and manages interactions well. She plans suitable opportunities for the children that allow them to follow their interests and develop a range of skills.

Our findings

The child minder had up to date training regarding safeguarding and the policy in place evidenced she knew the procedure to follow should she have concerns about a child. Records showed that incidents and accidents had been recorded appropriately and shared with parents. The child minder followed routines that helped prevent cross contamination. These include regular hand washing, tables being cleaned regularly and children being provided with liquid soap and paper towels. Regular fire drills were conducted so she and the children were aware of how to evacuate the premises if needed.

The child minder promoted elements of a healthy lifestyle. Although she did not provide meals or snacks for the children, she encouraged them to have a healthy packed lunch and if children did not want what they had brought for their snack, she offered a healthy alternative. For example, a child did not want their snack so the child minder offered them some raspberries. However, the children were given diluted juice for a drink at lunch which does not follow recent new guidance on nutrition for child care providers. The child minder was aware of the importance of keeping children hydrated and ensured they had access to water throughout the day. The child minder planned plenty of opportunities for the children to be active and get fresh air. Children were able to choose to play indoors or outside throughout the day. The child minder told us that children could go out in all weathers and the children confirmed this.

The child minder promoted positive behaviour through being a good role model. She helped the children to develop their speech and communication skills by encouraging and supporting them to express themselves and responding with care and interest. The child minder dealt with the very few small incidents calmly and by getting down to the child's level and discussing the issue. For example, when a child was asked to share, she knelt down and explained that it was kind to share. The child minder made sure she shared the routines with the children and told them what was happening throughout the day so they were fully aware.

The child minder understood the needs of the individual children she cared for. She spoke with affection and knowledge about their likes, dislikes and needs. Appropriate resources and activities were provided for the children so they could follow their interests. The child minder completed weekly plans that related to a topic and resources related to this topic were provided for the children. For example, the latest topic was animals, so the child

minder had provided writing, number and play activities that were animal related. She had also planned to take the children on a teddy bears picnic the following day, which the children were looking forward to. The child minder tracked the individual progress of the children and records were kept so they could be shared with parents and so next steps could be identified. She promoted independence, giving the children the time, space and resources to attempt things for themselves. For example, they had the equipment needed so they could pour their own drinks.

3. Environment

Adequate

Summary

The environment is safe with hazards managed well by the child minder. All areas used by the children were suitable and provided them with enough indoor and outdoor space to play and learn. Resources were age appropriate and of a good quality.

Our findings

The environment was generally safe. Risk assessments had been completed and showed hazards were eliminated wherever possible. They included reference to the renovations that were taking place and how these were being managed so they had minimal impact on the children and the care they received. For example, temporary fencing had been erected to partition an area off for the pet dog to go and artificial grass had been laid while they were waiting for the patio to be finished. The child minder completed weekly checks on the environment to ensure no new hazards had occurred. The front door was kept locked, as was the gate leading into the back of the house, this ensured there was no unauthorised access and children were unable to leave unsupervised.

The children had the use of most of the downstairs of the child minder's house in which to play. There was an allocated room that was set up as a playroom. This gave the children a specific area where they could access resources and their work be displayed, giving the children a sense of belonging. The kitchen was used for craft activities and the lounge provided a space for children to relax and have some quiet time. All areas were suitably maintained even though there were signs that improvements were being made. There were two outdoor areas that the children could access. A small area directly off the playroom had been laid with artificial grass and was available for use by the children when they wished to have their snack outside. The other, larger area, was accessed through the kitchen. This had fixed play equipment and storage for other resources. All areas, indoors and outside were utilised well.

Resources were of a good quality and suitable for the age ranges of the children attending. The large fixed play equipment in the garden gave children the opportunity to develop their coordination, balance and gross motor skills. It had a swing, slide and wooden bridge that was accessed by climbing up some steps or a rope ladder. The storage indoors allowed children some independence as they could access what they wanted to play with and there were child sized tables and chairs so children could be comfortable when eating or when they were involved in a table top activity.

4. Leadership and Management

Good

Summary

The child minder effectively manages her service. She has a clear understanding of the care she offers and shares this with others. Self evaluation is ongoing and is used effectively to make improvements that benefit the children. The child minder ensures her training is up to date. She forms positive partnerships with parents and helps children to feel part of the community through visits to local places of interest.

Our findings

The child minder managed her service well. She had a good knowledge of the service and care she offered, which was evident in the policies and procedures that were up to date and reflected current practice and care provided. The statement of purpose was a good source of information for parents so they could decide if it was the right care for them and their child and it contained all the required details. All paperwork was organised which made it easy to find the information needed.

The child minder understood the requirement to complete a quality of care review after 12 months of her operating her service. She had begun collecting views of parents through questionnaires and looked at the comments made to help plan improvements. The child minder had self assessed her service and identified areas for improvements, mainly relating to the environment. These were being completed as part of the renovations that were taking place, evidencing her commitment to improving her service.

The child minder had ensured her and any household member over the age of 16 had an up to date Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. She had completed core training including, paediatric first aid, safeguarding and food hygiene.

The child minder worked closely with parents. She sent pictures of the children taking part in activities to parents throughout the day. Returned parent questionnaires evidenced that parents felt informed about their child's day, their progress and they commented that they felt welcomed at the service.

The child minder used local areas to enhance the children's experiences and help them feel part of the community. For example, visiting local parks and play centres.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

We made the following recommendations;

- to continue to manage the changing risks while building work is taking place;
- consider the new guidance for food and nutrition in child care settings regarding providing juice for children at lunch time, and
- continue to gather the views of children and parents to form part of the quality of care report.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken as part of our schedule of inspections where the provider was given short notice to check their availability. One inspector visited the service on 19 August 2019 from 10:00 to 13:30.

We:

- Inspected a range of paperwork including, policies and procedures, registers, risk assessments and two children's files;
- observed practice to evidence the children's engagement and the care being provided by the child minder;
- spoke to the children and child minder;
- inspected areas used by the children, and
- gave feedback to the child minder on the day.

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	Sonia Sprake
Registered maximum number of places	10
Age range of children	Under 12 years
Opening hours	Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 8am – 5pm, Thursday 9:30am – 5pm and Friday 8am – 2pm.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	3 August 2015
Dates of this inspection visit(s)	19 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 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 recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh Language in social care.'
Additional Information:	

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