



Inspection Report

Karen Sparkes

Aberdare



Date Inspection Completed

05/12/2023

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2023.

*You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*

About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered places	7
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	27 October 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

<u>Well-being</u>	Good
<u>Care and Development</u>	Good
<u>Environment</u>	Adequate
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

For further information on ratings, please see the end of this report

Summary

Children are clearly quite at home with a child minder who is caring and nurturing. They feel very secure, happy, and comfortable at this setting. They play freely, have fun, and express themselves well. Children choose toys and activities from the selection available. They have a very good relationship with each other and the child minder.

The child minder provides a nurturing and caring atmosphere and meets children's needs successfully. She offers a range of free play opportunities and some planned activities for children to access independently or with support.

The child minder ensures the environment is safe, clean, and well maintained. The premises are homely, welcoming and organised. The child minder provides an adequate range of resources, which provide opportunities to develop children's play and learning.

The setting is managed well. The child minder is suitably qualified and has a clear vision for her service. There are a beneficial range of policies and procedures in place. Communication with parents is effective. We, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) have noted two recommendations at the end of the report.

Children are clearly quite at home with a child minder who is caring and nurturing. They feel comfortable to express themselves through verbal and non-verbal communication. Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions. For example, they play freely and make choices about the toys and activities they engage with. Children confidently chat and interact with us, CIW following a morning in school. They have a strong voice at this setting.

Children are secure, comfortable and happy. They engage and chatter away to the child minder, receiving nurturing and appropriate responses which makes them feel safe and valued. They are very settled and relaxed. Children display positive emotional bonds with the child minder and are completely at ease with her. They know the routines well. For example, when children arrive after a morning in school, they take off their coats and shoes and wash their hands before having lunch. Children are active and express enthusiasm and enjoyment. They have fun with the child minder. We heard them laugh and giggle as they discussed eating their crusts and that this would give them curly, 'crumbly' hair.

Interactions between children and the child minder are consistently good. Children cooperate well, they are polite and considerate. Children are treated with respect and the child minder takes their views into account. For example, children are encouraged to eat their food but are also listened to when they say they have had enough. Children interact well with each other. They are beginning to develop empathy for each other. For example, a child comforted her friend after she had a small fall and made sure that the chair her friend had tripped over had a 'row'. Children are learning to share and take turns are ably supported in this process.

Children confidently choose activities that interest them. They enjoy their play and learning. For example, one child showed enjoyment and sustained interest in an art activity, using different stampers to create a picture. Children are supported and their self-esteem is raised as the child minder consistently praises their efforts. Children have freedom to safely explore their indoor environment. They have good opportunities to initiate their own play and to influence their activities.

Children have opportunities to develop their skills and independence appropriately. They are encouraged to feed themselves at mealtimes for example, as well as retrieve and use resources independently.

Care and Development

Good

The child minder has a range of purposeful policies, which promote children's safety and well-being. However, some policies are in need of review to ensure the child minder's current practice is accurately reflected. Her safeguarding training is up to date, and she has procedures in place to safeguard children, appropriately and confidently answering child protection scenarios. The child minder promotes children's health successfully. She holds current first aid and food hygiene certificates. There are appropriate systems in place to record accident, incident and medication administration. Effective hygiene practices are in place, with regular cleaning routines followed. The child minder supervises children well and the pet dogs are kept out of the areas the children use during child minding hours.

The child minder has a positive behaviour management policy in place. She follows the policy and uses the positive management strategies consistently, praising children for their achievements and encouraging turn taking and sharing. She positively models the language associated with good manners and acts as a good role model at all times. The child minder engages successfully with children, whilst promoting their learning and particularly their self-esteem. Interactions are consistently positive demonstrating respect, warmth and kindness.

The child minder provides a nurturing and caring atmosphere and gives responsive care. She is aware of the children's individual development. The child minder maintains useful developmental records and is aware of the benefits of recording such information and its use in planning the next steps in learning and play. She knows the children very well and has a good understanding of each child's individual needs and routine. She involves children in a variety of activities, both planned and free play. She supports children in their free play, using incidental opportunities to extend discussion and learning opportunities. For example, introducing shapes and colours when a child is engaged with an art activity. Activities are fun and fully engage the children's interest. The child minder does not use Welsh to further develop children's play and learning.

Environment**Adequate**

The child minder ensures the indoor environment is safe, clean, and well maintained. The child minder keeps a record of the visitors to the premises and the front door is locked once the children have arrived. She practises regular fire drills at varying times so children are familiar with this routine. Comprehensive and robust risk assessments are in place and show that risks have been considered and minimised where possible.

The premises is welcoming, well organised, and homely. Children benefit from a dedicated play area which is organised and full of resources. Within the play area, there is low-level, accessible storage and furniture which children can easily access. Children's recent artwork is displayed within the play area, strengthening their connection to the space. Children freely move between the play area and living room. Children are able to access the first-floor bathroom with the support of the childminder. It is clean and well maintained. At the time of our visit the outside area was not being used and this is generally the case during the wintertime. The child minder does however make good use of her local rural area taking children on walks to ensure that children enjoy and benefit from time outdoors.

Indoors, the child minder ensures children have access to an adequate range of toys and play equipment that suit their individual needs. Toys and resources are stored appropriately, and the layout and design of the environment promotes children's independence. For instance, children can access play toys and resources themselves or ask the child minder to pull out what they want.

Leadership and Management

Good

The child minder runs her service well. She is organised and maintains all the required records to a good standard. The child minder has up to date car documents. A statement of purpose is in place and provides an accurate reflection of the service provided. There are a range of beneficial and thorough policies in place. The child minder is suitably qualified and has a clear vision for her service and she has some understanding of current best practice relevant to the children in her care.

The child minder reviews and reflects upon her service and produces a purposeful quality of care report. She seeks information from parents and children to support her in the evaluation of her service and provides an opportunity to make suggestions for improvements. For example, she asks children what new toys, equipment or craft supplies they require. The report looks at what works well and targets areas for improvement. The child minder engages positively with CIW, consistently and swiftly acting on recommendations in relation to her service.

The child minder promotes positive partnerships with parents. During our visit we observed a thorough handover where it was clear that communication and the exchange of information is good. The child minder keeps parents up to date regularly through verbal communication during drop off or pick up, private messages and the use of social media. The child minder also completes a daily book for younger children which gives a detailed breakdown of their day.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
20 (2) (a)	The child minder has failed to ensure that all household members over the age of 16 have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. Once the DBS certificate has been issued, the child minder must inform CSSIW and make it available to officers.	Achieved
6 (3) (a) [i]	The child minder has not ensured that she has a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. Once the DBS certificate has been issued, the child minder must inform CSSIW and make it available to officers.	Achieved

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
	The child minder has not ensured that she has an up to date gas safety certificate. She must ensure that a safety check is immediately undertaken and a copy of the gas safety check should be forwarded to CSSIW.	Achieved

Where we find the provider is not meeting the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Child Care but there is no immediate or significant risk for people using the service, we highlight these as Recommendations to Meet National Minimum Standards.

We expect the provider to take action to address these and we will follow these up at the next inspection.

National Minimum Standards	
Standard	Recommendation(s)
	No NMS Recommendations were identified at this inspection

Where we think it helpful, we may make best practice recommendations. These are to encourage settings that are doing well to become even better at helping children thrive.

Best Practice
Recommendation(s)
Further develop the use of Welsh within the setting.
Improve written policies to include evidence of review dates and ensure policies reflect current practice.

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.

Was this report helpful?

We want to hear your views and experiences of reading our inspection reports. This will help us understand whether our reports provide clear and valuable information to you.

To share your views on our reports please visit the following link to complete a short survey:

- [Inspection report survey](#)

If you wish to provide general feedback about a service, please visit our [Feedback surveys page](#).

Date Published 30/01/2024