



Inspection Report

Geraldine Monk

Abertillery



Date Inspection Completed

26/10/2023

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About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered places	10, either alone, or working alongside other child minder's registered at the premises.
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	6 August 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>	Adequate
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Adequate

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

Summary

Children are settled, have good opportunities to make choices and are confident in their environment. They are happy and have strong bonds with the child minder which helps them feel safe and valued. Children are relaxed in her company and enjoy the time they spend in her care. They thoroughly enjoy learning through play.

The child minder provides responsive care and supervision to children. She has recently updated relevant training courses. She keeps children safe and is aware of her responsibilities towards supporting children's welfare and some of their development. She works alongside two other child minder's working from the same address, and has an assistant as and when needed.

The home provides a good space for children to play and explore in comfort. The space is clean, pleasant, welcoming and the premises is in good repair. Children benefit from a broad range of suitable resources to promote play and learning.

The leadership and management is mostly effective. There are adequate policies and procedures in place, however the child minder needs to update them to ensure they are current and relevant to her. Almost all records and recording systems are sufficient. The child minder has good relationships with the children's parents. There is a system for monitoring the quality of care provided by the service, however some minor improvements are needed. The child minder has some information on her assistant. Some recommendations from the last inspection have been met.

Well-being

Good

Children almost always make choices and enjoy the time they spend at the child minder's setting. They are confident to speak up and make their needs and wishes known, and all forms of communication are respected. We saw a young child shaking his head to indicate he didn't want any yogurt when the child minder asked him after his lunch. When the child minder asked if he was sure, he confirmed "*I don't want a yogurt*". Children have opportunities to follow their play interests and to make decisions and choices about what they like to do. For example, a child confidently stated they wanted to make paper aeroplanes after lunch, which they did.

Children are very content and settled. They have developed strong relationships with the child minder and other adults. Children are confident to approach them all for guidance or reassurance. For example, when a child was trying to eat their pasta using a fork, they were encouraged by the child minder to keep trying. A child colouring a picture asked the child minder: "*Want to help me Ger?*" and the child was told: "*Yes I'll help you.*"

Children interact positively with the child minder and are used to the routines of the setting, including tidying up before lunch. Children find great enjoyment in their play and concentrate on activities for an appropriate amount of time. We saw children who were active and curious. They move freely around their play space, choosing the toys and activities that fill the playroom. We saw children enjoy playing with paper aeroplanes, jigsaws and colouring in paper ready to make them into aeroplanes.

Children have opportunities to develop new skills and practice some independence. For example, children washed their hands using the mobile hand washing unit in the play area, and dried their hands with paper towel. Children are given time and space to select their own toys and follow their own interests, supported by the child minder and/or other child minders when required.

Care and Development

Adequate

The child minder has suitable knowledge of how to keep children safe and healthy. She understands the principles of child protection and safeguarding and has recently undergone refresher training. The child minder has policies on safeguarding, which included 'Prevent'. The policy was updated after our visit to include information on the actions that could be taken, if an allegation was made against her. The child minder had a behaviour policy which was generic for the three child minders working on the premises.

The child minder sometimes follows hygiene practices, she washed her hands before preparing lunch; however, she did not wear an apron. The child minder did not wipe the children's hands after lunch, or ask them to wash their hands. She did not wipe the table before or after they had eaten. Food provided was not always in line with Welsh Government guidance; however forms have now been devised for parents to complete regarding food choices.

The child minder has permissions in place from parents for various events such as outings, doctors visits and for children's emergency medical treatment. Accidents and medication records are available, however, the last dose of medication administered at home was not recorded. We heard her give safety messages to the children such as "*Careful now, not too much in your mouth.*" The child minder told a child; "*no you mustn't do that*" when they pointed their fork at another child.

The child minder treats children warmly, with dignity and respect. The child minder takes account of the children's age and understanding. We saw the child minder was positive and warm when talking and playing with the children. She used praise for positive actions such as "*Well done, I knew you could do it*" and "*that's it turn him round, well done*" when a child was completing a dinosaur jigsaw.

The child minder provides a caring environment for children and mostly promotes their development. She knows the children well and considers their interests and abilities. This helps the children to respond well, be interested and engaged in their play and learning. No developmental records are used at present with the younger children. However blank development sheets are in place, and the child minder told us that she will commence these with the younger children.

The child minder promotes independence, as we saw children helping themselves to small bowls of cucumber, carrot and cheese to go with their pasta bake. The child minder encouraged children to eat independently; however, helped when a child could not get the pasta on their fork. We noted the television was left on through the day, and during lunchtime this proved to be a distraction. We did not hear the child minder using Welsh as part of the daily routine, and she did not celebrate or promote any other cultures or religions which reflect our diverse world.

Environment

Good

The child minder cares for children in a clean and safe environment. She has monthly risk assessments in place for the home, pets, and front garden. She also has risk assessments for travelling in the car and a fire risk assessment, all were reviewed regularly. Risk assessments for visit's/outings were not completed at the time of our visit; however this is now in place. A first aid kit is situated in the entrance to the house and there is one for outings.

A visitor's book is available; however, the other persons working at the address were not recorded as present when child minding takes place; or which children they were responsible for. This is now recorded. Children's registers seen did not record the actual times of arrival and departure, and their ages for ratio purposes. The child minder has smoke alarms and a carbon monoxide alarm in place, and a wall mounted fire blanket. The child minder undertakes regular fire drills with the children which are recorded, but the exit used and time taken was not. The child minder maintains relevant insurances and an annual gas and log burner safety certificate for her home.

The facilities and equipment provided meet the children's needs. The home is welcoming and friendly, appropriately maintained, and there is a good standard of cleanliness and repair throughout. The main play spaces are the well laid out playroom/dining area and small enclosed front garden. The first floor and rear garden are not used. The child minder has decorated the hallway in an inviting, child-friendly way, for example, with an Autumn display, birthday wall with cup-cakes with children's names and dates of birth, and a hand printed hedgehog.

Small tables and chairs allow younger children to sit at the table to complete activities or to eat, and if they wish to rest, a settee is available, as well as a child size settee and armchair. A clean, hygienically maintained bathroom and hand washing facilities are available on the ground floor, which older children can use independently. This has a changing table a a child size toilet potty. Safety gates are in place where needed.

Children have access to toys and equipment that are appropriate and suitable to their needs. A large number of resources are stored within the play space, which were adequate for the age and interests of the children attending, and some are stored low for easy access. Outside, the the child minder has other resources in the enclosed front garden. For example, there is a small summer house, and a mud kitchen.

Leadership and Management

Adequate

The child minder has a Statement of Purpose in place which contained the information required. However, it was a generic document used for the three child minders operating from the address, and was not specific to each person. The setting has policies in place that are mostly appropriate, although some were amended after our visit, a few require reviewing and updating to ensure the information is current for each child minder.

The child minder has robust procedures in place to ensure she is suitable to care for children. The child minder and relevant members of her household have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in place. The child minder has all vehicle documents in place to ensure the safe transportation of minded children. She is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. The child minder has an assistant who has all the relevant training in place; however, the staff file was incomplete, and appraisals were not carried out.

The child minder identifies children's needs and preferences ensuring suitable quality care is provided. She has records for minded children which contain almost all the information required, including almost all children's contracts, however, one contract was only signed by one child minder, and one child's contract was missing. Information sheets completed by parents inform the child minder about their child in 'All about me' sheets; however this did not include the parent's wishes on sleep arrangements for their child. This has now been added.

The child minder makes sure children and parents benefit from a setting which is committed to acceptable standards and improving outcomes for children. There is a quality-of-care review in place to ensure that the child minder undertakes formal self-evaluation on an annual basis, as required by the regulations. The child minder gives parents and children questionnaires annually, and the plan includes the views of parents on the service; however, the children's views are not evaluated. All questionnaires completed by parents were complimentary about the child minders service.

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

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
28	At inspection on 26 October 2023, the staff file for the child minding assistant did not contain two written references as required.	New

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)
Standard 6 - Working in partnership with parents	Ensure young children's progress is recorded to help plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development.
Standard 18 - Quality assurance	The views of the children are evaluated as part of the quality of care review to measure the success of the service in meeting the assessed needs of the children.
Standard 12 - Food and drink	Consider recommendations in the Welsh Government Food and Health Guidelines for Early Years and Child Care Settings (2009)

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)
All contracts and documents must be signed by all child minder's working from the premises.
Promote diversity by celebrating cultural and religious celebrations.
Ensure the ages or dates of birth, and actual attendance times are recorded for children.
Each child minder working from the premises must have their own statement of purpose.
Update policies to include all the current and relevant information.

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.

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