



Inspection Report

Ruth Howard

Neath



Date Inspection Completed

29/11/2023

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About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered places	10
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10 May 2019
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	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.

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

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

Summary

Children are happy, relaxed, and comfortable in the child minder's care. They develop positive relationships with each other, the child minder and her assistants. Children of all ages communicate confidently with the child minder. They experience a suitable range of activities and enjoy their play. Children make satisfactory progress and are developing their independence adequately.

The child minder delivers warm and supportive care. She provides some appropriate resources and toys to ensure children can follow their interests. The child minder knows the children well and is at the early stages of implementing a new observational tool to support children's learning and development.

Children receive care in a relatively safe, clean and secure environment. There is sufficient space with a suitable supply of toys and resources available. These are in good condition and promote children's play and learning appropriately. The child minder is developing her garden to provide a stimulating outdoor play space.

The child minder's management of her service is adequate, improvements are needed. There are a range of policies and procedures in place to support the appropriate running of the service. The child minder and her assistants have undertaken mandatory training. Parents feedback is very complimentary and the child minder builds positive partnerships with them.

Well-being

Adequate

Children have some opportunities to make choices and decisions about things that affect them and how they spend their time at the setting. For example, they have free play in the conservatory, choosing what toys and resources to play with. However, some activities were adult directed. For example, children had not been provided with a choice of paints or given the opportunity to decide where the glitter was placed whilst completing the Christmas craft activity. Children communicate confidently in a variety of ways and know they will be listened to. For example, a baby's body language suggested they need a cuddle and adults immediately responded, helping them settle.

Children are happy and settled with the child minder and her assistants. Children are relaxed in the environment and explore the play space freely. As a result, they develop confidence and form close bonds with their peers and the adults caring for them. We heard children chatting to their carers about Christmas and saw them approach their carers for cuddles with ease.

Overall, children interact and behave well as is appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Most children play alongside each other managing their behaviour well. They are learning to respect others, to share and to take turns. Children are familiar with routines and follow the child minder's directions, such as when she asks them to wash their hands or get ready for the school run.

Children enjoy their play. They co-operate and work well together to build a magnetic tower, giggling when the tower fell down. They had fun taking part in the music and movement session, thoroughly enjoyed singing songs and receiving praise for their efforts. Most children identified colours with ease and a few spontaneously counted.

Children have suitable opportunities to develop their independence skills. For example, most children are able to wash and dry their hands but the child minder is on hand to offer support if necessary. Babies are supported well with their meals and many older children eat independently. However, children need support to leave the breakfast bar as the bar stools are too high.

Care and Development

Adequate

The child minder has appropriate procedures to keep children safe and healthy. The child minder has a suitable safeguarding policy and ensures that her and her assistant child protection training is up to date. They understand the process to follow should they have concerns about a child. The child minder does not provide any meals but stores packed lunches appropriately. She carries out regular cleaning and follows relatively good hygiene procedures, such as washing down surfaces. However, on occasions, the pet dog took the children's toys. The child minder has appropriate systems in place to record accidents and safe administration of medication. The child minder and her assistants have up-to-date training in paediatric first aid, enabling them to deal with minor accidents confidently.

The child minder has a calm manner with the children, her interactions are positive, demonstrating warmth and kindness. She has a suitable behaviour management policy. No issues of unwanted behaviour were observed during the inspection and distraction methods are used to manage minor upsets. The child minder knows the children well and responds positively to their needs.

The child minder adequately supports children's learning and development through the experiences she provides and her interactions with them. She regularly praises the children and talks to them in a way suited to their age and level of understanding. The child minder plans some activities informally and follows monthly themes such as Christmas. The child minder is in the early stages of implementing new observational records of children's development. We heard some basic Welsh words being used and children were encouraged to identify colours and count.

Environment**Adequate**

The child minder ensures her home is secure, generally safe and clean. For example, she keeps external doors locked and has an entry system that includes a camera. She uses her diary to keep a record of visitors, however, stated that she does not have any visitors during working hours. The child minder has suitable risk assessments in place and appropriately supervises children. The child minder had made changes and updated her risk assessment in relation to the fire hearth. The childminder told us the garden is out of bounds at present as it is not safe due to the area being developed. However, she had not updated her risk assessment to reflect this. Following the inspection, the child minder provided an updated risk assessment. The child minder ensures her home is well maintained and has the appropriate safety certificates in place, such as the annual boiler service. She has the necessary vehicle documentation in place to transport children. The child minder told us that she completes occasional fire evacuation practices, however, no records were available at the time of the inspection. The public liability insurance certificate viewed at the inspection had expired, the child minder told us that she has renewed the insurance.

The child minder provides a welcoming and friendly environment for children. It is light, bright, and has sufficient space for children to play and learn. Children have use of the open plan kitchen/dining room, living room and conservatory and can easily access the downstairs bathroom, with supervision. The child minder is in the process of obtaining a grant to renovate her garden to create a space that gives children many additional play and learning opportunities.

The child minder provides a sufficient range of resources, appropriate for a range of ages and interests. They are stored at low level allowing children to access many of them independently. The resources we saw were clean and in good condition. However, children did not have access to child size furniture to eat their meals. The child minder told us that she had low level furniture but had recently removed them.

Leadership and Management

Adequate

The child minder is managing her business adequately and is committed to providing a good quality service. The child minder has a Statement of Purpose which overall reflects her service. She has a suitable range of policies and procedures in place to support the running of her setting. Although, some are dated 2018 and some are not dated, making it difficult to see if the child minder has reviewed them. Overall, most paperwork is sufficient. However, the child minder has not maintained a daily record of children and staff attendance and there is no permission for emergency medical treatment on children's files. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to take action. Children's contracts have not always been signed. This matter was raised at the last inspection. The child minder is not currently registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

The child minder has an appropriate self-evaluation system in place to help her plan how she will improve her service. This includes using the feedback from parents and children. She has developed a written report which highlights strengths and areas of improvement. For example, implementing the developmental charts and developing the garden.

The child minder ensures she, adult household members and assistants have up to date disclosure and barring service checks (DBS). However, the child minder had not ensured that all the required recruitment information in relation to her assistants was available. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to take action. The child minder ensures they regularly update their mandatory training such as paediatric first aid, in line with legislation. The child minder is currently attending an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) training course.

The child minder develops good partnerships with parents. The child minder communicates verbally and electronically with parents. We saw some positive feedback from parents about the child minder in the information she has gathered to inform her quality-of-care review. The child minder takes children on outings into the local community which provides additional play and learning opportunities.

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
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30	The registered person must keep a daily record of attendance for children and her assistants.	New
28	The registered person must maintain the required recruitment checks for her assistants.	New
29	The registered person must undertaken supervisions and annual appraisals with her assistants.	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 10 - Healthcare	Ensure written parental permission is obtained in advance regarding any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.
Standard 24 - Safety	Ensure the risk assessment of the premises is completed at least annually and is reviewed, particularly the fire hearth, when there are any changes to the premises or the needs of the children and ensure fire drill records are available for inspection.
Standard 10 - Healthcare	Ensure animals on the premises are safe to be in the proximity of children and do not pose a health risk.
Standard 17 - Financial procedures	Ensure the public liability insurance certificate is available for 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)
Ensure all contracts are signed where necessary and include details about when children will be left alone with an assistants.
Ensure policies and procedures are dated for review purposes.
Register with the information commissioners office (ICO) if necessary.

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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