



Inspection Report

Sherry Davies

Blackwood



Date Inspection Completed

20/03/2024

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About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered places	8
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	23 January 2018
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>	Excellent
<u>Care and Development</u>	Good
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

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

Summary

Children are extremely happy, have fun and thrive in the child minder's care. They have a very strong voice and express their needs and opinions clearly. They have excellent opportunities to make choices and their interests are highly valued. They have very strong bonds with the child minder and are exceptionally relaxed in her company.

The child minder understands her responsibility to keep children safe and healthy. Interactions are nurturing and she is extremely responsive to the needs of the children. The child minder promotes children's learning and development well. She provides a good range of different activities and resources that promote children in progressing their all-round skills.

The child minder's home is safe, clean and well maintained, providing ample space for children to play in comfort. All safety aspects for children are fully considered and beneficial risk assessments and safety checks are in place. A good variety of toys, resources and play equipment are available, which are age appropriate and in very good condition.

The child minder manages and provides a high-quality service for both children and parents. She annually reviews her service to identify any areas for improvement. She has built positive partnerships with parents and works well to provide them with information about children's well-being and care.

Well-being**Excellent**

Children play freely and are always involved in making decisions about their routine. For example, when children said they were not ready to have lunch, the child minder postponed it for a short time, and they continued to play happily. Children are extremely confident to communicate with the child minder and ask for anything they might want. We heard children requesting to play a variety of different games and activities and confidently tell the child minder when they were ready to move on to the next activity saying, *"I don't want to play this game anymore"*.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the service and are extremely settled and relaxed within the child minder's home. It is clear that the children have formed affectionate relationships with the child minder. We saw children often approach her for spontaneous cuddles and invite her to join in with their play. Children consistently receive frequent praise for their efforts and achievements, enhancing their self-esteem. For example, children were bursting with delight when they were praised for things such as sharing resources, recognising their colours, and helping to tidy activities away, allowing them to feel valued and gain a sense of achievement.

Interactions between children and the child minder are excellent. Children thoroughly enjoy the child minder's company, sharing plenty of smiles and giggles. They are developing friendships by attending regular toddler and play group sessions which has helped to support them to share resources and take turns in their play. For example, we observed children readily sharing resources and using a method of 'my turn, your turn, as they played a game of 'Picken Chickens'. Children are particularly considerate of others' feelings. As they built towers together from large blocks, they showed compassion when another's tower fell down saying *"It's okay, I will help you make it again"*.

Children engage exceptionally in their chosen play. They concentrate well and sustain interest in their chosen activities for extended periods. For example, we observed children engrossed in the role-play kitchen as they made 'eggy bread'. They enthusiastically ask the child minder *"Would you like some?"* as they find the ingredients they need. They show delight and excitement in focused activities such as the alphabet song as they eagerly help the child minder to find matching picture and sound cards. They show off their work saying *"Here you go, I've made you a flower"* as they hold up their playdough model proudly.

Children are developing their independence skills superbly for their age and are extremely motivated to follow their personal interests. They freely access the resources that they want to use and pick out toys confidently. They assertively ask for help from the child minder when they need it. For example, we heard them ask the child minder to help them take their shoes off. They listen well to the child minder and follow simple directions, such as helping to tidy toys away and wash their hands at appropriate times.

Care and Development**Good**

The child minder has a good understanding of how to keep children safe and healthy. She has a range of beneficial policies in place, including a detailed safeguarding policy which has been updated since the last inspection to include information on the different signs of abuse. She is aware of her responsibility to report any safeguarding matters and understands the procedures to follow should she have any concerns about children's safety or welfare. However, we noted that her safeguarding training had expired. The child minder implements her health and safety policies and procedures effectively. She promotes healthy lifestyles by encouraging parents to provide children with healthy meals and physical activity is encouraged. She follows effective hygiene procedures when changing nappies and encourages and supports children to wash their hands regularly. There is a clear medication policy and procedure that is followed. Records of all accidents and incidents are kept and this information is shared with parents and signatures are obtained. The child minder has current paediatric first aid training, enabling her to deal with minor injuries confidently and she obtains written permission from parents for a variety of situations, including emergency medical care.

The child minder has a lovely manner with children and delivers warm, nurturing care. She is calm and patient, lowering to children's level to interact and engage with them. She consistently implements positive strategies in line with her behaviour management policy, offering regular and consistent praise to children for their efforts. For example, we heard the child minder using positive language such as *"Wow, well done, that's very clever"*, and *"That's very kind of you"* frequently. The child minder is a positive role model and sets realistic boundaries. She manages any unwanted behaviour using gentle tones and verbal reminders such as *"No thank you, remember we have kind hands"* and *"Be careful you don't hurt yourself"*. Manners such as 'please' and 'thankyou' are continuously encouraged.

The child minder is responsive to children's individual needs. She has fostered strong relationships with children and parents and knows the needs and preferences of the children in her care very well. She enthusiastically engages in children's play. We saw her singing songs, counting and naming objects and colours with the children as they shared smiles and played together. She is aware of children's individual ability allowing her to support their learning effectively. She naturally extends children's learning by asking questions such as *"What do you think might have happened here?"* providing them with a sense of wonder. The child minder occasionally takes photographs of activities undertaken to share with parents and makes informal notes on children's development. However, we did not see any formal observations or development records during our visit to show children's progress and next steps in learning. During the inspection, we did not hear the child minder promoting the use of any Welsh language or provide opportunities for children to develop their Welsh language skills.

The child minder ensures areas used by the children are safe, secure and meets their needs. External entrances are locked at all times with a 'Ring Bell' system in place for additional security and a log of any visitors is maintained. Fire drills are completed regularly and as a result children are very familiar with the process. The child minder manages risks well and undertakes daily visual checks to identify any emerging risks that could impact on children's safety and well-being. Additionally, the child minder has a number of detailed risk assessments for both the setting and outings and reviews them regularly to ensure children's safety. The child minder ensures that the maintenance checks for the home and appliances are up to date and fire equipment is regularly tested.

The child minder provides a welcoming 'home from home' environment which is child friendly. The home is comfortable for children and is very well maintained. Children have access to the downstairs lounge and dining room as well as a dedicated playroom, which provides a light, bright area for children to play. Children use the downstairs bathroom which is suitably equipped to support children's independence and suitable procedures are in place to change nappies downstairs. Safety gates are in place around the home to restrict access for children to areas such as the kitchen when unsupervised. Furniture is of suitable size and design for the age of the children and there are comfortable sofas where children can relax and rest. The child minder provides an area for outdoor play in her rear garden. Although this was not in use during our visit, we could see that it was secure, well-maintained, and contained a range of play opportunities for children. The child minder told us that during better weather conditions, she provides free flow access to the rear garden where children can choose from a variety of play opportunities.

The child minder ensures that the children have access to a variety of good quality and age-appropriate resources and ensures they are relevant to children's learning. For example, construction sets, interactive games, arts and crafts, small-world and role-play. Resources are organised well, and children can access most resources freely because they are stored at low level, supporting their independence. The child minder also has a wide variety of outdoor equipment including ride on toys, a pop-up tent and a tunnel. The child minder regularly rotates toys to provide further choice and variety for children. She provides some multi-cultural resources such as dolls, books and puzzles, helping to promote equality and awareness of various cultures and the diverse society we live in. Children's work is on display in the playroom, helping to provide a sense of belonging.

Leadership and Management

Good

The child minder is experienced in her role and is committed to providing a high-quality service. She has a clear statement of purpose which provides parents with the information they need to make an informed decision about its suitability for their child. The child minder has a range of beneficial policies and procedures in place and has kept these updated through regular review. The complaints policy has also recently been updated to include information regarding consideration of any complaints made against the child minder as well as procedures for outside agencies to investigate a complaint. The child minder obtains relevant information about children as part of the admission process, which helps ease their transition into her setting. Records about the children are completed and organised including contracts, children's information forms and parental consents.

The child minder monitors the quality of her service effectively. She asks for the views of children and parents, using their feedback to evaluate the service she provides and produce a quality-of-care report. The report reflects positive feedback from parents and children. She ensures she makes continuous improvements to meet the needs of the children. For example, she has previously added a range of multi-cultural resources for children's use and purchased new storage units to make resources more easily accessible for children helping to support their independence. The child minder submits her Self-Assessment of Service Statement when requested by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

The child minder has a good oversight of her business. She organises her day well, to meet the needs of the children in her care. She has nominated a back-up child minder that she can call on should an emergency arise. She fulfils her responsibilities in terms of notifying CIW of significant events affecting the service. The child minder and all household members' disclosure and barring service checks (DBS) are up to date.

The child minder has well-established and strong relationships with families who use her service. She gathers useful information about children's preferences and routines before they start and keeps parents well informed. She provides daily verbal feedback to parents upon collection alongside providing them with updates via private message. Parents feedback is positive and highly complementary. They confirmed they are extremely happy with the care provided and that their children are very happy attending the service, with good quality care being provided. They highly value the connections their children have with the child minder.

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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N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
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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 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Develop observation records for the monitoring of children's development to help plan for and support next steps in learning.
Standard 20 - Child protection	Ensure safeguarding training is kept up to date and renewed in a timely manner.

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)
Provide opportunities for children to develop their use of incidental Welsh.

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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