



Childcare Inspection Report on

Susan Watkins

Merthyr



Date of Publication

14 May 2019

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2019.

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.

Description of the service

The child minder is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to care for up to six children under the age of 12 years. She runs her child minding business from the family home that she shares with her husband. The service operates between 8.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. It is an English speaking service.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

The child minder currently cares for a small number of school aged children for short periods of time before and after school. Our assessment is therefore based on observation of one minded child, as minded children attend at different times. The child minder was also caring for two of her grand children during our inspection. We found that the minded child was settled and comfortable and their needs catered for. The child minder has a kind and gentle manner and it was evident that there was a good relationship between her and the minded child. The environment was suitable for minded children and there were a reasonable selection of play resources. Leadership of the service requires attention to ensure that regulations and national minimum standards are adhered to.

2. Improvements

Following the previous inspection in 2015 the provider has introduced medication and accident records.

Following this inspection the provider has developed an exclusion policy, medication policy and lost and uncollected child policy. She has also developed an equal opportunities policy, safe conduct on outings policy, nappy changing policy and revised the complaints policy. CIW has also received a copy of the review of quality of care report.

The provider has also contacted CIW to renew Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for herself and her husband.

3. Requirements and recommendations

The registered provider is not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to the Statement of Purpose. However, as this issue did not impact on children's care a non compliance notice has not been issued on this occasion.

The registered provider is not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to reviewing and monitoring of her service to plan for improvements. We have not issued a non compliance notice as this issue did not impact on children's care. Since our inspection visit the provider has completed a review of her service.

Furthermore, we notified the registered provider that they are not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for herself and other persons residing on the premises. We have not issued a non compliance on this occasion as the provider took immediate action to address this matter.

We also notified the registered provider that they are not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to keeping records. However, we have not issued a non compliance matter on this occasion as some paperwork has been updated, and the provider is actively working to address outstanding issues in relation to other records.

We have also made a number of best practice recommendations to improve outcomes for children. These recommendations are discussed in the body of the report and summarised in section 5.2.

1. Well-being

Summary

Our assessment of well-being is based on observations of a minded child for a limited time. We saw that they were happy to see the child minder, relaxed in her care and have established positive relationships with both the child minder and her immediate family.

Our findings

1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?

Based on our limited observations of one minded child we saw that they can speak up and are listened to. A child told us that the child minder listens to what they have to say and they feel comfortable to talk to her about anything. We noted that the child self-directed their play and chose what they wanted to do when they arrived from school.

Children are able to make decisions, direct their play and their views are considered.

1.2 To what extent do children feel safe, happy and valued?

Children are settled and secure. The minded child was pleased to see the child minder when they were collected from school and settled immediately on arrival at the home. They made themselves comfortable in the playroom and chatted to one of the child minders grandchildren who was also present. The minded child told us they enjoyed visiting the child minders home and she is nice to them.

Children are content in an environment that they are familiar with.

1.3 How well do children interact?

Children interact well in line with their age and stage of development. We observed engagement between the minded child and other children who were present. We saw that they were relaxed in their company and engaged in conversations with them. They also told us that they liked to play with one of the child minders other grandchildren who was not present on the day of our inspection.

Minded children interact well in line with their age and stage of development.

1.4 To what extent do children enjoy their play and learning?

Children attend for short periods during term time either before or after school. We found that play and learning opportunities are therefore limited due to time restrictions. The minded child said they liked to relax after school and preferred to play with their iPad rather than do other activities. During our visit this was evident. The child settled down on the sofa, chatted to the child minders granddaughter and looked through their iPad showing us pictures of their recent holiday.

Children self- direct their play and follow their specific play preferences.

1.5 How well do children develop, learn and become independent?

Children are self-sufficient and independent in line with their age and abilities. We saw that the child was confident and knew what they wanted to do. On the way home from school they walked with the child minder whilst chatting to one of their school friends. On arrival from school they took off their jacket and went straight into the play room.

Children are independent in line with their age and stage of development.

2. Care and Development

Summary

The child minder has a relaxed and informal manner and is kind and respectful to children she is caring for. She has formed positive relationships with children she looks after and they are comfortable in her care. She supports their play choices. However, improvements are required in relation to documentation.

Our findings

2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?

The child minder is aware of her responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy, but greater attention is required to ensure that policies and paperwork is kept up to date. On examination of records we were unable to find a medication policy setting out the procedure for administering of medication, although there were medication and accident forms. We could not find a nappy changing policy, or exclusion policy setting out the child minder's policy in relation to children who are unwell. Since our inspection the child minder has updated some of her paper work and she has forward a medication policy, exclusion policy and nappy changing policy to CIW. The child minder does not provide hot meals but offers snacks for children and we saw that there was information on Welsh Government guidance on nutrition. We observed the school run which involved collecting a child from the local school and walking back to the home, which is a short distance from the school. This was undertaken will due reference to safety. Occasionally, minded children play outside in the street with their friends. The child minder has verbal consent from parents for this, but currently there is no written consent in place, although since our inspection visit we have received a copy of the child minders safe conduct on outings policy.

The child minder keeps children safe and healthy, but greater attention is required to ensure that relevant policies are available.

2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?

The child minder has an appropriate behaviour management policy. The policy outlines the strategies used to support children's social behaviour. These strategies include distraction and encouraging children to talk about their problems. The policy also outlines the importance of praising children as a way of supporting and encouraging positive behaviour. We observed no behaviour that warranted intervention from the child minder. We found her to be very kind and respectful and she acted as a good role model.

The child minder manages interactions in a positive way to support children's social behaviour.

2.3 How well do practitioners promote children's play, learning and development and meet their individual needs?

The child minder is restricted in terms of the activities and trips she is able to organise because children attend for limited times during the day. We found that she was very friendly, approachable and engaging with the minded child she collected from school and it was evident that they had a warm relationship. The child minder understood that the child was tired at the end of a school day and gave them space to self direct their play and relax. There are resources for children to play with after school, but the child minder told us that they prefer to chat rather than engage in specific structured activities.

The child minder supports children's choices and knows the children in her care well.

3. Environment

Summary

Children benefit from a 'home from home' environment that is suitable for their needs. There is sufficient space for the number of children the service is registered to care for, and children have access to a reasonable selection of play and learning resources.

Our findings

3.1 How well do leaders ensure the safety of the environment?

The child minder is aware of safety requirements in relation to her service. The back garden is not in use as the child minder has decided that it poses too many risks. We saw records relating to a safety checklist covering safety gates, smoke detectors and fire equipment. The home was secure and appropriate safety precautions have been implemented in relation to smoke detectors and gas safety checks. We saw that there was a written emergency procedure, although it was unclear when it was last reviewed and records showed that a fire evacuation drill was conducted in January 2019. Whilst hazards have been identified for some areas of the service, they did not extend to all aspects of the service such as the family dog, and children playing outside in the street.

The child minder has some appropriate safety measures in place.

3.2 How well do leaders ensure the suitability of the environment?

The home is welcoming and appropriately maintained. There is sufficient natural light and the home is decorated to an appropriate standard. There is a formal sitting room at the front of the property and a dedicated playroom which is spacious enough for the number of children the service is registered for. Some resources are stored in baskets laid out on the floor making them accessible to children. Children have use of the upstairs bathroom facilities which were appropriately maintained. There is a good sized kitchen which is equipped with a large dining table and chairs for meal times and table top activities.

The home is suitable for minded children and provides them with sufficient space for play and learning activities.

3.3 How well do leaders ensure the quality of resources and equipment?

The child minder has a reasonable selection of play and learning resources for children to use. Most of the resources on the day of our inspection were suitable for children in the younger age group. We saw some multi - cultural toys, soft toys, puzzles and books maintained to an appropriate standard. There are also arts and craft materials for children. The child minder has additional resources available that are stored elsewhere in the home.

There is a sufficient selection of resources available for minded children.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

The provider needs to take a more robust approach with regard to the operation of her service to ensure that she fulfils her responsibilities in relation to the Child Minding and Day Care (Wales) Regulations 2010 and National Minimum Standards. We found that there were deficiencies in a number of areas, but also found that the provider was keen to address these matters and improve the record keeping elements of her service. She responded quickly to recommendations made during the inspection and has updated and improved a number of service documents.

Our findings

4.1 How effective is leadership?

The leadership of the service is not as effective or organised as it should be and we found that the child minder was not meeting her legal responsibilities in a number of areas. The Statement of Purpose did not include all information as required by regulations and national minimum standards. This means that parents do not have accurate information about the service. We have not issued a non compliance notice as the child minder has agreed to make the necessary changes to this document. Furthermore, we found that the child minder is not meeting her legal responsibilities in relation to keeping records. This was because there was no evidence of a statement of the arrangements for the protection of relevant children, or a statement of the procedure to follow in the event of a relevant child being lost or not collected. Since the inspection the child minder has developed a policy in relation to a child being lost or not collected and has agreed to develop a statement in relation to the protection of children. As a result we have not issued a non compliance notice on this occasion.

We also found issues in relation to other service documents in terms of updating contracts and reviewing of policies. Following discussions with the child minder she has revised the complaints policy and developed an equal opportunities policy. We saw up to date public liability insurance and records of children's attendance were evident, although there was inconsistency in recording times of arrival and departure.

Leadership needs to be more effective to ensure that the regulatory requirements are met and to ensure good outcomes for children and parents who use the service.

4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?

The child minder does not have organised systems in place to monitor and evaluate her service on an annual basis and is not meeting her legal responsibilities in this area. She has previously reviewed her service and has sent her Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) to CIW as required. However, on examination of her records we found that she had not reflected on its performance, formally consulted with parents and children and used this information to plan for improvements in the

past year. The child minder has slowly reduced the number of children she cares for, as she is considering whether to continue minding in the long term. However, she understands that she will need to monitor and review her service annually until this time. Following our visit the child minder completed a review of her service including action plans for improvements and has forwarded a copy to CIW.

The child minder needs to ensure that she monitors and evaluates her service in a timely manner.

4.3 How effective is the management of practitioners, staff and other resources?

The management of the service is not as effective as it should be and the child minder is not meeting her legal responsibilities in this area. We found that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks were out of date for both the child minder and her husband. We have not issued a non compliance notice as the child minder contacted CIW immediately to start the renewal process. The child minder has completed some training in recent years, including paediatric first aid, food safety and safeguarding. The child minder has arrangements should an emergency arise, and her husband is available to provide cover in such circumstances.

The child minder is not managing her service as effectively as she should do.

4.4 How effective are partnerships?

The child minder has an established business and has been operating for many years. She does not have a social media site and business is generated via word of mouth. We did not speak to any parents during the inspection, although CIW has received one parent questionnaire. The parents commented that: *'everything has been great over the past years.'* They also strongly agree that they would recommend the service to other parents, are kept well informed about their child's progress, and that the child minder is caring and supportive. We viewed thank you letter sent to the child minder. These indicated that parents and children are very happy and appreciative of the service the child minder offers. Comments included: *'Thank you for everything you have done for me in the past 10 years... thank you for teaching me how to solve crosswords.'* Another child wrote: *'I have loved coming to your home.'*

The child minder has formed positive partnerships with parents and children who use her service.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure that all service documents are reviewed and dated as least annually, including contracts;
- develop a statement for the arrangements for the protection of relevant children and develop the statement of purpose in line with regulations and national minimum standards;
- ensure that times of children's arrival and departure are always recorded and
- develop risk assessments to cover all aspects of the service and seek written permission from parents for their child to play outside.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was an unannounced full inspection conducted as part of our normal schedule of inspections. The methodology used to gather information for the inspection report included:

- One inspector visiting the service for approximately three and a half hours;
- speaking to the child minder, extended family members and one minded child;
- observation of care practice;
- examination of service documents and records;
- visual inspection of rooms used for minding purposes;
- examination of information held by CIW including the previous inspection report and
- feeding back our findings to the provider during the inspection and via a telephone conversation on the 12 March 2019.

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	Susan Watkins
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	8 year olds
Opening hours	8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. Currently working term time only
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	04 June 2015
Dates of this inspection visit	07 March 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. We recommend that the service provider considers Welsh Government's <i>'More Than Just Words follow up strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.'</i>
Additional Information: The child minder has a dog.	