



Inspection Report

Ashwyn Thomas

Swansea



Date Inspection Completed

18/01/2024

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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	11 January 2018
Is this a Flying Start service?	Yes
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>	Excellent
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Excellent

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

Summary

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the child minder's home. They have a strong voice, feel very secure, happy, and comfortable. Children confidently and competently choose toys and activities which interest them. They effectively communicate both verbally and non-verbally.

The child minder has a very strong understanding of his role and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. He is very kind and nurturing towards the children and manages children's behaviours exceptionally well. The child minder promotes children's play, learning and development naturally.

The environment is secure, clean, welcoming, and very well organised to support children's play and learning. An excellent range of indoor and outdoor resources promote children's all-round development. The child minder monitors the environment well to identify and eliminate any unnecessary risks to children's safety.

The child minder is experienced and effectively works alongside another child minder at the setting. He is a great role model, and clearly enjoys his role. His commitment sustains improvement and promotes excellent outcomes for children. There are established strong partnerships. He works hard to ensure children are nurtured within a safe and stimulating home environment.

Well-being

Excellent

Children are very happy, settled and thoroughly enjoy their time with the child minder. They have a strong voice and feel comfortable to express themselves through verbal and nonverbal communication. They are confident communicators. Older children talk constantly to the child minder and are keen to engage us in their play too. They have vast opportunities to make choices and decisions. For example, they choose their breakfast, fruit, and lunch. Children make choices about the toys they play with and select activities which interest them.

Children feel safe, happy, and valued. Nearly all children are extremely settled and have a strong sense of belonging. Children who are new to the setting receive consistent comfort and support. They are cared for by a nurturing child minder who knows them very well. Children display positive emotional bonds of attachment with the child minder, seeking cuddles and reassurance regularly without prompting. They know routines and engage in instructions made by the child minder. For example, children purposely help with tidying. They form strong relationships with each other, interacting successfully, co-operating and learning to share with each other.

Interactions between children and the child minder are consistently positive and often delightful. Children smile and laugh as they talk about how to make pancakes, confidently and correctly naming a list of ingredients. Younger children engage in action rhymes and songs including 'Row, row, row your boat' and 'wind the bobbin up' with the child minder. They are treated with respect and the child minder takes their views into account. For example, asking children what they would like for lunch and their requests are met.

Children confidently choose activities that interest them. They thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. We saw children confidently share books, sustaining interest independently for significant periods of time, re-telling stories to adults. Children receive praise when they competently count and look extremely proud of their achievements. They have freedom to safely explore their indoor environment. Children have good opportunities to initiate their own play and to influence their activities. They freely choose toys from the resources available.

Children are well supported and encouraged in developing their independence. They engage in visits to the bathroom to wash hands and do so independently. They are learning to look after their own belongings and take responsibility for putting their own shoes and coats on. Children sit nicely at mealtimes and are competent in feeding themselves. They are actively encouraged to make decisions about how they spend their time at the setting. This encourages children's independence and raises their self-esteem.

The child minder has a very thorough understanding of his role and responsibilities to keep children safe and healthy. There are purposeful and effective policies in place. He seamlessly works alongside another child minder at the setting, promoting extremely effective care to children. However, records are not clear in showing who is caring for which children at specific times of the day. For example, when undertaking school runs. The child minder has current safeguarding training and has robust procedures in place to safeguard children. Children's health is successfully promoted. He holds current first aid and food hygiene certificates. There are very good systems in place to record accidents, incidents, and administration of medication. Effective and robust hygiene practices are complete. Handwashing and sanitising are carried out regularly, and children have individual name hook and towels to dry their hands. Nappy changing procedures are appropriately followed. Meals and snacks are provided by the child minder and promote a healthy varied diet, alongside options of water or milk to drink. The child minder is fully aware of children's dietary, health, and individual needs, with effective systems in place to support them.

The child minder is very kind and nurturing towards the children. He manages their behaviours exceptionally well using gentle tones, distraction, and praise. We heard lots of positive language including "*good girl/boy*" and "*dude, you nailed it*" with a fist pump. There are strong, natural bonds with children. We saw him cuddling and tickling children, making them laugh and giggle. He sits with children and engages with them. For example, during singing sessions and when eating breakfast. The child minder interacts eagerly and passionately promotes children's self-esteem, giving them responsibility, such as holding the van keys when leaving to go on a school collection. Children proudly smile and accept the responsibility of 'driving the van'.

The child minder promotes children's play, learning and development well. However, formal development records and planning are not maintained consistently and do not always reflect the 'Curriculum for Wales' and next steps in learning and development for children. The child minder keeps parents up to date with children's development using photographs, videos, and 'wow moments' via an app. Children's individual needs are met, and the child minder has sound understanding of how to support them. He is aware of children's routines and promotes 'child led' play. Engaging and supporting children during their chosen activities. For example, when children come to share a book with him, they look at different animals, counting the number of parrots they can find. He develops and extends their understanding of other jungle animals. The child minder engages positively with children during activities and free play, naturally promoting their play and learning. The child minder did not speak any Welsh during our visit, but confirms incidental Welsh is encouraged at the setting.

Environment

Excellent

The child minder provides a safe and very well-maintained property, with specific areas for child minding. The side gated entrance is secure, with a ring doorbell in place. All visitors sign in and out of the setting. The child minder practises monthly fire drills with varying groups of children, and at different times to ensure they can evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. Daily checks and comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the premises, activities, transporting children and regular outings such as woodlands. The indoor and outdoor areas are secure and provide a stimulating space for children to play and learn. There are stair gates across the downstairs of the property, to ensure children remain in areas safe to them. The pet dog has its own resting area, away from the children's playroom. Risk assessments, policies and consent forms are in place for supervised contact with the pets at the setting.

The property is welcoming, well organised, and homely. Children benefit from a dedicated playroom which is organised and full of a variety of excellent resources. The playroom reflects a natural and calming environment which promotes positive learning outcomes for children. Within the playroom, there is low-level, accessible storage, which children can easily access. Children have lots of floor space to play, as well as areas to rest and relax. He introduces toys which spark exploration and encourage imaginative play. For example, children play for a sustained period in their 'kitchen' whilst making a picnic and using 'real life' utensils. There are a range of resources which reflect diversity and promote children's understanding of the world. The child minder promotes and encourages children to take age-appropriate risks, allowing them to learn in a safe and supervised environment. The kitchen and dining area is used for mealtimes and when completing creative activities. Children access a downstairs bathroom which is clean, well maintained and child friendly.

The child minder encourages children to use the outdoor play space daily. It is extremely well maintained and organised, and recently improved to include a boundary wall, with a designated play space for minded children. The child minder provides a range of engaging resources outside, which extend children's play and physical development. The outside area is partly covered, with a new retractable awning, allowing children to access outside play during wetter weather, as well as having sun protection during the summer. The child minder confirmed during warmer weather, older children can move freely between outdoors and indoors. Children regularly visit other areas of interest, such as local woodlands, beaches and play areas. The child minder confirmed she has a variety of car seats which suit all ages of children attending the setting, including 5-point harness and booster seats.

Leadership and Management

Excellent

The very experienced child minder runs a quality provision to children and their families. He has established systems to ensure the setting often exceeds the regulations and national

minimum standards in all aspects of the care provided. All paperwork is extremely organised, with clear and effective records in place. There is a detailed statement of purpose, providing parents with accurate and thorough information. Policies and procedures are clear, extremely well organised, implemented well and undergo regular review. The child minder works effectively and proficiently, keeping Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) up to date with any changes at the setting. All household members have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and are on the update service. Public liability, car documentation and Information Commissioners Office (ICO) certificates are all in place.

The child minder continually monitors the quality of service and plans for improvements very effectively, regularly seeking feedback from parents and children. He uses the information to write a very thorough and effective annual quality of care report, identifying areas of success and areas for development. The child minder seeks feedback which demonstrate very high levels of satisfaction from parents and children. The child minder ensures his own continuous professional development is maintained through comprehensive training. All mandatory training is kept up to date, alongside a sound understanding of changes which are required in the future. The child minder seeks grant funding to further enhance the environment to benefit children accessing the setting.

The child minder has strong and effective relationships across the sector, which is a real strength of the setting. He works alongside his wife, and together, the care they provide is seamless. They work in partnership with child minding organisations and have supported the implementations of briefing videos during Covid 19, promoting positive role models in the childcare sector. They have developed and implemented the use of transition documents, allowing for effective and clear information sharing between settings when children start in a new provision. The child minder has recently received an award from the local authority for 'inclusive practice'.

Feedback received from parents is extremely positive. Parents told us they are very pleased with the setting and with the opportunities their children experience with the child minder. Parents said, *"we couldn't ask for a better child minder"* and *"Really happy with our child's development, can see how our child is developing more and more, and a lot of that is down to Vicky and Ash... they are amazing."* The child minder communicates regularly with parents through verbal handovers, messages and using an online app.

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 5 - Records	Ensure clear records are maintained of who is caring for which children at all times of the day
Standard 7 - Opportunities for play and learning	Embed the Curriculum for Wales, reflecting this within development records, next steps and planning for children

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)
Increase the 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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