



Inspection Report

Amy Nicholls

Neath



Date Inspection Completed

20/12/2022

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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	26 July 2017
Is this a Flying Start service?	No
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	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>	Excellent
<u>Environment</u>	Good
<u>Leadership and Management</u>	Good

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

Summary

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting. They feel very secure, happy, and comfortable. They play freely, are extremely contented, and happily communicate their needs. Children confidently choose toys and activities which interest them from the selection available. They have very positive and affectionate bonds of attachment with the child minder and each other.

The setting has a comprehensive range of policies in place, which promote the children's well-being. The child minder provides a nurturing and caring atmosphere and consistently meets children's needs successfully. She offers an excellent range of free play opportunities and engaging planned activities for children to access independently or with support.

The child minder ensures the environment is safe, clean, and well maintained. The premises are welcoming, homely and well organised. Suitable risk assessments and safety checks are in place. The child minder provides a range of engaging resources, which extend children's play and further their development.

The service is managed well. The child minder has a beneficial range of policies and procedures. Communication with parents is effective. Links with the community are good. We have noted one recommendation at the end of the report.

Well-being**Excellent**

Children are very happy, settled and thoroughly enjoy their time at this setting. Children have a strong voice and feel comfortable to express themselves through verbal and non-verbal communication. They are confident communicators, chatting constantly to the child minder. As a result, their wants, moods and needs are fully considered. They have opportunities to make choices and decisions. For example, they play freely and make choices about the toys and activities they play with and select activities which interest them.

Children feel safe, happy, and valued. They are settled, relaxed and clearly have a strong sense of belonging. They feel quite at home. Children know the routine well. For example, they make their way to the kitchen table when it is lunchtime and wait patiently for their food. They form strong relationships with each other, learning to share favourite toys. They are clearly cared for by a nurturing child minder who knows them very well. There are obvious bonds of affection and attachment. Children snuggle in for a story and frequently approach the child minder for cuddles.

Interactions between children and the child minder are consistently positive and often delightful. Children cooperate well and are actively engaged and interested in their play and the routines of the day. Children are treated with respect and the child minder takes their views into account. For example, she asks children if they are ready for their snack. Children interact successfully, co-operating and learning to share with each other. Older children greeted a younger child, who had just woken from a nap, with smiles and gentle cuddles.

Children confidently choose activities that interest them. They thoroughly enjoy their play and learning. For example, children showed enjoyment and curiosity when exploring the multi-sensory musical instruments and one child was engrossed in making a car wash. Children have freedom to safely explore their indoor environment. They have good opportunities to initiate their own play and to influence their activities. They freely choose toys from the resources available. For example, one child chose to use a splash mat and as other children joined in with this activity, they were supported in sharing and taking turns. They can also choose to relax and have quiet times.

Children are well supported in beginning to develop their independence and given ample opportunities to do so. They are actively encouraged to choose toys and activities which interest them. During an art activity, children were given the freedom to make choices about colours they used and expertly applied glue to their snowman creations. They confidently explore the indoor environment and are encouraged to participate in the decision-making process with regards to mealtimes and nappy changing times. Children are competent in their use of cutlery and independently feed themselves.

Care and Development**Excellent**

The child minder has purposeful and thorough policies in place, which promote the children's safety and well-being. Her safeguarding training is up to date, and she has robust procedures in place to safeguard children. The child minder promotes children's health successfully. She prioritises children's wellbeing and safety. She holds current first aid and food hygiene certificates. There are good systems in place to record accidents/incidents and medication administration. Effective and robust hygiene practices are in place. Handwashing and sanitising are carried out regularly and the children are supported in this practice too. Nappy changing procedures are appropriately followed.

The child minder has an effective behaviour management policy in place. She follows the policy 'house rules' and uses a range of positive management strategies consistently and competently. Behaviour management is a real strength of the childminder. She praises children for their good behaviour and encourages positive interactions. For example, we heard the child minder say, "Good boy" and "You are a good girl tidying up, aren't you?". We saw the child minder encourage children to share appropriately with each other, calmly reminding children to take turns. The child minder engages successfully with children, whilst promoting their learning and self-esteem. For example, whilst engaging in an art activity, we heard her encourage the children and praise their efforts. She models the language associated with good manners and acts as a good role model at all times.

The child minder provides a nurturing and caring atmosphere and gives responsive care. She is aware of the children's individual development and emotional needs. She knows the children very well and has a good understanding of each child's individual requirements and routine. The child minder strives to understand and communicate with the children in her care. Her interactions with the children are positive demonstrating warmth and kindness. She supports children in their free play, using incidental opportunities to extend discussion and learning opportunities. For example, during story time she encouraged the children to look at the pictures and asked open questions to promote discussion. Her passion for developing a love of books in the children she cares for is evidenced in their regular visits to the local library. The child minder plays alongside children which results in children playing and developing their imagination for sustained periods of time. Planning is thematic and the childminder tracks the children's progress. The child minder uses a little Welsh to further extend learning however has identified this as an area for development and is booked onto a relevant course.

Environment**Good**

The child minder ensures that the environment is safe, clean, and well maintained. The child minder keeps the front entrance door locked and keeps a record of the visitors to the premises. She practises fire drills at suitable intervals and completes safety tests on smoke detectors. She supervises children well and understands the difference between acceptable and unacceptable risk for the age group of children she cares for. She completes thorough risk assessments for the environment and outings. The risk assessments did not include how groups of children are moved safely from the house to the car. This has been swiftly addressed by the child minder and the risk assessment now reflects the good practice in place.

The premises is welcoming, well organised, and accessible to all. Children benefit from a dedicated play area which is homely, bright, and engaging. Within the main play area, low-level furniture and accessible storage containing toys and resources promote children's independence. Children benefit from the use of a small tent which they can choose to rest and relax in. The child minder's garden is currently not in use as additional fencing and a handrail are required to make the area safe for children to play. Plans are in place to complete works to the garden by the spring which will have a positive impact on the service provided. In the meantime, the child minder makes good use of local amenities such as the local park, local toddler groups and the library.

Indoors, the child minder ensures the children have access to a good range of toys and play equipment that suit their individual needs. The child minder regularly refreshes and renews the resources in line with her thematic planning. Children's recent work is attractively displayed. Toys and resources are stored appropriately, and the layout and design of the play environment promotes children's independence. For instance, children can access toys and resources themselves. The child minder ensures the play environment is homely and nurturing and provides interesting activities and play equipment. Diversity is encouraged through varied resources and exploring celebrations from differing cultures.

Leadership and Management

Good

The child minder runs her service well. She is organised and keeps all the required records. The child minder has up to date car documents and is registered with a professional association for childcare and early years. A statement of purpose is in place which has been updated promptly following our visit to provide those who use the setting with an accurate reflection of the service provided. The child minder has a range of beneficial, easy to read, policies in place. The child minder is suitably qualified and has a clear vision for her service. She has a strong culture of continuous personal development.

The child minder reviews and reflects upon her service and produces a purposeful quality of care report. She seeks information from parents and children to support her in the evaluation of her service and provides an opportunity to make suggestions for improvements to the service. The report looks at what works well at the setting and clearly targets areas for improvement. The childminder engages positively with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and consistently acts on recommendations in relation to her service.

The child minder promotes positive partnerships with parents and other professional childminders. She keeps parents up to date regularly through verbal, private messages, and social media posts. Younger children take home a daily diary which details important information about their day. The childminder makes good use of her local community and environment engaging in interesting and stimulating trips which will benefit the children's development and learning. For example, using the local library, local park and rural walks.

People who use the service have completed online questionnaires as part of this inspection. Feedback received is very positive. They tell us, *"My child's communication skills and development have come along since attending twice a week. I am very pleased with the service she provides,"* and *"My child loves going and I know I can be confident that she is looked after and cared for there."*

Recommendations to meet with the National Minimum Standards

R1. Develop the use of Welsh within the setting.

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
	No current DBS - contacted CSSIW office during inspection to request application forms	Achieved

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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