



## Inspection Report

**Melanie Simons**

**Cardiff**



**Date Inspection Completed**

24/09/2024

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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	01 August 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><a href="#">Well-being</a></u>	<b>Good</b>
<u><a href="#">Care and Development</a></u>	<b>Good</b>
<u><a href="#">Environment</a></u>	<b>Good</b>
<u><a href="#">Leadership and Management</a></u>	<b>Adequate</b>

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

### **Summary**

Children have a strong voice and know each other and the child minder well. They are happy, settled and interact successfully. They follow their own interests and express themselves very well.

The child minder promotes children's health and safety well. Interactions are positive and very nurturing. The child minder is aware of children's individual needs and promotes their learning and all round development.

The child minder implements working practices to ensure the environment is safe, secure, clean and well maintained. The child minder provides a variety of good quality equipment and resources for children to access.

The child minder operates her setting well and is very knowledgeable about her role. She works well alongside her husband who is also a registered child minder. She is aware of the national minimum standards and regulations. The child minder is keen to make improvements, particularly regarding record keeping and monitoring policies and procedures, and regularly undertakes training.

**Well-being****Good**

Children have good opportunities to make choices and decisions about what activities and resources they want to play with. They confidently choose playdough and small world resources. They decide they would like pizza at lunch and their requests are met. Non-verbal children have their cues recognised. For example, raising their hands to the child minder, to be lifted and comforted. They confidently express themselves by talking to the child minder and one another.

Children are happy, settled and cope well with separation from their parents or carers. They have very positive relationships with each other, and the child minder. Children receive support and reassurance, having regular cuddles and comfort. They contentedly play alongside the child minder, their friends or on their own, engaging in their chosen play activities. Children are familiar with routines, for example, at mealtimes they sit at the table and wait for their lunch.

Children express enthusiasm and enjoyment. They smile, laugh, and interact with each other very well. Younger children are comforted and included in play by the older children. For example, a younger child became unsettled whilst sitting on the floor. An older child noticed, smoothed the child's head gently, got a stethoscope and pretended to listen to the child's heart. This immediately engaged the younger child who relaxed and smiled. Children interact with small world play and enjoy discovering contents of the storage baskets. They confidently explore the indoor environment and engage in a range of play opportunities.

Children are interested in their play and learning. They follow their own interests and engage in activities of their choice. For example, children sit at the table and really enjoy playing with the play dough. They interact whilst reading and share books with each other and the child minder. Children laugh and smile when they engage in social times, for example, whilst sitting at the table for their meals. Children are very polite and considerate to one another, for example, they make room on the sofa so their friends can sit down.

Children are developing their independence skills well. They support the child minder when tidying up and follow instructions closely. Children feed themselves at mealtimes and younger children are provided with support, if needed. Younger children are learning to access the bathroom with help.

## Care and Development

Good

The child minder understands and implements policies and procedures to promote safety for children. She has current child protection, first aid and food hygiene training. The child minder is aware of her responsibility to safeguard children, is clear about identifying areas of concern and understands her duty to report concerns. Accident, incident, existing injuries, and medication records are in place. The child minder manages children's allergies but has no formal policy to outline the procedures she uses in practice. She provides children with healthy meals and snacks. There are suitable cleaning and hygiene practices in place. The child minder ensures children have regular fresh air and outside play to promote good physical development through frequent trips to parks and nature walks. The child minder completes regular fire drills with children so that they know how to exit the home quickly and safely.

The child minder understands her behaviour management policy and promotes positive strategies to help develop children's social skills. With the children she has developed house rules such as 'To listen carefully' and 'To tell Melanie if we are not happy'. She supports children to share and be kind and respectful to each other. For example, we heard her say to one child '*Lets be nice and careful with the little ones*'. The child minder engages with children at their level, knows them very well and has good knowledge of their needs. The child minder regularly offers encouragement and praise. She interacts with warmth and kindness, giving children cuddles and engaging with them. The child minder is a very good role model and demonstrates how to speak respectfully to both the children and her co-worker. The child minder manages interactions and play between differing ages of children very well. For example, reminding older children to be careful of the playdough which must stay on the table, as the younger babies must not have access to it.

The child minder is aware of children's individual development. She keeps developmental records for children not attending school and recognises key achievements. The child minder provides a range of play and learning activities. For example, introducing shapes, counting and colour recognition through different play opportunities. The child minder is aware of Additional Learning Needs (ALN), supporting children and signposting parents to seek further support if needed but has not developed a policy to outline her procedures. The child minder confirmed children regularly go to local playgroups and other areas of interest.

**Environment****Good**

The child minder has a range of good practices in place and ensures the environment is safe, secure, and very well maintained. She undertakes daily visual checks and no risks were identified within the environment during the inspection. Cleaning routines reflect good overall hygiene standards and safety gates are appropriately situated to keep children safe. The front door is kept locked so that the child minder can keep children secure and properly monitor visitors. She explained that she arranges any repairs or maintenance to the home to take place outside of child minding hours. The child minder has pet dogs at the setting, who remain away from the children, so contact is limited. A pet policy is in place so that parents are fully aware how interactions are managed.

The environment meets the children's needs and enables them to reach their full potential. The dedicated playroom is bright and spacious, with a suitable range of resources and play equipment. Outdoor play space within a flat well maintained garden allows children access to outside play. The child minder timetables lots of visits to community resources to encourage much more physical play and exploration. Older children have easy access to a suitable downstairs cloakroom that is clean and is well stocked with soap and individual paper towels to encourage independence and good hygiene habits. Younger children have access to good quality cots to sleep peacefully and good quality changing facilities. A small sofa in the playroom allows children to relax and have downtime. Tables and chairs are suitably sized and enable children to eat their meals and undertake tabletop activities with ease. There is suitable equipment for the ages of the children who access the service. For example, highchairs, booster seats, and toilet training equipment.

The child minder provides a range of suitable, good quality, developmentally appropriate play, and learning resources. There is a wide range to ensure children have a variety of choice. For example, small world play, sensory activities, reading books, play kitchen and puzzles. The child minder confirmed she monitors the quality of resources and toys to ensure any broken or worn items are immediately removed so they do not pose a risk to children.

## Leadership and Management

Adequate

The child minder manages her setting appropriately and has most required policies and procedures in place. However, some of these did not evidence they had been reviewed regularly. Whilst she has a good understanding of managing allergies and what she would do should a child present with emerging additional learning needs, she did not have policies and procedures to reflect her practice. The child minder has a statement of purpose which outlines well the details of the care service she offers to parents and children. She gathers required information for children, including permissions for medical emergencies, car transport and outings, and stores this appropriately. She is registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) as some information is gathered and stored electronically. The child minder ensures her car has valid insurance, tax and MOT. She completes regular fire drills with children, but these are not recorded effectively. Registers are maintained but they record the contracted hours as opposed to exact hours of children's arrival and departure.

The child minder is reflective and keen to identify ways of improving the service she provides to children and families. She consults parents and children for their views on the service she provides and undertakes an annual review of the quality of her care. However, she does not refer to parental or children's responses in her review and does not clearly identify an action plan to outline how she plans to develop her service.

The child minder does not employ an assistant but works alongside her husband, who is also a registered child minder. They work very well together, with clear, calm communication, so they understand which children they are responsible for ensuring children are supervised appropriately. She is suitably qualified and up to date with the required mandatory training. The child minder has a full Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS) to confirm her suitability as a registered child minder. She consistently maintains appropriate ratios to ensure children are cared for in line with her registration.

The child minder understands the importance of working with parents to provide a good standard of care to their children. She communicates regularly with them through phone messages to ensure they are kept updated on their child's time at the setting. Parents we spoke with were complimentary and happy with the care the child minder provides to their children.



### Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
<b>New</b>	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
<b>Reviewed</b>	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.
<b>Not Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
<b>Achieved</b>	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.

### Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	
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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 the daily register record children's hours of attendance and the names of the persons who looked after them.

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)
Review and date policies and procedures for version control.
Develop policies to outline current practice regarding procedures implemented for allergies and for additional learning needs.
Ensure fire drill records contain suitable information to properly monitor fire evacuations with children.
Expand the annual quality of care review report to reflect children's views more effectively, outline any improvements made and develop an action plan to identify any future developments to be made to the service.

Ratings	What the ratings mean
<b>Excellent</b>	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.
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Adequate</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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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