



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru  
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

# Childcare Inspection Report on

**Emma Morris**



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## **Description of the service**

The child minder is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to care for up to six children under the age of 12 years. She lives with her family in a large detached property in Pontllanfraith, close to the centre of Blackwood. The service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 7.15am and 5.20pm, although times are flexible. Full, part time and before and after school care is available. This is an English speaking service.

## **Summary of our findings**

### **1. Overall assessment**

Children enjoy their play and learning, are forming good relationships with their peers and the child minder and are happy and settled. The child minder provides responsive care and support but there could be a more robust system for observing and assessing children's individual needs and administration of medication. The home offers a well maintained, safe and spacious environment for minded children. The service is managed effectively in some areas, but there are inconsistencies in relation to records and documentation and improvements should be considered. There is some review and evaluation of the service, but this could be improved. Partnership with parents is strong and they greatly value the service provided by the child minder.

### **2. Improvements**

Following the last inspection the child minder has contacted the Food Standards agency. She has acted upon recommendations made at a CSSIW registration visit in 2016.

### **3. Requirements and recommendations**

There was no non compliance identified at this inspection. A number of recommendations have been made in relation to care and development, the use of Welsh, the environment and leadership and management of the service. These recommendations are highlighted in further detail at the end of the report.

# **1. Well-being**

## **Summary**

Outcomes for children are positive. They are forming a good relationship with the child minder and developing friendships with their peers. They are settled and valued and have a suitable range of play activities to support their all-round development.

## **Our findings**

### **1.1 To what extent do children have a voice?**

Children are listened to and are confident to express themselves. Their wishes and requests are acted upon. We heard the child minder frequently ask children if they would like extra food and drink. When children asked for snacks from their lunch boxes the child minder immediately responded and provided what they needed. She listened to what children had to say and there were informal and very natural conversations throughout the inspection. We noted that a child who arrived later in the day was confident with the routines, went straight to the small table in the kitchen and told the child minder they were going to have their lunch because they were hungry having been at school all morning. The child minder chatted to the child while they happily ate their food.

Children's views are considered. This promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Children are settled and comfortable in the child minder's care. They are respected and treated kindly and gently. There is a settling in process and children are able to visit for short periods of time before being left for a full day. This means that children are able to settle at their own pace and get to know the child minder over a period of time. Children appeared happy and content through the course of our inspection. Younger children were settled and older children who attend on an after school basis told us that they liked coming to the child minder's and she was nice to them. We noted that the child minder spoke to children in a kind manner and one child who was very new to the service approached her for cuddles and reassurance.

Children are supported and happy in the child minder's care. This benefits their well-being.

### **1.3 How well do children interact?**

In general children play well together, are learning to co-operate with their peers and share appropriately. When younger children were playing with small toys they sat on the floor alongside each other and at one point a child showed another child how something worked. There were some minor incidents around the sharing of toys when the children were playing outside, but these were in line with the age and stage of development of the children and were quickly resolved. Older children who attend after school played very well together and sat at the small table in the kitchen when drawing. They told us that coming to the child minder's home meant that they made new friends.

Children are developing their social skills and are beginning to understand the importance of sharing and considering the needs of others. This promotes their social development in preparation for more formal education.

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

Children enjoy the activities available to them. Once a week children have the opportunity to visit a play group, there are outings to the park and they attend story telling sessions at the local library. They also have the opportunity for more physical play in the child minder's garden. Children were actively engaged over the course of our inspection. They played with a variety of different toys such as the role play kitchen which involved putting 'food' in the oven and serving up the food. A child played for a good period of time with a small van putting small figures in and out of the van, whilst another child played with a farm and small animal figures. For a period of time they played outside in the garden and threw and kicked footballs and used the ride on equipment available. Older children spent time on drawing and cutting activities and told us that this is what they like to do when they visit after school and said there were enough things to interest them. The child minder also showed us photographs of children engaged in activities such as St David's Day.

Children have the opportunity for a suitable selection of play activities to promote their development.

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

Children are developing their independence and self help skills. They are able to make free choices regarding their play activities and choose their own resources. At snack time we noted that children were encouraged to feed themselves and appropriate utensils were provided. Children who were old enough went to the bathroom independently and put on their shoes and coats. They used child friendly scissors to cut paper and had access to pens and pencils for a drawing activity to develop their fine motor skills.

Children are learning valuable self help skills to benefit their development.

## **2. Care and Development**

### **Summary**

There are reasonable health and safety processes in place and the child minder manages interactions appropriately. Children's play and learning is promoted in a suitable way but there could be greater use of incidental Welsh through play and song. There is room for improvement in relation to some policies and recording of children's progress and development and medication records.

### **Our findings**

#### **2.1 How well do practitioners keep children safe and healthy?**

There is a child protection policy and incident and accident records. There are brief written risk assessment records, and the child minder has an up to date paediatric first aid certificate. She completed food safety training in February 2017. In relation to the child protection policy, we noted that there was some information on the procedure the child minder would follow in the event of a concern about a child's welfare, but the information was quite brief. We further noted that there was no mention of the Prevent duty, which places a responsibility on providers to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation. The child minder also told us that she was not aware of Prevent. We therefore discussed development of the child protection policy and up dating the policy to include information on Prevent. There are medication records and the child minder has recorded times when she has administered medication and we saw that parents had signed the records at the end of each week, but not necessarily on each day that medication was administered. There was no medication policy and we spoke to the child minder about completing a policy in line with Standard 11 of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare (2016). The child minder has contacted the Food Standards agency since her last inspection but as she does not provide meals. Children bring their own food and their lunch boxes are stored in the fridge. Although the child minder does not provide full meals we spoke to her about developing a healthy eating policy in line with Welsh Government guidelines to inform parents of her commitment to providing nutritional snacks for children. We saw that children's hand and faces were cleaned regularly and that individual towels are supplied for children to reduce the risk of cross infection. Currently there is no intimate/nappy changing policy and we discussed this matter with the child minder. The child minder has a well established routine for school runs. At the end of the day she picks her daughter up from school. They then proceed to collect children from local schools with the child minder remaining the key person for collecting and supervising minded children at all times.

Overall, the child minder considers children's safety and health. Some improvements and developments could be made in relation to policies.

## **2.2 How well do practitioners manage interactions?**

There is an appropriate but brief behaviour management policy which explains the strategies that the child minder uses when dealing with children's behaviour. The policy places an emphasis on positive reinforcement and explaining to children what is expected of them. We saw that the child minder was a positive role model and encouraged good manners. Minor incidents which occurred between children over toys were dealt with in a suitable way by the child minder, who gently explained to children why they should share.

The child minder supports children's social development appropriately.

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

The child minder supports children's play and learning and there is an emphasis on freely chosen and unstructured play activities. Children are active and have opportunities for outdoor physical activities, which we observed on the day of our inspection. There is an informal and relaxed atmosphere at the home which is conducive to play and learning. We heard the child minder engage in lovely, natural conversations and make suggestions to children about what they might like to play with. She has an understanding of the needs of children she cares for but does not complete observations and assessments of children or currently record their development and progress. We heard no incidental Welsh used during the inspection. The child minder offers an English speaking service and does not intend to provide the 'Active Offer' in relation to the Welsh language and does not anticipate any change in this position. However, we would encourage a stronger emphasis on incidental Welsh through play and song so that children have a basic understanding and knowledge of the language. We received one parent questionnaire with the parent commenting that *'[they are] very satisfied with the care Emma provides.'*

Overall, the child minder promotes children's development and is aware of their individual needs. Observations and assessment records should be considered for younger children to identify their needs and plan for the next stage in their development and greater use of Welsh should be introduced.

### **3. Environment**

#### **Summary**

This is the first inspection since the child minder moved to her new home. It offers a welcoming and spacious environment which is suitable for the care of minded children. Appropriate safety measures are in place, there is comfortable seating and the home is very well maintained with a good standard of décor. There is outside space for physical play and exercise and in general there is a suitable range of play resources for the age of children being cared for.

#### **Our findings**

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

The child minder maintains suitable safety measures to ensure that the home is safe for children. Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis, although we suggested to the child minder that the time of the drills and the number of children present should also be included in the records. Gas appliance checks are up to date and smoke alarms are in situ and connected to the mains supply. We noted that registration issues identified at a premises visit in June 2016 have been actioned. The child minder has installed restrictors to kitchen cupboards for children's safety. There is a fire blanket on the kitchen wall, there is a fire evacuation procedure and there is a first aid box stored in the kitchen which the child minder can easily locate. The entrances are safe and locked to ensure that children cannot leave the property, there is a safety gate to limit children's access to the upstairs of the property and the rear garden is secure.

Parents can be assured that the child minder has suitable safety measures in place to promote children's welfare.

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

The child minder provides an environment which is suitable for minded children. Her property has ample space for children with a dedicated play room at the front of the property. There is a large hall way which is used for play, a down stairs cloakroom off the hallway and a large kitchen which leads out through the utility room to the rear garden. Children are able to access all of these rooms with ease and during our inspection we saw children move between all of the play spaces. The rooms are very well decorated and maintained with good natural light. In the play room toys are stored at floor level so that children can easily access them which promotes their independence and limits the need for adult assistance. There is ample seating in the play room as well as a table and chairs which are suitable for older children. In the kitchen there is a large island which is suitable for older children, as well as a smaller, plastic table and seating which children use for snack time and table top activities. The outside space is equipped with a good sized lawn as well as a patio area and we noted that the garden looked well maintained and free from hazards.

Overall, parents can be assured that the home is very suitable for the care of their children. The child minder provides a spacious environment with dedicated play areas for children to enjoy.

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

The child minder ensures that toys are of a suitable standard for children. Additional toys are stored in the garage which is accessed off the hall way and the child minder told us that she rotates resources on a regular basis. There was a good selection of small toys in the play room suitable for the age range of children currently using the service. These resources were stored in boxes at levels that made them easily accessible for children. The child minder has some cultural resources and age appropriate books, although there were no Welsh books. There are craft materials which older children particularly enjoyed using during our inspection visit and a range of small toys such as farm animals and a role play kitchen. The child minder does not keep a written record of checks but told us that she completes a daily check of toys and discards toys which are broken. The car seats we saw were well maintained and there is a travel cot which is used for sleeping children which is currently stored in the garage.

The child minder has an appropriate range of toys and equipment which are maintained to a good standard, although consideration should be given to the purchase of Welsh books.

## **4. Leadership and Management**

### **Summary**

In general the child minder operates her service in line with regulations. She has good partnerships with parents who value her service and she ensures that key training and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are completed. However, some documentation and evaluation of her service and planning for improvement could be stronger.

### **Our findings**

#### **4.1 How effective is leadership?**

The child minder is effective in regard to some elements of her service but there is room for improvement in relation to her understanding of the new National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare (2016) and some of her policies and records would benefit from development. There is a Statement of Purpose which overall provides parents with information about her service so they can make an informed choice about its suitability for their child, but the information on complaints could be more detailed and the times the service operates did not reflect the current operating times and should be reviewed. There are a range of policies for parents to view. The complaints policy provides parents with information on how they can make a complaint but as there are no clear timescales indicated this policy should be developed. There is a lost/uncollected child policy which sets out what the child minder would do in the event of a child being lost or uncollected but there were no timescales included in them. An attendance register is maintained and contracts are in place. Whilst parents had provided the details required in terms of consent for emergency medical treatment, emergency contact numbers and GP information, one parent had omitted to sign their contract and this should be addressed and the record updated immediately. There is current public liability insurance and motor vehicle documentation is up to date. The child minder did not have a current copy of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare (2016) and we discussed the importance of understanding the document in order to ensure that she provides best practice in relation to her service.

The child minder mostly operates her service in an organised manner. However, there is room for improvement in relation to some records and documents.

#### **4.2 How effective is self evaluation and planning for improvement?**

There is a brief review of quality of care report and some evidence of quality assurance is in place. The child minder speaks to parents about their views and there is some very brief mention of this in the current report. Presently, there is no formal way of capturing the views of parents and children, for example via questionnaires, and no evidence of clear action planning for improvement within the review of quality of care report.

The child minder takes some steps to evaluate her service. However, the consultation process with parents and children could be stronger and their views more effectively

included with the review of quality of care report. Action planning and identifying areas for improvement could also be stronger.

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

The child minder is effective in managing her time. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are up to date for all persons over the age of 16 years living at the premises and we saw evidence to support this. The child minder plans her holidays well in advance and parents are given good notice so that they can make alternative child care arrangements if necessary. There is a back up child minder who can be called on should an emergency arise. This means that in exceptional circumstances minded children are supported by another registered child minder who is qualified and has had the required safeguarding checks.

The child minder has effective systems in place and this means that she manages her time and resources for the benefit of children and parents who use her service.

#### **4.4 How effective are partnerships?**

Parents value the service the child minder provides. She gives verbal feedback for children over two years of age and provides daily diaries for younger children. There is a password protected system so that parents can be sent information about their child's day and parents receive information on key policies and procedures. The child minder currently supports five families and we spoke to two parents during the course of the inspection. Both parents were very complimentary and positive about the support and care offered by the child minder and both have used the service for some considerable time. They commented on how happy their children were and how supportive the child minder has been. One parent said the child minder is '*brilliant,*' and stated that they are confident that their child is safe and well cared for. One parent questionnaire has been returned to CSSIW and the parent commented that '*Emma provides... activities and good routine. I have seen a huge improvement [in my child]*'

The child minder maintains good links with parents and they are happy with the service they receive.

## **5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection**

### **5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections**

There was no non compliance identified at the previous inspection

### **5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection**

There was no non compliance identified at this inspection

### **5.3 Recommendations for improvement**

We have made a number of recommendations to improve outcomes for parents and children who use the service:

- Develop and review policies including the child protection policy and include information on the Prevent duty, develop the complaints and lost and uncollected child policies and devise an intimate care/nappy changing policy;
- revise the Statement of Purpose to accurately reflect the current operating times of the service and consider more in depth information on areas such as complaints;
- introduce more incidental Welsh through play and song and purchase Welsh resources;
- ensure that all contracts are signed by parents;
- develop a more consistent system for recording parent permission for administering of medication and develop a medication policy;
- ensure that the views of parents and children are more strongly represented in the next annual review of quality of care report and improvement action planning;
- develop a healthy eating policy in line with Welsh Government guidelines;
- include the times and the number of children present on fire drill records;
- record children's progress and assess their individual needs in order to plan for the next step in their development and
- download a copy of the National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years (2016)

## **6. How we undertook this inspection**

This was a full inspection conducted as part of our formal schedule of inspections and as the result of an anonymous concern in relation to the supervision of children during school runs. The inspection was completed by one inspector over the course of one day and as part of the inspection process we:

- Spoke to the child minder, five children and two parents;
- completed a visual inspection of rooms used by minded children;
- observed care practice and interactions between the child minder and minded children;
- looked at a selection of service documents and records and
- considered information held by CSSIW including the last registration report, the last two inspection reports and one parent questionnaire.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website [www.cssiw.org.uk](http://www.cssiw.org.uk)

## 7. About the service

Type of care provided	Child Minder
Registered Person	Emma Morris
Registered maximum number of places	6
Age range of children	18 months – 8 years
Opening hours	Monday to Friday, 7.15am – 5.20pm but times are negotiable.
Operating Language of the service	English
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	30/04/2014
Date of this inspection visit	10/05/2017
Is this a Flying Start 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. An 'Active Offer' means providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it. This is part of the Welsh language policy to develop and strengthen Welsh language services.
Additional Information:	