



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161802
Inspection date	06 October 2006
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder first registered in 1993. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminding network. The childminder holds an Extending Childminding Practice training certificate. She lives with her husband and three teenage children. The family home is a four bedroom detached house on the outskirts of Chippenham, Wiltshire. It is within walking distance of schools, pre-schools and other amenities including shops and parks. All rooms of the ground floor, and the main bedroom on the first floor, are available to minded children. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have two cats and one dog. Registration is for a maximum of six children under eight-years at any one time, and currently there are seven on roll, five of whom are under five-years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where their good health is actively promoted. The risk of infection is minimised as the childminder follows hygienic procedures. She shares her sickness policy for excluding children who are ill with parents. Parents also have details of the signs and symptoms of communicable diseases, together with exclusion periods. Children learn the importance of hygiene from a young age as they wash their hands and brush their teeth. The frog shaped, liquid soap dispenser makes hand washing more fun. A small step is available so children are able to reach the sink and towels independently. The childminder has effective procedures for managing both accidents and medication so that children's welfare is promoted.

Children are protected from the elements. In summer they wear hats, sun screen is applied and keep to shaded areas. In wet weather children keep dry as they wear waterproof jacket and trousers. Children enjoy playing in the garden in the sand and with the toy kitchen. Large muscle skills are developed as they play on the tricycles and a small rocking horse. Physical skills are extended at local indoor play centres where they stretch and climb. Children continue to develop large muscle skills indoors as they dance to music and use the small trampoline.

When thirsty, children help themselves to their bottle of water. At snack time children select from a wide range of fruit. They help prepare the fruit by washing the grapes and develop independence as they carry their plates of fruit from the kitchen to the dining room. Lunch times are a social occasion when all children sit together, including babies, whilst they eat their packed lunch. Children are encouraged to eat their main course before the dessert is offered. Children learn about healthy eating through discussion and a range of planned activities, for example growing and cooking potatoes, making soup and fruit tea.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the home by a warm greeting from the childminder and she encourages them to choose the toys they wish to play with. The childminder provides a broad range of clean, safe resources. She regularly rotates items with those stored elsewhere in the home so children's interest is sustained. The atmosphere is relaxed with music playing quietly in the background. Children have a sense of belonging as their artwork and photographs, together with the frame they decorated themselves, are displayed. Furniture is organised to the side of the room so that space available for play is maximised. Children move freely between the dining room and conservatory. In the summer the patio door is left open so children can choose to play in or outdoors. Babies are able to sleep peacefully in a travel cot in the main bedroom, whilst their peers continue to play downstairs.

Children play in a secure environment and are only released to authorised adults. The risk of children having an accident is minimised as potential hazards are placed out of reach, there is suitable equipment in place such as high chairs with five point harnesses and the childminder is vigilant. Children learn to keep themselves safe. On outings children know that they should

hold onto the buggy and are alert to the danger of the road. In the event of a fire children are able to leave the premises safely as they have practised the drill. During a more recent practise children also visited a fire station where they assisted fire officers in folding out the hoses and spraying the water. Children experienced sitting in the fire engine and trying on the fire officers' helmets. Children are further protected as the childminder has a good understanding of local child protection procedures, having recently completed training on this subject. However, not all records of pre-existing injuries are signed by parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The relaxed relationship between childminder and children and the flexible daily routine, which incorporates periods for rest and physical activity, provides children with emotional security. Whilst in the childminder's care, children make good progress. The childminder is knowledgeable about child development and how to promote learning. She regularly monitors their development and produces individual play plans. Children are motivated to learn as planned activities focus on children's interests and often incorporate first hand experiences. For example, children visit places such as Longleat, Weston-super-Mare, garden centres and Westonbirt Arboretum. One child wrote "I like coming to this house because it is a friendly colourful house we go to nice places". Afterwards children like to browse through the photograph album and recall the visits. Social skills are extended as children regularly attend toddler groups and soft play centres.

From a young age children are provided with the tools to make decisions. For example, the play planner has pictures, as well as words, so children can tell the childminder what activity they want. Children develop independence as they are provided with the time and opportunity. As the childminder praises their achievements children are keen to try again. Children are social and have good communication skills. Proud of their success children show the necklace they made earlier in the week. The childminder encourages children to say new words and acknowledges what they say. Children are alert to their senses; they comment when they hear the rain on the conservatory roof and then lie down on a cushion to listen more carefully. They recognise the music as being from Jungle Book and develop large muscle skills as they dance. Children copy what adults do and are beginning to develop their imagination as they set out the tea set on the table and try to tie up a doll's hair. Fine muscle skills are developed as they press the buttons on an electronic toy and then watch to see what happens. They are able to name the primary colours and various farm animals. Aware of numbers one child says she is fourteen and a half. Young children explore the toy boxes and sitting inside try to cover themselves with the lid.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children new to the provision are already familiar with the childminder through the gradual introduction, so the settling in period is less traumatic. To offer children further reassurance the childminder does not go out of the home until children are sufficiently confident to explore the wider environment. Once settled, children are provided with good opportunities to explore the world in which we live. Children begin to understand the local community as they visit

shops, parks, toddler groups and a garden centre. The childminder helps children to foster a love of nature as they plant flowers and vegetables. They observe the seasons at Westonbirt Arboretum, and on one occasion attended the Wild West Show where they were able to see a snake, scorpion and crickets. At Longleat children experienced feeding the deer and at Lackham College observed lambing. Children know that they must be gentle when they stroke the childminder's dog and keen to help the kitten, hold the cat flap open so the kitten can go outside.

Children develop confidence as the childminder listens to what they have to say, and values and includes all children. They learn from the childminder's example and are considerate to each other. Children begin to appreciate difference and play with readily accessible resources reflecting positive images of our diverse society. The house rules are displayed in picture format so that it is easier for young children to understand. Knowing the rules children begin to tidy away toys they have finished playing with, without prompting from the childminder. Children are polite and very well behaved.

The close working relationship between parents and childminder provides emotionally secure. Parents comment positively about the provision; "a really lovely setting" and one parent comments that they have "complete confidence in the childminder's ability to provide a stimulating environment where our children can learn new skills, build their self confidence and develop their social interaction with other children". Parents are aware of the childminder's practices as they have a well presented information pack and are regularly updated via a newsletter. Verbal updates are provided on a daily basis and for parents of babies there is also a daily diary. Children's progress records are shared four times a year. Twice a year all parents and children meet with the childminder for a social gathering.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the children for whom she provides. She is appropriately qualified and, keen to extend her practice, has undertaken further training on subjects such as disability awareness and basic food hygiene. She is able to assess her own provision and future plans include improving her practice for younger children by using photographs of activities rather than pictures, as she feels this will help them to make more informed decisions about what they want to play with. The welcoming, child focussed environment provides children with space to play and take physical exercise, as well as relaxation. Children receive a high level of support. They make good progress as the childminder has an effective planning cycle and wherever possible tries to organise practical activities so children learn from experience. Paperwork is regularly reviewed, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents. Documentation complies with regulatory requirements and the National Standards.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to meet one recommendation. She now has detailed information about notifiable and communicable diseases and this is shared with parents, so that children's health is further promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure records of pre-existing injuries are countersigned by parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk