

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136449
Inspection date	29 March 2007
Inspector	Karen Elizabeth Screen

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 1994 and holds a Developing Childminding Practice certificate. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 16 and 12 years old. They live in a three bedroom property. Additional space has been created through a loft conversion. The home is near the centre of Thornbury in South Gloucestershire and is close to shops and parks. All areas of the home are registered for childminding. Only the patio area of the garden is registered for outdoor play. The childminder offers care Monday to Friday, between 08.00 and 17.30. There are seven children on roll aged between 11 months and nine years old.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, tidy and comfortable home where they learn about the importance of personal hygiene and to care for themselves and their environment. The importance of hand washing is explained and children are confident to use the facilities with minimal assistance from the childminder. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of how children's good health is promoted. She has clear systems in place to gather information

from parents regarding medical needs, dietary requirements and any allergies. However, she does not hold parents permission to seek medical treatment and advice, which may result in a delay in a child receiving emergency treatment.

The childminder and parents work closely together to ensure that children receive a healthy balanced diet. Parents provide their children with a prepared 'lunch' box. The childminder is very flexible, and in consultation with the parents, provides a child with sandwiches because he prefers not to eat the cooked lunch his parents have provided. If the children are thirsty, they either consume their own drinks, or request water from the childminder.

Children are afforded good opportunities to develop fine motor control, such as through opportunities to fully explore the properties of playdough. They also enjoy more robust activities, such as playing games of catch in the garden and park, and attend football coaching once a week.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A warm and welcoming feel to the home is achieved through comfortable furniture and easily accessible toys and resources. Many other resources are stored in a large cupboard and children know to ask for help to find particular toys and resources stored there. Toys hold the children's interest and are of good quality, but there are few natural materials such as sponges, for young children to play with. The childminder tailors her purchases to suit the needs and interests of the children. She also supplements her collection with resources such as 'story sacks' from the local library.

The childminder takes positive steps to promote safety inside, outside and on outings. Children are able to move around the floor free from hazards and harm, and are always supervised when playing outside. Risks to children from house fires have been minimized through well thought-out emergency evacuation procedures. Children learn what to do if they have to leave the house in an emergency, as they are involved in regular fire drills which are linked to stories of Fireman Sam. Children are protected by a childminder who is aware of the possible signs of children at risk, and of her responsibility to report her concerns without delay, according to Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy excellent relationships with the childminder and other children. They communicate very well with the childminder, who offers appropriate praise and listens carefully to what they have to say. She is warm and attentive and the children respond with obvious affection. Children are relaxed and settled. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised by a childminder who is sensitive to their needs and knows them well. For example, those who prefer imaginative play, rather than creative pursuits. Children are gaining an excellent understanding of past and present through their enjoyment of re-visiting the recent experiences depicted in their photographs, such as pretending to be 'Fireman Sam' using a hose to put out a fire in front of the house. Children learn to order items according to size, as they lay a number of fir cones out on the ground at Westonbirt Arboretum. Children make choices about their play. For example, a child asks to make a Fireman Sam picture instead of the planned picture of his family. He concentrates for a long time, tearing up tissue paper and screwing it into small balls, to add to

his picture. Young children enjoy exploring sounds and rhythm, when they attend weekly 'Music With Mummy' sessions with the childminder.

The childminder describes how she helps children to feel secure, through establishing an organised and predictable day. This helps babies and young children to begin to predict what will happen next and to extend their skills in a secure environment. Plans are used as a basis for the day, but they are not rigid and are subject to change according to the children's interests, needs and other variables such as the weather. The childminder communicates how she helps older children to feel involved and valued, by encouraging them to suggest ideas for resources and activities. The childminder is using the Birth to three matters framework to help support her work with the young children. She recognises that it is a useful tool in planning appropriate experiences and tracking children's progress, but does not always use it to the best advantage, as a tool for planning individual children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn about the different activities and the people involved in their market town community. They take part in regular visits to the wider community, for example they ride in their pushchairs to the local library, and learn about the role of fire fighters through specially organised visits to the fire station. All children are valued as individuals. The childminder has a positive attitude towards finding solutions to any difficulties affecting the inclusion of all children, in any activities on offer.

Children are very well behaved. The childminder manages children's behaviour in a way that promotes their welfare and development. She helps children to understand that rules have to be followed for everyone's benefit; and encourages children to share. For example, when two children want to carry the 'babies case', she asks "do you want to carry the 'doctor's case' instead". Behaviour management procedures are shared with parents, so that continuity may be agreed and followed.

Parents speak very highly of the childminder's commitment to providing a happy environment, where their children flourish. Excellent relationships between the childminder and parents, contribute to the children's confidence in the childminder. Close partnership with parents is achieved through the high quality information provided about the organisation of the childminder's business, and prior information about planned activities. The environment is also welcoming to parents, with helpful information posted in the entrance hall.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is well qualified and is keen to update her knowledge and understanding, in order to improve outcomes for children. She recognises the importance of ongoing training, and devises her own training plans to enhance her practice. Children are very well supported by a childminder who uses her time efficiently to organise space, resources and herself, to the best advantage, in order to ensure that the children receive excellent adult attention. However, planning does not always fully support individual children to build on what they already know.

Policies and procedures have been developed by the childminder for the efficient management of the provision, such as the sickness policy. Documents, are reviewed annually or sooner if

necessary, in order to reflect any important amendments, such as the changes required in the recording of any complaints. The childminder has all required documentation in place, but has not considered obtaining permission from parents, to seek treatment or advice for their child in the event of an emergency.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to: further develop fire safety by practising the emergency evacuation procedure; and to further develop procedures for documentation, specifically in relation to the register, medication and child protection.

Children are safer in the home because the childminder takes positive steps to promote children's awareness of how to exit the home safely in the event of a fire. Children's safety and welfare is promoted through clear policies and procedures for recording children's attendance, any pre-existing injuries, and for recording and administering medication.

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 the 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):

- consider asking parents for permission to seek emergency medical attention
- continue to develop links between observations, assessment and planning, in order to support individual children to build on what they already know

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