

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	155172
Inspection date	21 May 2007
Inspector	Timothy Butcher

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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and their one adult child in Shirehampton, Bristol. The whole of the premises are used for childminding, except for the upper garden. There is a fully enclosed lower garden available for outside play. The childminder works with three assistants.

The childminder is currently minding six children under five all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and has use of a car. She takes children to the local park, community farm and to other places of interest. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder effectively consults with parents to ensure that the dietary needs and preferences of children are met. The childminder and her assistant place strong emphasis on

healthy eating. Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet and, in consultation with parents, are encouraged to try some foods new to them. Drinks are made readily available at regular intervals throughout the day and children are regularly asked if they are thirsty.

The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that children's health needs are closely met. She has the required documentation in place for medication given to children and ensures they receive very good care should they become ill. She has a clear understanding of the safe procedures to follow, should an accident occur. Information is well documented and a copy of the record is given to parents and carers. Parents are routinely asked to give consent to emergency medical treatment or advice and permissions are recorded. As a result children's good health is promoted. Nappy changing procedures effectively protect children from the risk of the spread of infection. The childminder takes sensible precautions, such as the use of gloves. Children are regularly checked to see if they are comfortable and are kept relaxed whilst changing takes place.

Children have regular opportunities for exercise and active play. The childminder and her assistants regularly take children out to parks, a city farm and to other places of interest. Parents are asked to give specific written permission for children to go in the cycle trailer. Some younger children walk with the childminder to school on some days. There is a very well equipped garden for children to play. Photographic records show children engaged in many stimulating activities outside, for example, use of the sit-on equipment, swings and slides.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and homely environment. The childminder takes positive steps to reduce risks to children and has in place appropriate safety control measures. Smoke detection equipment is sited on each floor. The childminder requested a visit from the fire service to ensure that the smoke detection equipment was effective and well placed. The premises are secure. Stair gates make areas inaccessible to children. The childminder supervises children appropriately at all times. Children are provided with simple explanation about keeping themselves and each other safe.

The well-equipped garden provides a rich number of resources for children of all ages and is a particularly stimulating area for children. It is made bright and interesting to them. For example, the fence separating areas for younger and older children, has brightly painted shapes to represent a train and carriages. There are a host of sit-on toys and other play equipment with plenty of space for children to move and play. The sandpit is covered and the sand checked to ensure it is clean. There are areas for children to grow plants and to dig. The garden and equipment are well maintained, however, steps in one wall have a small potential to be a fall hazard to children.

Children play in a spacious and child-friendly environment. A good range of toy resources and other equipment support children's learning and development. Boxed resources are on display at children's eye level. The playroom is made attractive to children with such things as brightly coloured posters, interesting artefacts and examples of children's work on display. Children have their needs well met because the childminder ensures that she has ample equipment available to care for the numbers of children that she looks after. This includes such things as travel cots, car seats and highchairs.

Children have their welfare safeguarded. The childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibilities in regard to the protection of children and has a clear procedure to follow, should she have a concern. The childminder has a sound knowledge of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have positive experiences through play. They make good progress because the childminder provides a balanced range of stimulating activities and play opportunities that support their all round development. She has a clear understanding of child development and an awareness of each child's abilities. The childminder has begun to use the Birth to three matters framework and provides a folder of what children have done, that she makes available to parents. This helps her track children's general progress. She has yet to develop the use of this to plan for each child's specific next steps in development. Children are valued and develop their independence as they are given encouragement to exercise choice within play activities; many of which are self-chosen and which build on children's interests. The childminder supports play well.

Although there were no children older than toddlers present at inspection, the childminder demonstrates how she supports pre-school children's good progress through her descriptions of the activities she provides. She is clear about what she hopes children will learn from the experiences. She describes how she asks questions of children and sets simple counting and naming challenges for them. The childminder's husband is her full-time assistant and her two adult daughters also assist for some of the time. Babies and young children are provided with lots of appropriate cuddles and physical contact from all adults. They are happy and content. Children settle well and are relaxed. They benefit from the family atmosphere and homely environment.

Babies and young children use such things as shape-sorters to develop their coordination and manipulation skills. They stretch and reach for items. Older children have construction toys to build with. Some resources are home-made, for example, the childminder's assistant has made a wooden block for children to use. They use real tools to hammer pegs and to turn screws. The childminder provides good levels of variety with regular trips out. Children go swimming. The childminder is discerning in the choice of swimming pool and in the arrangements to ensure children's safety, care and enjoyment. There are visits to the beach. Children have fun as they gather pebbles and stones and count. Children begin to understand that print carries meaning through their easy access to books and through visits to the library.

Photo-documentary evidence shows children enjoying a host of appropriate activities. The garden is used extensively as children take their play outside wherever possible. Planned activities like painting and reading are taken outside. The childminder and her assistant respond to children's spontaneous play. For example, by making an impromptu paddling pool from plastic sheeting and bricks; where children are able to keep cool and safely splash on a hot day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the strong partnership with parents and carers. There is a comprehensive initial exchange of information with all parents as part of an induction procedure. They are provided with good information about the setting through written information and are closely

consulted about the care to be provided. Home routines are respected. This strongly contributes to the continuity of care for children. The childminder has in place effective procedures for the on-going sharing of information. General information and some plans are on display. The childminder sets aside time to discuss the events and activities of the day with parents. A complaints procedure is in place but the process needs further clarity for parents.

The childminder has a clear understanding of equality of opportunity issues and has a good number of resources to help her with her practice. Children learn about diversity and the wider world through familiarity with the multi-cultural toys, artefacts, wall posters, dressing up materials and books in every day use. As a result, children have positive experiences when learning about the world around them.

The childminder has supported children with learning difficulties or disabilities previously and has suitable procedures in place to identify with parents, carers and other professionals how best to meet the specific care needs of all children.

The childminder provides praise and positive attention to children and they enjoy a relaxed and warm relationship with her. The childminder and her assistant use simple explanation to modify behaviour and offer distraction to babies and young children. Children remain calm and cooperative in a relaxed atmosphere. There is a clear behaviour management policy, that is shared with parents. As a result children are usually well behaved and learn to respect the needs of others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very well organised. She organises her time, space and resources effectively to meet the needs of children. Comprehensive policies, procedures and other documentation are used very effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of all children. She has a clear understanding of the National Standards and interprets these in the best interests of children. Parents and carers are fully consulted and kept well informed. The childminder is very thorough and places a strong emphasis on keeping her documentation well organised. She ensures that children have plenty of adult support and attention.

Children experience a broad range of stimulating play opportunities in a very welcoming and supportive environment. The childminder and her assistant have a good understanding of child development. The childminder plans activities to meet children's general developmental needs and as a result, children make good general progress in their development.

The childminder uses the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that consideration is given to the whole of children's development; she intends its further use to plan for children's next steps in development. Children appear to be happy, settled and to thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed that improvements would be made to the record of children's dietary needs. It was also agreed that children would have greater access to multi-cultural resources.

Since the last inspection the provider has changed the induction procedure for parents. She now records children's dietary preferences as routine. As a result children's dietary preferences are known acknowledged and clearly recorded. The childminder has increased her toy and other multi-cultural resources. As a result children have good access to a wide range of play materials and have further opportunities to learn about diversity and the wider world.

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):

- review the risk assessment of the garden to include changes to the wall that now has a step
- develop the use of observations of what children do, to plan for children's next steps in development in line with the Birth to three matters framework
- develop further the complaints procedure.

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