

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106880
Inspection date	03 April 2007
Inspector	Yvonne Campbell

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 2000. She lives with her husband, an adult child and two other children aged nine and 13 years in Brislington, Bristol close to St Annes Infant and Junior Schools. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The family does not have any pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children and is currently minding six children on both full time and part time hours. She walks to the local school to take and collect children.

The childminder regularly attends groups at Wicklea Community Centre and St Christopher's Church. She is a member of the local childminder support group and she is working towards a Level 3 qualification in Childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where their health is actively promoted through daily hygiene routines and effective practices. All areas used for childminding are cleaned before children arrive to remove dust and dirt particles from carpets. The childminder has a good understanding about how germs multiply and transfer so she ensures that in high risk areas such as the kitchen, extra care is taken. For example, surfaces and floors are cleaned with an antibacterial solution. The childminder ensures that children use clean utensils for meals. Plates and cutlery are washed and sterilised in the dishwasher. The childminder also has appropriate procedures for storing perishable foods children bring from home in the fridge. Food hygiene is maintained by washing her hands before handling food and different chopping boards are used for preparing raw meat and vegetables.

Children are learning about the existence of germs and the need to keep their bodies clean. They are encouraged to carry out self care procedures such as wiping their noses if they have a cold and disposing of the used tissues in the bin. Older children are reminded to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. The childminder provides soap and a clean towel each day. Wet wipes are available for wiping babies' hands and faces. Children who sleep are provided with clean sheets which are not used by others. The risk of infection to children is further minimised by the exclusion of those who are unwell or have an infectious illness. The childminder has a sickness policy which is shared with parents at the pre placement meeting. Children have prompt attention to minor injuries which happen during childminding as the childminder has a current first aid certificate and a fully equipped first aid box which is accessible for use.

Children's dietary needs are met through ongoing discussions with parents. The childminder ensures that food preferences and any food allergies children have are recorded and that the information is available for reference if needed. The childminder complies with parental instruction regarding the packed lunches they provide for their children. She engages parents in discussions about the nutritional value of the meals and she encourages them to provide more nutritional food such as dairy products and fresh fruit. Leftovers are returned in the lunch containers so parents know how much their children have eaten. The childminder provides children with drinks and snacks, usually fruit or toast. They are encouraged to drink at meal times and also during play.

The childminder provides frequent opportunities for children to take part in energetic activities. For example, they have regular walks in the fresh air travelling to school to drop off and collect older children. Children also enjoy playing outdoors in the childminder's garden which is well equipped with enjoyable and challenging equipment such as a trampoline and swing balls for playing in pairs. There are also regular visits to nearby parks to play on the equipment and children attend groups where they learn to use bikes and ride on toys to help develop their gross motor skills

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder's home is a comfortable and generally safe environment for care. A homely atmosphere is created by a display of family photos in the wide entrance hall which has lots of

space for parents to manoeuvre buggies and to remove children with ease. Children have their own accessible coat pegs. They move around freely between the lounge and the dining areas which are child friendly with accessible toys.

Children have access to a wide selection of toys and play equipment. These include materials for construction, imaginary play and also materials for art and craft activities. Toys are safe and sturdy as the childminder ensures that all items are purchased from reputable retailers and have the British Standard mark. She also ensures that toys are age appropriate and that younger children do not have access to small pieces which are hazardous. For example, when older children and babies are present, a safety gate between the dining room and the lounge is secured so that babies do not have access to toys which meet the needs of the older age group.

The childminder has a generally good understanding of safety issues both indoors and outdoors and she has procedures in place to keep children safe by minimising unacceptable risks. Safety gates are in place to exclude children from the stairs and the kitchen is not used except for access to the garden. However, the locking mechanism on the front door is at a low level and this is accessible to children who can open the door without adult supervision. The childminder fully complies with fire safety requirements by fitting smoke alarms to both levels of the premises. Children are familiar with the procedure for leaving the home quickly in an emergency as the childminder has regular fire drills with them.

The childminder is extra vigilant about maintaining children's safety on outings and trips. She has procedures for carrying out prior risk assessment to any new venue she plans to take children to. She assesses issues such as layout, amenities and additional supervision to ensure that children are safe, comfortable and that the aims of the trip are met in a safe environment.

Children's well-being is safeguarded and promoted as the childminder has a clear understanding of child abuse and some signs and symptoms which cause concern such as bruising and marks to unusual parts of the body. She has a written child protection policy which is well set out and outlines her commitment to building a safe environment for children in her home; also, listening to children and recording any concerns she has about abuse. The policy is shared with parents at the pre placement meeting. However, existing injuries which happen away from the setting are recorded by parents on a voluntary basis and this does not comply with safeguarding children procedures which require the childminder to create these records.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are making good progress as the childminder has good a understanding of child development and she provides enjoyable activities to promote their learning. Regular trips to the zoo are organised to enable children to see and learn about the animals which live in various environments in different parts of the world. Children also learn about the plants which are found in the zoo's garden. The childminder provides simple work sheets to help children develop their observation skills. They note the different animals and objects as they go around the zoo. Colouring-in drawings are also provided and the childminder engages children in discussions when they recall and describe what they have seen.

Children also have regular visits to childminding groups which offer them opportunities to play on larger equipment such as bikes and ride on toys. They are developing essential social skills as they mix with their peers and learn to play and share with others.

Children have a clear structure to their day. The childminder maintains a consistent routine in order to meet the various needs of children from different age groups which include babies and school age children. Included in the daily plan are: times for dropping off and collection from school; supervised group attendance for preschool children; meals times; sleep and rest periods. Movements are planned and adhered to so that children feel secure and are familiar with the routine.

Children enjoy some home based adult-led activities such as those where the childminder supports the children as they explore mixing colours and the many textures of the materials that are available to them for creative play. Children are articulate and they use language with ease to express themselves and to share their thoughts about people who are important to them such as members of their families. The childminder sits close by and asks various questions to develop conversation.

Preschool children are developing an understanding of basic maths as the childminder includes this in the daily activities. She creates opportunities for them to count and use numbers in a useful way. For example, they count the number of bricks as they play with them and they are learning about weights and how to balance construction blocks to create a stable upright structure. Regular art activities where children use brushes in free flow movement also enable children to develop muscle control in their arms and hands in preparation for holding a pencil correctly and learning to write.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met through ongoing discussion with parents. The childminder collects information about each child at the pre placement meeting. This is recorded on appropriate child information forms. New children feel contented to be left by their parents as settling-in periods are arranged when children gradually increase the time they spend at the childminder's home. The childminder builds up her understanding of each child during interaction so that she can meet the particular needs and preferences she has assessed.

The childminder provides an interesting range of activities to promote children's understanding of difference and help them develop a positive view of the wider world. For example, trips are planned to exhibitions where children learn about how other people live and the clothes they wear. Children also have access to books, dolls and puzzles with positive images of culture and disability.

Children who have disabilities are included and have a high level of support as the childminder understands the need to work closely with parents and professionals when planning care and activities. She works with health workers such as the physiotherapist to find ways of helping children to exercise their bodies and maximise the use of their limbs. The childminder ensure activities are inclusive and all children can contribute and take part in some way regardless of their level of ability.

Children are well behaved. The childminder has a firm but loving approach and gives clear instruction of what she would like them to do, for example, when it is time to stop playing and clear up as they have to go to school to collect others. Children are happy to be involved with helping as they know the routine well. The childminder is a good role model for children and shows good examples by being polite to them and saying please and thank you. Children are taught to be caring to others and to reflect on the impact their behaviour has on others by

considering how they would feel if an unkind act was done to them. The childminder makes sure that she is available to children so they can talk to her if they have problems which concern them.

The childminder works closely with parents and she complies with their instructions in order to provide continuity of care for children. A written agreement of care is completed so parents can make their expectations of the service known to the childminder. When necessary, she seeks their written permission for special procedures such as administering medication and going on trips. As well as daily verbal feedback about children's care, communication is maintained through individual information books for younger children. The childminder and parents use the books to record essential and additional information. Parents know what to do if they have concerns about the care of their children as they have access to the complaints procedure with the telephone number and address of the regulator.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled as the childminder has organised her home and her practice well to meet their needs. She has completed the childminder preparation course and holds a current first aid certificate. All adults in the home have completed the required criminal record checks and are safe to be in close proximity to children. The childminder continues her professional development through formal training and she is currently working towards a Level 3 in Childcare. She is actively involved in running her local childminder group and is in contact with a support worker from the Education Department.

The available space is used effectively to create clear areas for children to play and rest. The comfortable lounge area is organised so that children have clear space on the floor to use toys such as bricks for construction activities. They also rest on the sofas if they want to rest or be quiet. Children have easy access to additional toys that are stored in storage units at the dining end of the room. There is also a table and chairs where children sit, draw or do art and craft activities.

The record of attendance maintained as required. The information is neatly recorded in large working diary and clearly shows the names of the children who are cared for each day. The childminder understands the need to maintain the adult to child ratio. She usually cares for no more than three children during the school day. She also provides out of school and holiday care for older children.

The childminder shows a good understanding of the need to have documents to record information about children and to share policies and practices with parents. The written policies she has developed include those on: Behaviour, Fire Plan, Child Protection and a Complaint Procedure. Policy documents are kept in a working folder for reference and for sharing with new parents. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to recommendations to improve hygiene by ensuring that children's food and bottle feeds were refrigerated. She also agreed to improve procedures for keeping children safe by ensuring the front door is secure and to create a record of any existing injuries children have when they arrive for childminding.

Children's pack lunches are now refrigerated immediately on arrival to prevent deterioration in quality and the growth of harmful bacterial. However, the safety measures which the childminder has in place for preventing children from having access to the opening mechanism on the front door is insufficient. Children's existing injuries are now recorded by their parents on a voluntary basis. But, this does not fully comply with safeguarding children procedures which requires the childminder to create her own records which are discussed with parents and signed by them to verify the details.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complains 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):

- assess the risk to children in regard to access to the front door and take action to minimise this
- further improve procedures for keeping children safe and maintain a record of existing injuries which occur away from the setting.

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