



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136415
Inspection date	18 July 2005
Inspector	Valerie Anne Curotto
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder became registered in 1996 and has an NVQ level 3 qualification in child care.

She lives with her husband and three children; a son aged 13 years and daughters aged 11 and 8 years. The family have two cats. The home is a four bedroom semi-detached house on the edge of Downend in South Gloucestershire. It is situated close to local amenities, including a park, primary school and playgroups. Minded children have access to the ground floor of the house which includes toilet facilities and an enclosed rear garden.

The childminder works part time, Monday to Wednesday. She is registered for 6 children under 8 years and there are currently 9 children on roll; 3 of whom are over 8 years. She became an accredited member of South Gloucestershire's childminding network in May 2005 and currently

offers funded nursery education to 1 child aged 3 years. She is also affiliated to Avon and Somerset Constabulary's childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for outdoor play to promote their health and physical development. The childminder supports these effectively to help children develop a range of skills; such as pedalling tractors and negotiating safe pathways when running around the garden. Young children also benefit from regular visits to soft play and gymnastic facilities.

Children's health is promoted by written procedures in place to limit the risk of infection and exclude children when sick. Children learn appropriate hygiene routines to keep themselves healthy and are able to take increasing responsibility for tasks, such as handwashing. They know how to keep their bodies safe in the sun, remembering to wear hats and suncream.

Appropriate information is gathered from parents to ensure that children's individual health and dietary needs are met. The childminder is aware of children's nutritional needs and provides them with healthy snacks and regular drinks. Menus are shared with parents and older children are able to discuss their preferences, which are taken into account by the childminder. The management of pets ensures that children are protected and that they learn to understand the needs of animals.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected well from hazards in the home and garden by use of suitable safety equipment and barriers. An extensive range of toys and equipment is checked regularly to minimise risks to children. Written procedures are available to promote children's safety, including fire and emergency plans.

Young children learn to play safely due to gentle explanations from the childminder about the safe use of equipment. Older children develop rules for safety in the garden, demonstrating consideration and care of younger children. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own safety, including road safety when out on walks. The childminder has recently updated her knowledge and understanding of first aid and child protection to further promote children's wellbeing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children relate well to the childminder within a relaxed and warm environment. They are provided with a flexible and varied range of activities throughout the day to retain their interest. Children confidently access a wide range of attractive equipment outdoors and play imaginatively together in the playhouse. Within the home, young children concentrate on individual tasks at

the table, such as colouring in pictures and shaping and cutting playdough. They initiate their own play on the floor, investigating which trailer links to a tractor or collecting and stacking items in a tower. They fondly recall previous activities they have enjoyed together and ask to repeat their favourite ones.

The childminder has a good understanding of young children's developmental stages and how to support these. Children extend their vocabulary as the childminder encourages conversation during free play and stories. She develops their play by encouraging them to think for themselves and explore ideas; for example, while blowing bubbles or describing their pictures. Younger children are able to match similar play figures and identify colours. Children develop independence in self care, learning to put on their shoes and recognising when wet clothes need changing after water play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A long-term plan is in place for the local childminding network which outlines appropriate aims for children within the six areas of learning. Termly themes, developed by the childminder, support children's learning across these areas by offering a suitable range of weekly topics. Through these, children develop an understanding about the world around them, including animals and nature. They learn to care for their teeth within a 'healthy living' theme. Short-term planning of daily activities demonstrates the childminder's sound knowledge of the foundation stage and sufficient understanding of how children learn, which she continues to build on. While initial plans are not yet fully developed, the childminder continues to review these as she gains more experience, to ensure all aspects of children's learning receive sufficient attention.

Children benefit from a varied programme and show interest and involvement in free play and structured activities. Links with the local community support their learning as they visit a garden centre to buy seeds that they later plant. They develop an understanding of colour, shape and number during everyday activities. Time is organised effectively and children benefit from individual attention for specific activities which support their mathematical development, such as floor puzzles and threading beads. They learn to recognise letters in their names and appreciate stories and books.

Children enjoy regular access to resources such as dressing up clothes and sand and water play which supports their creative development. However, the wide range of equipment is not yet organised effectively to promote challenge in all areas of learning. A suitable format is available to track children's progress, although it does not consistently include meaningful observations of children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children appear happy and secure, supported by appropriate settling-in procedures. They are familiar with regular routines which are suited to their individual needs. Placements are organised effectively to ensure young children receive individual attention from the childminder and are not overwhelmed by older children.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately. Children are well behaved and are responsive to the childminder's occasional direction. They receive regular praise for their achievements and their contributions are valued; they confidently share their achievements with the childminder. Young children learn to play cooperatively with each other and older children develop consideration for others. Children increase their awareness of the local community on regular outings. Suitable resources are incorporated into age appropriate activities, to provide children with sufficient understanding of disability and cultural diversity.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory for children receiving nursery education. Arrangements to involve parents in their children's learning continue to be developed, following an initial home visit to discuss how progress will be monitored. Informal discussion with parents each day ensures that children's individual needs continue to be met. Written policies and procedures to support children's care are shared with parents, although some lack sufficient detail. Parents comment positively on the care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder uses available space in the house and garden effectively for children's play and rest periods. Sufficient storage is available in the house and garden for the wide range of equipment available. While indoor equipment is not organised as effectively, the childminder rotates this appropriately to provide sufficient variety for young children. Planning for younger children is informal and offers suitable activities within the home and the local community. Planning for children receiving nursery education has become more formalised, although systems are not yet fully developed to evaluate activities and consistently set challenges for individual children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The childminder has only recently begun to provide nursery education, for one three year old child, and is being supported appropriately by the network coordinator to develop this area of her provision. The childminder is committed to developing her practice through ongoing training and regular contact with the network coordinator. She is able to identify her own training needs and access appropriate support. Paperwork is well organised and suitable records are maintained. A range of policies and procedures, developed by the local childminding network, are gradually being reviewed by the childminder to reflect practice within the setting.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has addressed the two recommendations made at the last inspection to improve children's safety. The greenhouse has been removed and a record of pre existing injuries is maintained. This is the first inspection of funded education since accreditation in May 2005.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- continue to develop information given to parents, including policies and procedures, to provide meaningful information about the setting and their children's development.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- continue to develop planning and the evaluation of activities, to more consistently provide challenge to children and make more effective use of available equipment
- continue to develop use of children's observations and assessments to more effectively track individual children's progress

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