

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101007
Inspection date	21 August 2007
Inspector	Zahida Hatia
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 lives in a three-bedroom, semi-detached property in the Brockworth area of Gloucester. She shares her home with her partner and son aged seven years old. The whole house is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden. Local amenities within walking distance include two local schools, two parks and a library.

The childminder is registered to provide care for five children and may provide overnight care for one child under eight. She currently minds five children during the week.

The childminder has completed the Introduction to Childminding Practice, Developing Childminding Practice, Extending Childminding Practice courses and NVQ Level 3 in childcare. The childminder has also completed first aid, child protection and food hygiene training, and is a member of the Gloucestershire Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of their personal care through routines such as washing hands before eating and toileting. However, closer supervision of older children needs to be carried out to ensure that they all use soap to prevent infection occurring. Children's health is safeguarded by the use of the accident and medication records. First aid training enables safer practice and treatment by the childminder.

Children's physical development is supported effectively through the opportunities they have to play and exercise outside throughout the year. The children are provided with interesting outdoor play experiences such as a large trampoline in the garden which is surrounded by safety nets to prevent accidents; children take turns on the trampoline and the childminder ensures that no more than two children use the equipment at one time. They also enjoy visits to parks and local shops within the area of the childminder's home. Children learn how to keep themselves healthy as the childminder uses everyday opportunities effectively in order to support their understanding. For example, children are provided with appropriate clothes for the weather.

The childminder liaises closely with parents to ensure their children's individual needs are met, for example, with regards to sleeping and daily routines. During the school holidays the parents provide main meals which the childminder stores and prepares appropriately. The childminder discusses healthy eating with the children and encourages them to make healthy choices that include fruit and vegetables in their children's lunch boxes. During the term time the childminder provides cooked meals that are in line with the recognised guidance about healthy eating. Plenty of water and healthy snacks are made readily available all day. All relevant details are taken at admission to ensure children's dietary needs are well met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where the childminder has taken precautions to minimise hazards and ensure areas are safe for the children. For example, she checks sleeping children regularly and uses safety equipment such as socket covers and stair gates which prevents unsupervised access to the first floor and the kitchen area. The childminder has an emergency evacuation procedure which is shared with parents and practised with the children. Children are becoming aware of how to keep themselves safe as the childminder discusses road safety on outings and gently reminds them to tidy up toys on the floor.

The childminder has a good awareness of child protection issues and the signs and symptoms that would alert her to have concerns about a child in her care. A useful child protection policy is in place which states that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance and that the childminder strives to create an atmosphere where children are safe and secure and can feel happy and well looked after.

Children access a good range of toys and resources which are suitable for their age and stage of development. They are readily accessible and this helps children make choices about what they wish to play with. The childminder makes regular checks to ensure toys and resources remain clean and safe for the children to use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, comfortable and have fun in the childminder's home. They develop good relationships with each other. Children become independent as they choose from a variety of toys and resources set out by the childminder. The childminder changes these frequently using the toy library to support the range of equipment she already has. This helps to keep the children engaged and interested in play. Children benefit from themes and activities planned by the childminder to meet their individual needs and stage of development. The children benefit from the childminder's understanding of child development and use of the Birth to three matters framework. Children enjoy imaginative play; they particularly like to dress-up and pretend to be pirates sailing on a ship far away. The children choose different activities throughout the day. They have a choice from small world toys such as dinosaurs and small people, puzzles and creative activities. They have conversations about what they have done at home with the childminder who encourages them to build their language skills and understanding through their play. Children develop their creative skills through planned craft activities and experience good practical opportunities to explore painting, cutting and sticking.

The children's day includes a good variety of outings where they meet other people, use a wide range of equipment and explore their local environment. Regular visits to the park give younger children the opportunity to play alongside other children, develop social skills and become confident in larger groups. Trips to the library allow children to choose books for themselves and listen to stories in a different environment. During school holidays, outings include visits to venues such as nature parks and farms where children learn about the natural world and enjoy picnics with their friends. This all helps children develop a positive attitude to the world around them.

The childminder is very warm and affectionate towards the children making them feel comfortable and valued. She develops excellent relationships with them; she enjoys their company and knows them well. She spends a lot of time talking and playing with the children ensuring they are making good progress in all areas of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children enjoy a good range of activities that promote equality and reflect positive images of diversity and disabilities. For example, resources such as books, dolls and dressing up clothes reflecting diversity are made available to the children. The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity and has a positive attitude towards exploring differences, providing children with a balanced view of society. Children with any learning difficulties and/or disabilities would be assessed and liaison with parents is used to ensure all children are given the right care to meet their needs.

Children receive praise and encouragement to support positive behaviour. The childminder is patient and enjoys caring for children, providing support for their play. This helps to develop their understanding of how they should behave. For example, children are encouraged to share and say 'thank you' when they are given toys or drinks.

There is a good partnership with parents. The childminder cares for children according to their parent's wishes and this promotes the welfare of the children. She gathers individual information before children are placed in her care to ensure they can be cared for appropriately. For example,

food likes and dislikes and medical information are noted and discussed to ensure the childminder delivers individual care to suit children's needs. Parents access a range of clear written information to support their understanding of the service. For instance, the emergency plans, the contact number for the regulator and vehicle records are shared. Contact books inform parents of activities provided for children and the childminder uses photographs and examples of their handicrafts to support this.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the good support and encouragement they receive from the childminder who uses her experience and training well. They have free access to interesting play areas, as well as safe and clean resources. The health of the children is occasionally compromised because older children are not closely supervised during hand washing, but the childminder is planning to improve this immediately.

Children feel at home and comfortable within their surroundings. They benefit from a safe, organised environment, which enables them to develop independence and confidence. The childminder displays her certificate for parents to see and shares her policies and procedures with them. She has all the relevant documentation in place to support children's safety and welfare. The childminder continues her professional development through attending regular training courses to further improve the service to children and their parents. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to develop documentation to ensure that there are clear procedures in place regarding the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious and to share this with parents. There are procedures in place and written documents are signed by parents. Parents now receive a copy of the childminders exclusion through illness policy. This promotes the safety and welfare of the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 consistency in encouraging children's good practice for personal hygiene

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