

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106550
Inspection date	05 November 2007
Inspector	Nigel Lindsay Smith
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 children aged 14 and nine years in Henleaze, Bristol. The whole of the ground floor and three bedrooms are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, most of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She takes children to toddler groups, a children's centre, the zoo, library, parks, and on farm visits.

The childminder is a member of the Avon and Somerset Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is very well promoted as the childminder follows excellent practice. Children learn about good hygiene through washing their hands, with signs in the toilet to encourage them, and they use separate towels at low level. They select tissues independently to blow their noses. Colourful posters encourage the theme of being healthy, such as 'eat lots of fruit'. Children benefit from very good procedures in place to ensure equipment is suitable for use, including the regular cleaning of toys and equipment.

Children's health and welfare is significantly enhanced through the clear supporting documentation. Parents sign to ensure they have been made aware of accidents. They give permission for the childminder to seek emergency medical treatment to avoid delay. Children can be treated promptly in the event of an accident as the childminder holds a current first aid certificate, and maintains a recommended supply of first aid provision. Parents provide consent for any medication to be given by the childminder and give details of any previously administered, to avoid confusion. They are asked to sign a record of any medication given by the childminder. Children are protected from unnecessary exposure to illness as the childminder has an agreement with parents for children not to attend if they are unwell.

Children's good diet is very effectively promoted through the childminder's commitment to promoting healthy eating. She provides healthy snacks, such as bananas and oranges. Children sit together at the kitchen table for their meals, which are balanced and healthy with a variety of vegetables. The childminder encourages achieving 'five a day' portions of fruit and vegetables through ticking them off on a chart with the children. She makes a copy of her menu available to the parents. Records of any allergies are maintained. Drinks are available throughout the day to ensure children's fluid levels are maintained.

Children have excellent opportunities for regular physical play and fresh air. They enthusiastically use the outside area even when the weather is cold.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a well maintained and clean home. The premises are well organised to meet children's needs. The area used for the children is very welcoming, with colourful displays of the current theme, autumn, including a leaf collage made by the children and photos of their activities.

Children choose from a comprehensive selection of toys and resources which they can safely and easily access from labelled boxes; the childminder regularly checks all equipment to ensure their safety.

Children's safety is secured by a thorough risk assessment. Precautions such as a gate between the kitchen and the hall, and safety film on the glass doors protect children from hazards. Smoke detection equipment is in place and the childminder has evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. However, the key to a bedroom window used for resting was not available at inspection. Children are safe when on outings as arrangements are made suitable to their ages, for example, younger children use reins and older children hold onto the buggy. The childminder takes first aid provision and emergency contact details with her.

Children are safeguarded by the childminder's good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. She has a copy of the relevant guidelines so that she can make a referral promptly if necessary. She has written a clear policy which she makes available to parents so that they are aware of her responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy learning through play as the childminder ensures that they experience a mixture of extremely well-planned activities and free play, using her skills to develop their knowledge.

Children choose to play at the play kitchen with a good choice of play vegetables, which the childminder uses to talk about their lunch. They benefit from the childminder's commitment to engaging with them in their play, encouraging them to explore through appropriate questions and giving them helpful information. When they show interest in play figures representing images of disability, the childminder helps them to understand by linking difficulties with mobility with their own early stages in walking.

In a very well-prepared activity outdoors, 'harvesting' bulbs that the childminder has buried in a tray of soil, she skilfully stimulates their interest by giving clues as to what tools they could use and helping them to find them. The children excitedly discover the bulbs and are helped to recall previous discussions about 'roots and shoots'. They count the bulbs and follow instructions to 'fill their pots halfway'. They then develop their own game of adding water, to make 'sandcastles' with the soil. A spontaneous game outside using a ride-on car and a doll's buggy develops as the childminder chucks a roundabout for them to negotiate and they discover other circular items in the environment. Children enjoy attending toddler groups and a children's centre, and visit parks, the zoo, farms and the library.

Children benefit from the childminder's excellent knowledge of Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage in planning for them. Different activities link to the overall theme; for example the children sit cosily with the childminder on the settee and enjoy a book about harvest festival. The childminder makes comprehensive written observations of children's progress, supported with photos, which she shares with their parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a good range of resources which reflect different cultures, for example multi-cultural puppets, figures and puzzles. The childminder adds to her own resources by using the library, and obtains information from the internet for projects with the children. She does not have experience of caring for children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, but has a good understanding of how to include children so that their needs are met, including adapting activities if appropriate.

Children behave very well and this is reinforced as they receive plenty of praise and encouragement from the childminder. The childminder uses a good range of sensitive tactics to manage any disagreements, such as negotiating swaps of equipment. She has appropriate strategies to deal with any unacceptable behaviour.

Children benefit from the childminder's high commitment to building good working relationships with their parents so that they settle well. She provides comprehensive information about her service, and daily feedback to parents. She makes written agreements with the parents and seeks appropriate consents. She has thorough procedures in place in the event of a complaint about her practice. Written comments from parents show that they are very happy with all aspects of the care given to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are met very well by the childminder, who shows good understanding of how children develop. The childminder provides an excellent balance of play opportunities for children in a well organised and spacious environment. She regularly updates her knowledge to ensure consistency in the care that she offers, through attending a variety of training courses and taking part in an accreditation scheme.

Children's care, welfare and learning are well promoted through thorough procedures and policies, which she shares with parents from the outset. All records are kept confidentially and retained for the appropriate period of time. All adults in the household are vetted and children are not left alone with anyone who has not undergone checks.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that the fireguard was secured. This is no longer necessary as the fire is not used during childminding.

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:

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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):

- ensure that keys are accessible for windows in rooms used for children to rest

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