

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136422
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Esther Harvey

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband and two teenage children in Warmley on the outskirts of Bristol. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding seven children under five and one child occasionally after school. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family have a pet Labrador dog.

The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for early education for three and four-year-olds.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and comfortable home. Children are encouraged to be independent in their self-care skills. For example, they learn good hygiene routines and wash their hands before meals. The childminder makes it fun using bubbles and liquid soap. Excellent nappy changing procedures are in place, such as ensuring children's privacy when changing their nappies, and using protective gloves. Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through gentle reminders such as a picture routine for washing hands. Young children's toys are cleaned and washed regularly. As a result, the childminder sustains a high level of hygiene in order to prevent the spread of infection.

Children develop very good physical skills as they regularly take part in a wide range of vigorous physical activities on a daily basis. The childminder encourages their hand and eye coordination catching and batting balloons to each other. They visit toddler groups and soft play areas most days with the childminder, which increases their large muscle control and helps them to develop control over their bodies. Children are able to rest and play according to their own needs and are aware when they need to rest. As a result, children are given the opportunity to enjoy daily fresh air and a range of activities which contributes to their good health.

Children are very well nourished. They are provided with a healthy cooked meal each day. A menu is provided which shows a well balanced diet for snacks and meals. Children enjoy the social interaction at meal times as they sit together with the childminder. Children learn life-skills such as setting the table for lunch and making healthy choices about the food they wish to eat. They are helped to become aware of good foods as the childminder uses activities to promote healthy eating, by including the children in the preparation of the meal. For example, children decide what vegetables they will have for lunch, they choose the size of the potatoes and whether carrots are cut in circles or strips. As a result, children learn to take an interest in what they are eating which increases their enjoyment. Children have their health and dietary needs met because the childminder works with parents and takes into account children's choices and preferences.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. There is an extensive range of toys and resources available for children to use which are stimulating, interesting to play with, and cover all areas of development. For example, children delight in catching paper butterflies in small nets blown from a trunk of a toy elephant. These free choice activities enable children to develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children's art and craft work is displayed in the home as a means of celebrating their achievements. Photographs of children engaged in activities are displayed professionally in frames so that children can recall what they have enjoyed.

Children benefit from the excellent range of safety measures the childminder implements in the home. For example, children are very familiar with the fire safety arrangements and are able to demonstrate how effectively they leave the house on hearing the smoke alarm. A large poster in the childminder's hallway supports the action with room to record the time and date of the fire drill. While on outings children wear a personalised wrist band in the event of being separated from the childminder. As a result, children are closely supervised yet with some elements of freedom to develop their own safety awareness. This includes tidying away toys from the floor before using other resources. A thorough risk assessment supports the childminder's commitment in keeping children safe indoors and on outings.

Children's welfare is fully protected and the childminder has a clear understanding of her personal responsibility to safeguard children. The childminder has a thorough knowledge of child protection reporting and recording procedures and has attended a child protection course. The childminder's duty to refer to the appropriate authorities is shared with parents. This means that children's well-being is actively and effectively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are provided with quality care, in a warm, secure and stimulating environment. Young children are encouraged to enjoy themselves by learning through play. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Birth to three matters framework which enables young children to gain confidence and develop their self-esteem. Children have access to a wide range of play resources chosen carefully by the childminder to encourage their independent learning abilities. The childminder involves herself in children's play, and listens carefully to their ideas. She provides thoughtful support and encouragement in order that children achieve.

The childminder uses good questioning techniques to develop children's ability to recall events and communicate their ideas. For example, children talked excitedly about a bus and train journey they had taken with the childminder, children remembered where they went, and that a ticket was needed in order to travel on the number '41' bus. The childminder carefully plans a good range of interesting activities, loosely based on themes, such as 'space', but she also follows the children's lead if they have ideas to extend their play. The extensive range of resources provides inviting opportunities for imaginative play such as using card board boxes to make a train.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children benefit from the childminder's experience and extremely good knowledge of the early years curriculum and stepping stones. She plans a very good range of activities which attracts children's attention and stimulates their interest. As a result, children are helped to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The childminder has very good knowledge of children's individual progress demonstrated through the clear and accurate record of children's achievements, these are regularly monitored. Children's progress is shown through the extensive use of photographs, a sample of children's

art work, and detailed observation records. The information is used by the childminder to inform future planning for each child. Activity plans are clear and are extremely well linked to the stepping stones.

Children are confident and show a great deal of enthusiasm for the exiting range of activities provided by the childminder. There are many opportunities for children to be creative. For example, children concentrate for some period of time making a picture of a rocket, decorating it with glitter, cutting out various shapes to add to the picture, using their hand and eye coordination to independently spread glue on the paper. Children learn about astronauts and shape of a rectangle with varying sides. Children are developing good relationships with each other and the childminder. They team up to drive the train made out of large card board boxes. Children enthusiastically sing and play various instruments such as a drum and harmonica.

The childminder encourages maths skill in all areas of the children's play. For example, children count carrots and potatoes while helping the childminder to prepare lunch. They talk about whether the circle shape carrots taste better than the long shape, while recognising simple shapes and patterns. Children look in wonder as they snuggle in a dark corner shining torches on the wall reflecting spider shapes, and making the shape small and big by moving the torch forward and back. Through practical experience and discussion, children are beginning to develop some understanding of addition and subtraction. They calculate how many potatoes are needed to cook for lunch. They recognise that the number five is upside down and numbers are not in the correct order. Children sing enthusiastically about 'five little men in a flying saucer'.

Children are confident speakers and welcome visitors into the childminder's home. They love story telling and learn about who wrote the story and illustrated the pictures. Children listen intently to the well told stories by the childminder. Children have access to a good range of books and treat them with respect while turning the pages. Children learn letter sounds through the childminder's keen interest in teaching phonics. Children have many opportunities to learn pre-writing skills. They freely make marks in small trays of sand, and make patterns as they swirl large chalks onto brightly coloured paper. Children have good listening skills and can follow simple instructions. They learn basic science as the childminder blows up a balloon and releases it. Children laugh as the balloon shoots around the room. The childminder explains the principle to the children. As a result, children are learning well through experiential play opportunities, within the intimate setting of the childminder's home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel at home in a welcoming environment. Children are happy, relaxed and contented, and feel a sense of belonging, which enables them to confidently initiate their own play. Children are encouraged to participate in all the activities. For example, cooking activities, such as, making cakes, preparing a meal, and planting bulbs for the spring. As a result, children are able to move forward in their areas of learning and grow in confidence and self-esteem. They have regular opportunities to explore the environment. For example, the childminder takes children on walks to collect autumn leaves or to feed the ducks. Children enjoy going to the scrap store to choose their 'scrap' for modelling, they visit the toy library to choose a toy to borrow. Children

thoroughly enjoy their time and experiences in the care of the childminder. All children are included and cared for equally by the childminder who works in close partnership with parents to support children's individual needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered in many ways. This includes learning to care for living creatures, and learning to be kind to each other, by sharing toys and taking turns. Children learn about diversity through various planned festivals, as well as good quality resources such as small world figures, dolls, jigsaw puzzles and books reflecting positive stories relating to disability and culture.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. The childminder is a good role model for children. She treats them with respect and listens carefully to what they have to say. Children learn to behave through the childminder's calm, consistent approach, and age appropriate strategies. This includes rewarding achievements with a badge to stick onto their jumper. This enables children to know the boundaries in a positive way. Children enjoy each other's company. For instance, they join together to build a tall tower from coloured plastic bricks. Children are encouraged by the childminder to be considerate and kind, such as laying the table for lunch.

Parents are provided with a wealth of documents with information about policies and procedures and a full prospectus which includes details of the childminder's family. The childminder gives parents further information, such as, which days she works and a typical week's activity routine. Parents are fully informed about the Birth to three matters framework, and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The childminder gathers extensive information about children before they start, including any cultural or dietary requirements, any extended family members and any known fears of the children. The childminder shares information about the children with parents verbally at the end of the day, and by using daily diaries for young children. Parents are given opportunities to comment about the childminder's service through use of a questionnaire. Parents value the work of the childminder and say that she is an 'amazing lady'. There is a close working relationship with parents and the childminder for the benefit of the children.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents receive good quality information about their children's educational programme. They are well informed through written explanations of the early years curriculum and their children's progress following the stepping stones. The childminder creates a professional relationship with parents, but includes a warm and friendly approach by which parents can work in partnership for the benefit of the children. The childminder has a very comprehensive system in place for sharing information with parents to meet the children's needs. For example, parents are provided with regular opportunities to look at their children's progress books. These have been well documented by the childminder with photographic examples of what the children achieve, set against the stepping stones. Parents are invited to write any comments in their child's book, and take part in their children's learning by providing objects from home to support the theme. A regular news letter keeps parents informed about the theme the childminder is covering with the children, and what parents can do to support their children's learning. For example, she plans to concentrate on personal skills such as helping children to be independent putting on shoes and socks. As a result, the high standard of information which is shared between the childminder and parents ensures that each child's learning needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enriched by the childminder's highly effective organisation of space and resources. Children feel at ease within the homely and relaxed environment. They are extremely confident in initiating and extending their own play and learning. The childminder is experienced and is highly motivated to improve her professional development by attending training courses. As a result, she is well informed and able to implement any childcare practices into her childminding setting. The childminder has a high regard in maintaining standards, where children are her first priority.

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the health, welfare and learning of children. Information is regularly shared with parents to keep them well informed about their children's day and their activities. Documentation is maintained to a high standard, very comprehensive and well organised. The quality for children in the setting is high.

The childminder has a very good understanding of the areas of learning, children's achievements through the stepping stones, and the early learning goals. Her planning is detailed, easy to follow and accurately linked to the curriculum. The childminder is fully supported by the local authority network coordinator, and is committed to providing good quality care and education. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure the written statement of the procedure to be followed if parents have a complaint, includes Ofsted's details. The childminder has attended a child protection course and provided parents with the contact details of Ofsted. As a result, these improvements have enhanced children's welfare and parent information.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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