

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY292195
Inspection date 04 January 2008
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 satisfactory. 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 2004. She lives with her husband and child aged 11 years in Bedminster, Bristol, close to the main shopping area. The whole of the ground floor, bathroom and one bedroom on the first floor is 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 six children. One child attends full time and the other five attend on a part-time basis. She works occasionally with an assistant. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She regularly attends a toddler group held at the City Farm and has advice and support from Redcliffe Children's Centre. The family has two cats, minded children may have supervised contact with the pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as they are cared for in a clean environment where the childminder has set routines for maintaining hygiene. Areas of the home are cleaned and disinfected regularly using a check list which sets out areas for specific attention such as, the kitchen and bathroom where surfaces and floors are cleaned with antibacterial wipes and solution. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet or touching pets. They are beginning to develop the understanding that they should not pick up things they find on the pavement as this is 'dirty'. Tissues and wet wipes are kept accessible for cleaning children's hands and faces.

The family cats do not pose a health risk to children as they have regular treatment to prevent common feline ailments including fleas and worms. Children have satisfactory treatment to minor accidents that may occur during play. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and a fully equipped first aid box which she checks frequently to ensure none of the items have expired. Procedures are also in place for obtaining prior written permission from parents to administer medication to children in a safe way which meets their needs.

Children's dietary needs are met through discussion and agreement with parents. The childminder has a sound understanding of children's nutritional needs and has developed a menu of light lunches which she shares with parents and invites their comments. Children are also offered choices of what they want for snacks and lunch and they are encouraged to try small amounts of things they are not familiar with eating. Water is accessible in covered cups and children help themselves if they are thirsty. Children also have drinks with snacks and meals. However, some children are at risk of drinking insufficient amounts of fluids as they do not like water and a solution to this problem has not been fully explored.

Children have opportunities to be outdoors and to take part in energetic activities to promote their healthy physical development. They walk to and from school each day on the school run with older children and also go for picnics and walks around local landmarks. Children enjoy active play at toddler groups where they use mobile equipment such as bikes and tricycles to develop large muscle strength. They play outside in the fresh air in the childminder's garden but more energetic play takes place away from the home as the space in the garden is restricted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have sufficient room to move around and explore their play in the welcoming space provided by the childminder. Furniture is arranged to the side of the sizable through lounge in order to create a central area for play. Children see several welcome posters as they enter the home and choose where to put their coats on the novelty child-height coat pegs. They also have individual drawstring bags to store small items of personal belongings. Parents are free to settle their children and to read the information set out on the notice board.

A wide range of interesting toys and resources are provided to support children's learning in all areas. These include: books, puzzles, items for imaginary play, toys for hand to eye coordination and push and response curiosity toys for babies. Toys are fit for purpose and are safe for children to use as items are purchased from reputable manufactures. Toys are also sorted into categories and kept in labelled storage boxes. The childminder keeps toys clean

and makes regular checks of resources before and after children use them to ensure they do not play with toys which break and are hazardous. Younger children have age-appropriate toys and the childminder is vigilant as she monitors younger children closely when different age groups are presents to ensure they do not have access to items used by the older children.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of safety issues and she has several safety features in place to prevent accidents and injuries to children both indoors and on trips outside the home. For example, children do not have access to the stairs as a safety gate is in place and a smoke alarm is fitted to the ceiling on the ground floor. A plan is in place to enable the childminder to evacuate children from the building quickly in an emergency. She also has a system for taking essential items such as spare door keys and written details of minded children as these are kept ready in bag made for this purpose. However, the risk assessment in the home is incomplete as some elements of risk remain and control measures are not in place to reduce these. Namely, the fire guard in the lounge is hazardous and unstable as it is not secured to the wall, the kitchen has limited space and is accessible to children, a smoke alarm is not in place on the first floor and access to the front door is difficult as children's buggies are kept in the hallway when not in use. Children are learning about staying safe outdoors and they know they must stay close to the childminder and hold on to the buggy. When crossing the road they practice the safety code for and know what the coloured light signals mean such as, red for stop and green for go.

Children's wellbeing is safe guarded and promoted as the childminder has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and has systems in place to record, monitor and make referrals to the relevant agency if necessary. The safeguarding children guidance booklets and additional written information is easy to access in a separate folder. Children are closely supervised at all times and callers do not enter the home during childminding.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are bright, alert and have good language and social skills. They take part in stimulating activities in the childminders home and have regular trips and learning opportunities in the community. A stimulating range of resources is accessible in the lounge which is the main area for care. Children can clearly see what is available and choose what they want to do during free play. They feel free to talk through their learning experiences as the childminder is very attentive and supports play by coming alongside children and skilfully intervening when necessary to extend children's learning. For example, on one occasion, a child of preschool age chooses a jig-saw puzzle to complete. The child concentrates and shares her thinking with the childminder by saying which pieces they need to find next to build up the puzzle. The child understands that she occasionally needs adult help to accomplish a task and asks the childminder to assist her to place some of the more challenging pieces. Children have good examples of how to solve problems as the childminder demonstrates possible actions and makes suggestions before allowing children to explore those methods to complete the self-chosen tasks.

Children spontaneously demonstrate evidence of previous learning and their ideas and thinking are clearly observed during play. They count independently in a meaningful way as they point to objects. They know the primary colours and are also able to distinguish the subtle differences which result in other shades such as pink and purple. Children enjoy singing and express their creativity when using musical instruments. They have opportunities to socialise with their peers at toddler groups and visits to a city farm where they are also able to observe animals.

Children enjoy being outdoors and seasonal changes such as autumn are observed and used as learning opportunities by the childminder who allow children to explore the weight and movement of the leaves in the park. They also collect and stick leaves of different sizes, shapes and shades in their scrap books. Parents are aware of how children spend their time at the childminder as photographs of children at play and at parties are shared with them. Although the childminder has good understanding of child development and provides many learning opportunities which promote children's development, she has not used the Birth to Threes Matters framework to evaluate and assess children's progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well through initial and ongoing discussions with parents. Each child is valued by the childminder and she seeks to comply with parents instructions and to find solutions to any concerns. For example, ways of meeting dietary needs of children who are very fussy eaters. The childminder provides a meaningful range of resources for example, dolls, place mats and homemade picture boards to promote a positive view of the wider world and to increase children's understanding of how other people live. They have access to excellent factual and story books.

The childminder understands the need to work closely with parents and professionals when providing care for children who have an impairment with specific requirements. All activities are accessible to children of varying abilities and the childminder has some toys which promote sensory development including touch, sight and hearing. Children who have limited speech and English as an additional language have equal access to toys and can show the childminder which toys they want to play with if these are not already set out. Pictures and symbols of toys are available which they point to and communicate their need.

Children behave well as the childminder is attentive to their needs and keeps them purposefully occupied. Children learn what is expected of them through explanation and discussion about why a certain type of behaviour is unacceptable. They learn to contribute in important ways such as clearing toys away after using them before taking out new ones. Children are shown a good example from the childminder who is polite and treats children with respect. The childminder has a basic behaviour management policy which is shared with parents. Children may have time out for reflection if they fail to respond to adult instructions.

Children have continuity of care between home and childminding as the childminder has established close professional relationships with parents and engages them in regular discussion about care. Feedback is given at the end of each day or telephone calls are made instead if necessary. Parents also have access to written information about childminding practices and routines, as documents including, an activity plan, weekly menu and training certificates are displayed on the sizable notice board. Written policies are also shared with parents. Parents have access to a complaints policy and a system is in place for logging complaints. The complaints policy has the regulator's telephone number and also a web site address.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel confident and at ease as the childminder has organised the home environment and routines well to meet their needs. She has completed the childminder preparation course and has a current first aid certificate. She continues her professional development by identifying

and attending short courses to improve her practice. For example, she has attended courses on the Birth to Three Matters framework, inclusion and speech and language development. All adults in the home are safe to be in close proximity to children as they have completed criminal records checks.

Children have sufficient supervision as the adult to child ratio is maintained at all times. The record of attendance is maintained in a working diary and shows the actual times when children arrive, or are collected from school, and depart. The childminder occasionally works with her husband as an assistant.

Records of children and their parents are maintained satisfactorily, including the written agreements of care and the child record forms. These are kept in a working filing system and are easy to access for reference. The childminder also has a risk assessment document. However, some areas of areas of risk have not been identified and included for control measures as stated under Staying Safe. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to a recommendation to improve children's access to resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability. She also agreed to obtain information about the local child protection procedures and to develop further knowledge of these.

Children now have opportunities to learn about difference as they have access to a variety of resources with positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability. These include: interesting books, dolls, posters and colourful place mats. Children's wellbeing is now safeguarded and promoted as the childminder has now improved her understanding of the area procedures for keeping children safe from abuse. She has a clear understanding of signs and symptoms which may indicate abuse has occurred and she knows the procedure for recording concerns and having discussions with parents. The local and national safeguarding children guidance booklets are kept in a folder and are easy to access for reference if required.

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.

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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):

- further develop practices to promote children's good health and nutrition and develop ways to encourage children who are reluctant to drink water, to increase their intake of fluid throughout the day
- improve procedures for staying safe and assess the risk to children in regard to: the unstable fire guard; access to the kitchen; clear access to the front door in an emergency and, provide smoke alarms which conforms to BS EN safety standards at every level of the house and ensure they are maintained in working order.

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