

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101215
Inspection date	22 July 2008
Inspector	Jenny Read
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 has been registered since 1990 and may provide care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. She currently cares for three children under five years on a part-time basis all year round and one child over five years on a part-time basis during school holidays. The childminder attends local parent-and-toddler groups on a weekly basis.

The childminder lives with her husband and their two adult children in the Reddings area of Cheltenham. The whole of the house is used for childminding. The main areas used are the sitting room/play room, kitchen/dining area and downstairs toilet facilities. One upstairs bedroom is available for sleeping. There is an enclosed rear garden with paddock, grass and patio surfaces for outdoor play. The family has one dog, two sheep, four goats and nine chickens.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing clear understanding of health issues and how to look after their bodies because the childminder encourages them to regularly blow their nose and offers sensitive reminders about health and hygiene routines and practices. The children wash their hands before meal times and after art and craft activities, using the toilet, touching the goats and various animals in the garden and confidently explain how germs can make them poorly. In addition, the children honour each other's privacy when using the toilet or having their nappy changed. They know why they use sun cream and describe the clothes they need to wear in the winter to protect themselves from the weather.

The childminder has completed an approved first aid course that includes basic life support and maintains a number of first aid boxes to ensure children receive appropriate treatment for minor injuries. All the required records for accidents and administration of medication and written consent for emergency treatment or advice are in place. This prevents any delays in the treatment of the children.

Children's dietary needs are well supported. The childminder liaises closely with parents and the children, getting to know their likes and dislikes and providing a balanced menu. The children choose to drink water or squash at meal times, ensuring they are adequately hydrated. Meal times are a social occasion with all the children and the childminder sitting together at the table, talking to each other and sharing their news. They also occasionally help to set out the table at meal times, which supports their enjoyment of food.

The children are gaining awareness of the importance of healthy food and exercise through reading books and discussion with the childminder. For example, they know they have to wait for their food to go down before jumping on the trampoline and how they must not eat too many sweet foods or it will upset their stomach. Children are learning first hand where different foods come from by assisting the childminder daily with collecting the eggs from the chickens.

Older children rest and relax on the sofas when they need to, whilst younger children benefit from sleep routines in line with parents' wishes. The children enjoy generally good opportunities to be active and develop large muscle skills, coordination and control on regular trips to parks where they use swings and climbing equipment and by daily play on the trampoline in the garden. The childminder organises a sufficient selection of outdoor toys, such as bats and balls. In addition, the children enjoy the fresh air, running around the garden and paddock. Although checking of the grass for animal mess is not consistent.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in spacious indoor and outdoor play areas. Indoor areas are bright and comfortable for children to relax. Children use the space confidently and access the downstairs toilet independently. They choose a small selection of well-maintained play materials each day from the high shelves in the storage cupboard and keep the containers on the floor in the sitting room to help themselves when they wish.

Children's safety and security is given suitable priority. Stair gates in the hallway and entrance to the utility area, tables positioned carefully and high latches or bolts on appropriate gates in

the garden, ensures children cannot access certain areas of the house or garden unsupervised. However, some dangerous substances are accessible to children and although there is no safety netting or padding around the trampoline to prevent children from falling off or landing on the springs, the childminder supervises them and ensures only one person goes on at a time. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in an emergency through quarterly practise of the escape plan. They also describe with some assurance how to cross the road safely when on outings.

Children are safe and generally well protected because the childminder maintains an accurate record of attendance for children and regular visitors to the setting. She ensures persons are well known to her prior to collection and informs parents to make sure these are fully understood. Most children are kept safe on outings because some written permissions are in place.

Children are generally well protected from abuse and neglect as the childminder has clear knowledge of the signs and indicators of abuse. She understands the importance of observing and monitoring any concerns and is very clear about her responsibility to report these, although she is not clear of up-to-date safeguarding procedures to follow. The childminder takes appropriate steps to safeguard children's welfare by ensuring all adults living on the premises or who regularly visit the setting have completed relevant checks.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and content because the childminder knows them well and has good relationships. Children relate well to the childminder, readily sharing news and ideas and actively involving her in their play. They confidently ask questions and respond positively to the friendly atmosphere contributing to the children's enjoyment and comfort. The childminder listens to the children during play and offers excellent extension and challenge for the pre-school children. For example, the childminder shows the children how to build with the Polydrons, asking them to name the shapes individually and introduces new words, such as cube and pyramid. The oldest child proudly shows her tower to the group stating 'look how tall I have builded it' and with encouragement from the childminder counts the number of bricks up to 27. They respond positively to the childminder's effective questioning, such as 'if you put one more on how many would there be' or 'if you took one off how many would there be?'

Although the children play with a small range of toys, they keep busy and make good use of them. For example, they eagerly use the toys to represent other items, increasing their imagination, such as making cones with the Polydrons to represent chip cones and pretending to put salt and vinegar on. The childminder skilfully supports children's play and learning, actively encouraging them to think of solutions, for example, how to resolve fitting the wooden train track together. They share books together and eagerly take an active part by talking about the pictures.

Children show interest in what they do, making pictures with the fuzzy felts and choosing pictures from the magazine to organise and stick on their paper. They enjoy designing paper plate faces using a selection of craft materials and wool. The childminder loosely plans in line with children's interests, although activities and adaptations to the creative activities for the youngest children are not consistent to increase their sensory experiences. Children enjoy many opportunities to meet with other adults and children of similar age to develop their social skills. They have fun at the playgroup exploring more activities and ride on toys and take part in the

childminder support group picnic and fun day with bouncy castle, sponsored obstacle course and visiting Police car and officer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are generally well met because the childminder knows the children and liaises sufficiently with the parents. The childminder observes and monitors the children and sensitively shares any concerns. She is very keen to support those children with speech and language delay, spending individual time to read and support language. In addition, the children are learning to use basic Makaton signs during the toddler group sessions to aid communication. The children are confident to seek support and readily snuggle up with the childminder for cuddles when they wish. Children have little opportunities to learn about diversity or the wider world through resources or activities, such as researching and talking about their holidays and those of the childminder. However, the children share the kaleidoscope and Origami models made by the Japanese students staying at their home and briefly talk about the different language they speak.

Children are well behaved and are learning right and wrong because the childminder is firm, consistent and although the children do not contribute to the clear rules and boundaries, they know them well. Children use their manners and remind each other if they inadvertently forget. Frequent praise and encouragement for good behaviour and achievements raises children's confidence and self-esteem. In addition, all children excitedly explain if they share and take turns, try new foods at meal times or have been good during the day, they receive a sticker.

Children benefit from a friendly and informal partnership between their parents and the childminder. Letters observed from the parents praise the childminder's warm, caring heart and value her support with following their wishes for various aspects of care. Written business arrangements are in place but these have not been updated since 2006, therefore the information recorded is not accurate, such as including siblings. Most written permissions are in place. Informal daily discussion with parents ensures most information is shared to encourage a two-way exchange of information.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder enjoys her job and this is evident in the good interaction and relationships with the children. Consequently, the children are happy and enjoy themselves. Play space is organised satisfactorily to provide different areas for children to play and join in activities. Although the childminder is not keen to attend additional training to increase her own professional development, she attends first aid training each year and is shortly to attend safeguarding training to update her knowledge.

All the regulatory documentation are in place and contain sufficient information. Although some records or written permissions are not complete or regularly updated to promote children's well-being, the childminder displays parent contact details on the wall and keeps a copy in her bag and in her mobile phone for outings. Children and parents information is kept all together and mixed in with other letters and written permissions, making it difficult to find certain information quickly. However, the information is stored in a box file out of reach to ensure it is secure. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the care was judged as inadequate. The childminder was asked to obtain a first aid qualification and keep it up-to-date, keep an accurate daily record of children's attendance and improve knowledge and develop systems for recording complaints. The childminder holds an appropriate first aid qualification to protect children's health. The record of attendance is clear and accurate to show clearly who is present at any one time. A complaints pack is now in place for parents and procedures are well known by the childminder.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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 sufficient steps are taken to minimise all risks to children, including having the fire blanket accessible and removing all dangerous substances
- increase knowledge of the procedures to take with any safeguarding concerns
- obtain written permission for all children to go on outings or to travel in a vehicle.
- increase the opportunities for children to learn about the wider world.

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