

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	100818
Inspection date	08 May 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 good. 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 1996 and may provide care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She currently cares for eight children under five years on a part-time basis all year round and two children over five years before and after school, and during school holidays. Additional care is provided for three children over eight years before and after school, and during school holidays. An assistant supports the childminder on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools and playgroups to take and collect children.

The childminder lives with her husband and three children of 19, 17 and 14 years in the Longlevens area of Gloucester. The ground floor is available for the childminding. The main areas used are the conservatory/play room, open-plan dining area and sitting room, and downstairs toilet facilities. There are two upstairs bedrooms available for sleeping and an enclosed rear garden with grass and patio surfaces for outdoor play. The family has two guinea pigs and two frogs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very clean and well maintained home where very good emphasis is given to minimising infection and promoting children's personal care needs. For example, children know they need to wear sun cream in warmer weather to prevent them from burning and all children are encouraged to wash their hands at the sink, with older children demonstrating very good awareness of the routines by emptying the water out of the sink after each child. This reduces any spreading of germs. The children readily use the liquid soap and paper towels, and clearly explain how important washing their hands has on their healthy well-being. Suitable nappy changing procedures are in place to prevent cross contamination and infection because the childminder uses disposable gloves, wipes the changing mat after use and wraps the nappy in a bag and disposes of it straight away in the bin.

The childminder acts in the best interest of children when they are ill, following her policies clearly and being very mindful of other children in her care to minimise the spread of infection. The childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge having attended recent training and a well equipped first aid box to ensure children receive appropriate treatment for minor injuries. All regulatory records for accidents and medication are in place and shared with parents accordingly to ensure they are well informed.

Children learn about healthy eating, selecting from a range of different fruits at snack time and enjoy various fillings in their sandwiches throughout the week. They readily help themselves to their drinks when they are thirsty, recognising their individual cups and those of their peers. Meal time routines are clear and well known by the children, recognising they have to sit at the table when eating. Meal times are busy with many children going off to playgroup or arriving but every effort is made to encourage the children to sit together, talk and share news to create a social occasion, which aids their enjoyment of food. Children are gaining good awareness of the importance of healthy food through useful activities and regular explanations about how they will grow big, strong and healthy. They also learn about eating some foods in moderation and talk about the different food they eat each day, cutting out pictures of the different fruit and vegetables to stick onto their chart to monitor they are having the required 'five a day'.

Children enjoy daily fresh air and outside play all year round, building on fitness and confidence in their physical skills. The younger children are learning about their body and gaining more control as they use different tools and equipment, moving up and down the step and racing up and down the room on their sit-on wheeled toys. The children show agility, strength and confidence as they climb and move around the apparatus in the garden and demonstrate good control as they kick balls and pedal the go-kart.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright, spacious and comfortable play room where the toys, furniture and equipment for the younger children are low-level and readily accessible. They make good use of the outdoor space each day and utilise the open-plan dining area and sitting room as additional play space, moving confidently and freely between the different rooms. There is a broad range of well maintained toys and play materials suitable for the wide ages and abilities of the children attending. These are stored in well labelled boxes in the play room, along the

floor and on book shelves. This enables the children to see what is available, to help with tidying away and encourages their independence in selecting items for themselves. Children understand that games and play items for the older children are stored in boxes with lids in the hallway to safeguard the younger children from putting items in their mouth and choking.

The childminder maintains high levels of safety and security through good knowledge of health and safety policies and procedures to give sound protection to the children in her care. She is very vigilant and ensures all external gates are shut, latches are in place and the doors and stair gates are closed at all times to ensure the children are secure and supervised closely.

Children gain good awareness of safety issues and learn how to keep themselves safe through frequent and clear explanations, such as why they should not swing on the chairs, or why they should not climb on the furniture because they might bump and hurt themselves. Accurate recording and regular practise of the emergency escape plan keeps the children safe and helps them learn appropriate action to take. Regular practise of the green cross code and playing games, such as road safety snap, heightens children's awareness and ensures they clearly understand how to cross the road safely. The childminder describes good arrangements for the safe collection of the children and although she records daily children's times of arrival and departure, these are not consistently accurate.

Children are protected from harm and abuse because the childminder has attended up-to-date safeguarding children training, is registered with the children's safeguarding website to keep her up-to-date with current knowledge and procedures, and maintains detailed information to refer to with any concerns. She is clear about the need to record any concerns and has clear procedures laid out in her policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a suitable range of age appropriate activities, such as sticking and gluing, colouring and drawing, and occasional messy play activities, including play dough and cooking. The childminder through her current training is increasing her knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and Foundation Stage of learning and is developing written plans. Although the range of sensory experiences and creative play activities available particularly for the younger children to increase their awareness of textures, sound and smell are yet to be extended and fully introduced. The children benefit from the childminder's increasing awareness of their individual learning needs through completion of observation grids that include: learning intentions for planned activities; what the childminder has learnt about the child; next steps in the child's learning and an evaluation of the activity. Consequently, the childminder is developing her confidence in this area to begin to focus children's next steps on specific areas of development that support their learning and help them build on what they already know and can do.

Children are building good relationships with each other and show pleasure and excitement when familiar friends arrive to play. They regularly meet up with other adults and children during weekly meetings with other childminders and visit local childcare groups to encourage their social skills. The children are very confident and happy with the childminder, laughing and having fun together as they play. Their confidence is also enhanced because the childminder actively encourages them to make choices in their play. They play with the cars and garage, animals on the farm yard and enjoy hiding games using the household furniture. The children explore the snails in the garden and readily show excitement and glee as they play snap at the

table. They show interest in what they do and ask to repeat their activity numerous times. For example, asking their peers and the adults to co-operative as they draw around their hands. They compare sizes of the hands while the childminder models some appropriate language to support communication and language.

The older children enjoy relaxing on the sofa after lunch, choosing their favourite video and take comfort in 'snuggling up' with the childminder or the assistant to share news and chat about their day. The children have a lovely time with the childminder and her assistant, and appear happy and content.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has clear knowledge and maintains relevant information about the children to ensure their individual needs are well met and are fully understood and valued. Children benefit from the childminder's comprehensive research and reading materials regarding a wide range of cultures and festivals. They readily access a broad range of toys, jigsaws, books, play people and related activities that increase their awareness of diversity and the wider world. For example, colouring dragon masks for Chinese New Year.

The childminder works closely with parents to share any concerns to aid improvement and is developing her planning to focus more directly on children's next steps. She is committed to attending training workshops to support speech and language development, such as Makaton and shows good awareness of the need to adapt activities and resources to provide an inclusive setting.

Children are co-operative responding to sensitive reminders from the childminder to use their good manners. They play well together, share and take turns with support from the childminder and assistant, and take on board the clear explanations to help raise their awareness of the expectations for acceptable behaviour. As a result, children are well behaved. They are happy and confident because frequent praise and encouragement from the childminder and assistant actively promotes their self-esteem.

Children benefit from the good partnerships and friendly relationships between the childminder and their parents. Parents receive a good range of information about their children and the service she provides. For example, the parent welcome pack includes a short overview of the Birth to three matters and Foundation Stage curriculum, how the childminder is beginning to observe and assess children's play and learning, the policies and procedures, and how they relate to the National Standards. The development of yearly parent questionnaires indicates the childminder's commitment to involve parents in the setting and their children's care and learning. Daily informal discussions, children taking their pictures home and creating a calendar each year showing photographs of their children also helps parents feel involved.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is professional in her approach, demonstrates a good commitment to the children and indicates she enjoys her job. This is shown through her good organisational skills in managing the various children in her care, her good relationships with the children and how the homely environment is welcoming and child-friendly. As a result, the children are happy and have fun in the childminder's care. The childminder is very committed to improve and has

worked very hard since the last inspection by devising an action plan using guidelines from Every Child Matters to focus a detailed plan of action. She has attended a wide selection of training to enhance her own professional development and increase her knowledge of current good practice. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All regulatory records are in place and through discussion and observation of the records the childminder demonstrates sound awareness of the importance of sharing these with parents. Although these are organised in numerous folders making it difficult to find the information when required. The accident and medication records contain necessary details, although these are kept in a separate folder from the children's information. The attendance register shows children's times of attendance, however, the times shown are not accurate as they are often recorded prior to the child arriving or leaving. Written business arrangements, emergency contacts and permissions from parents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to parents' wishes. Each child has a separate named section in a file, to ensure information is stored confidentially. Policies and procedures contain useful and accurate information, and dates on each policy show when they are to be reviewed and up-dated to keep in-line with current legislation.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The childminder needed to ensure all records were in place, accurate and shared with parents; improve knowledge of the requirements set out in regulations; increase knowledge of local child protection procedures and action to take if an allegation of abuse is made while a child is in her care; collate evidence of complaints and make these available to parents, and increase knowledge and understanding of other cultures and customs.

The childminder has made significant progress in all areas to provide a richer and more balanced level of care that promotes children's health, safety and welfare.

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.

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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 accurate times of arrival and departure are recorded to show children's and the assistant's attendance
- further develop organisation of records and children's information to ensure easy access at all times.

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