



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 100868
Inspection date 03 October 2005
Inspector Linda Janet Witts

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 1994 and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children under 8 years of age; of these 3 may be under 5 years, and of these, 1 may be under 1 year. There are currently 8 children on roll.

The childminder lives with her husband and teenage son. They live in a semi-detached, three bedroom house in Hardwicke, on the outskirts of the city of Gloucester. There is a park, playgroup, toddler group and primary school within walking distance. The ground floor rooms, upstairs bathroom and toilet, and spare

bedroom are available for childminding. There is also an enclosed garden available for use. The family has a pet hamster.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because the childminder follows appropriate hygiene routines and procedures. The home in which they play is maintained to a good standard of hygiene, food preparation surfaces are clean, as are eating areas. Children are helped to understand simple good health and hygiene practice. They see the action taken by the childminder to keep the home clean and know to wash their hands after using the toilet. Babies' and toddlers' comfort is ensured by the childminder who responds promptly if they soil their nappies. Nappy changing arrangements are satisfactory. Older children are keen to help with nappy changing. They pay attention as the childminder talks through what she is doing and allows them to pass the baby wipes.

Children requiring medication are given their medication in accordance with their parents' direction and this is recorded appropriately. Arrangements in the event of an accident or injury are suitable to ensure children's welfare. The childminder has undertaken first aid training, but this is due to be updated; the first aid kit is routinely checked; parental permission has been received to seek emergency medical treatment or advise and accident records are appropriately maintained.

Children and babies are nourished and have their dietary needs met because the childminder works well with parents. Any meals provided by the parents are stored and heated appropriately. Meals provided by the childminder are varied, healthy and nutritious. Children enjoy their meals and ask for more to satisfy their needs.

Children enjoy being active. They move confidently within the indoor space, moving freely between the conservatory and kitchen area. Toddlers and older children climb the stairs safely. Babies crawl around as they explore the play environment. They all enjoy fresh air when they go out for walks. Those that can walk regularly attend 'Tumble Tots' sessions, which offer physical challenge and promote agility. The childminder has a variety of outdoor play resources to use in the garden and the children clearly enjoy time spent outside. However the garden tends to be used only in fine weather, which does not utilise the wealth of play opportunities and experiences available to children outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children move safely within the home. They are kept safe because the childminder supervises them well. Steps to minimise most risks have been taken, although children can access the stairs from the upstairs landing, if unsupervised. Outside the garden is secure. Children are able to use securely anchored swings and

a high climbing frame. There is no safety surface around the climbing frame and the childminder relies upon her supervision to ensure that children use it safely. Children regularly travel in the childminder's car and are suitably restrained to keep them safe. However written permission to transport children in a vehicle has not been obtained from parents.

Babies and children use age and stage appropriate toys and resources. They independently select resources which are stored so that they can access them safely. Children learn to keep themselves and others safe when using resources for example ensuring small resources are kept out of reach of the baby. Sleeping babies are monitored to ensure their well-being.

Children are protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection. She is able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies, toddlers and children are settled and happy. They are involved in a suitable range of activities, supported appropriately by the childminder. Children initiate their own play such as dressing up and going for a walk together within the home, 'cooking' and 'shopping', basing their imaginative play on their own experiences. They enjoy creative activities, for example, painting, drawing and colouring, cooking and manipulating play dough. Babies do not often join in creative activities as these are undertaken while they sleep.

Babies are keen to investigate their surroundings. They are absorbed as they watch the older children at play. They investigate the resources available to them concentrating hard. For example a nine month old explored sorting rings, putting them one by one to his mouth, looking closely at them, then fitting them over his arms and watching them turn as he moved his arms. The childminder interacts playfully with the baby, promoting communication by talking to him and responding to baby sounds.

Children show interest in what they do and are keen to demonstrate their abilities. They are taken to a local toddler group regularly where they socialise and enjoy different activities. They also have opportunities to visit local places of interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of different ages play happily together. Older children are sensitive to the needs of younger children and are keen to offer to help them. For example a child built a block tower for the baby to knock down and showed a toddler how to operate an activity toy. All children are well behaved and help to tidy away activities. The childminder fosters children's self-esteem by offering praise and encouragement for their good behaviour and achievements.

Individual children are supported because the childminder has a good knowledge of their particular needs. Two-way communication with children's parents ensures that the childminder works in partnership with them. She keeps them fully informed of how their children have been by talking to them when they collect their children and detailing information about feeds, sleeps and nappy changes in a diary for parents of babies. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns they may have but the childminder has not yet developed a system for recording complaints should she receive any. Parents report that they are very happy with the care their children receive.

Boys and girls are able to participate in the activities offered. Children benefit from being able to use some resources which reflect diversity. For example they can see positive images of ethnicity in the books available to them.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She organises the space within her home to enable children to play freely and access resources for themselves. The garden is not used to its full potential. Children are supervised well and the childminder has taken effective measures to minimise most risks within the home and garden. The childminder makes effective use of local facilities such as the local park, soft play centre, toddler group and 'Tumble Tots' sessions. She offers a suitable range of play activities and plans creative activities for older children, but fails to fully stimulate babies. The childminder positively supports children's care and play, promoting good behaviour and fostering their self-esteem.

The childminder keeps appropriate records but does not have a means of recording complaints, should she receive any. Parents are aware of the policies and procedures followed by the childminder. They agree care arrangements and draw up contracts, but parents are not asked to give written permission for the childminder to transport children in a vehicle.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that the smoke alarm on the first floor is maintained in working order and that the toilet door can be unlocked from the outside. Also the childminder was asked to request written permission from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice for children, as necessary.

In response to the actions and recommendation made the childminder has changed the toilet door lock and routinely checks the smoke detectors to ensure they are maintained in working order. Written permission to seek emergency treatment or advice has been obtained from parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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

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):

- consider ways to minimise the risks presented by the open access to the top of the stairs and the risk of children falling from the slide onto the grass surface below
- obtain written permission from parents to transport children in a vehicle
- devise a system for recording complaints.

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