



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101153
Inspection date	20 July 2005
Inspector	Angela Cole

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 childminding since 1994. She lives with her husband and adult son in the Wymans Brook area of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. Her husband and adult daughter are her assistants when numbers require. The downstairs of the property is used for general play and the upstairs is for sleeping only. There is an enclosed garden with decking, grassed and hard areas. There are no pets. Local amenities include shops, a school and a park. The childminder regularly takes minded children to toddler, pre-school and childminding group sessions.

The childminder is registered to care for 6 children under 8 years old. She currently

cares for 4 children during the day and 1 school-age child during the holidays. She is a link childminder under the Local Authority to mentor new childminders in the area. She also supports families in emergencies through the Job Centre Plus and Magnolia House Parent and Baby Unit. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and of the Gloucestershire Network for Childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. They have good access to the outside play area to improve their large muscle control. For example, they ride wheeled toys and crawl between a tunnel and a play tent. Regular walks and visits to a nearby park give children exercise and fresh air. They play a game to learn the names of parts of their bodies and develop good small muscle skills to feed themselves, draw and paint.

The children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They gain a clear understanding of why they must clean themselves carefully and use individual wipes to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Children drink regularly, choosing between water and dilute juice. They benefit from a healthy diet as the childminder successfully encourages parents to provide nutritious food. Their dietary needs are discussed so these are effectively met. The childminder stores packed meals correctly and offers plain biscuits or breadsticks for snacks so children's health is well considered. Occasionally, they learn how to prepare food to make a birthday or an Easter treat.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in the well-maintained, homely environment. Indoor and outdoor play resources are stored at their level so they can access these safely. They only use toys and equipment that are suitable to their age and stage of development. Older children play with small items, including tiny beads, when younger ones are asleep.

Children keep themselves safe, for example, by tidying toys away to make a clear space for their next activity. If required, they learn how to use appropriate, though potentially more dangerous, equipment safely. For example, the childminder talks through safety aspects of ironing a bead pattern and then supervises the child closely.

The childminder has made a detailed risk assessment of the home and garden and reduced hazards to a minimum so children are safe, except for low-level glass in the main bedroom. She ensures children arrive unharmed and are transferred to the

parents' with care. Babies and toddlers sleep safely as they are regularly checked and a monitor is used.

The childminder safeguards and promotes children's welfare and has all the required procedures and documents in place. For example, she has current first aid and child protection certificates and is familiar with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the effective, balanced range of activities offered. They regularly make appropriate decisions about their care, such as which table mat to use. They help to prepare play materials and so become independent in their learning, for example, when setting out paints. The childminder follows an appropriate theme, such as 'People who Help Us' so children begin to make sense of the world. They go on regular trips to interesting places and become engrossed in play with small-world toys, including a street scene.

The children make good progress in all areas of their development and this is recorded on sheets that are appropriate for different age groups. Their language skills develop well through continual one-to-one conversations in which they have time to think and reply. They learn new words from stories told with the aid of a picture board and point out the initial letters of their names as they play. Young children gain accurate mathematical skills as they count parts of their bodies and the number of stairs.

Children have good relationships with the childminder. As a result, they feel confident to ask for activities that they enjoy and learn to concentrate for considerable lengths of time. They often use their imagination and enjoy creating, for example, through collage and with large quantities of playdough.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the child-friendly surroundings. They play amicably in small groups and learn to help each other. The childminder treats all children with equal care, concern and understanding so they gain good self-esteem. She ensures that the resources positively represent children who attend, as well as individuals from the wider community. This helps children develop a positive attitude to others, for example, through sending Christmas boxes to children in need.

The children are well-behaved and polite. This is because of the childminder's appropriate methods for behaviour management, including include consistent house rules. Children receive frequent encouragement and praise, for example, when being helpful.

Strong relationships develop between parents and the childminder so children's

individual needs are well met. Continuity of care for the children results from highly effective procedures to exchange information between the childminder and families. For example, parents receive regular newsletters and share diaries about the babies' activities and routines. These ensure that children are cared for in full accordance with their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to on-going training and good organisation. She makes good use of her home and relevant childminding group meetings to offer children a wide range of appropriate play opportunities. Children have ample space to play in attractive, well-resourced, indoor and outdoor areas. They enjoy good adult attention as the childminder dedicates her time solely to the children and only minds small numbers at any one time.

The children's care is well organised according to detailed, written policies. The childminding documents are easy to follow, accessible and confidential. These include a clear register with separate records of children's contracted hours and actual times of attendance. Effective arrangements for sharing records with parents keep them well informed of their child's development, care and routines. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection recommended that the childminder further developed her medication records. Parents are now clear where to sign the records to show they are aware of administered medication so the children's health is promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.
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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- assess the risk to children in relation to low level glass in the main bedroom and take action to minimise this.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk