



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 100825
Inspection date 16 September 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 outstanding. 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 2000. She is registered to provide care for up to 6 children under 8 years; of these, 3 may be under 5 years, and of these 1 may be under 1 year, at any one time. There are currently 4 children on roll.

The childminder lives with her husband, daughter and son, who are both aged over 8 years. They have a pet cat. The family home is a three-bedroom-detached house in a suburb of Gloucester. There are shops, parks and other local amenities close by. Minded children can have access to all areas of the home at the discretion of the childminder. Primarily they play downstairs and sleep upstairs. There is an enclosed

rear garden which the children use.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home. They learn the importance of good hygiene as they see the childminder keeping the environment clean and minimising the risk of cross-infection; for example when dealing with body fluids and discarding spilt sand to avoid contaminating the remainder in the sand pit. Children understand why they need to wash their hands prior to eating and after using the toilet. They gain this understanding because the childminder takes time to explain the importance to them from a young age. She skilfully uses routine activities to reinforce the importance of keeping healthy. Children sleep or rest according to their individual needs. Children's health is further supported by the very clear policies and procedures which the childminder follows to protect them from illness and to deal with any accidents.

Children enjoy wholesome, nutritious meals and snacks. Meals are freshly prepared using fresh fruit and vegetables. The children often help to prepare either their snack or lunch. For example children washed grapes, chopped banana and mixed in Greek yoghurt at snack time. They then devoured their creation with enjoyment. Children are not served processed foods and are not given food and drinks with high levels of artificial additives and sugar. Menus are agreed with parents. Drinking water is always available. Children's particular dietary needs are met by the childminder.

Children get plenty of regular physical exercise. They enjoy outdoor play in the garden and local park, in all weathers. Children enjoy plenty of fresh air as they play outdoors and undertake daily walks to and from the local playgroup and school. Children develop physical skills and gain control over their bodies as they dance, run, climb, pedal tricycles, play hide and seek, football, race one another and attempt the challenge of obstacle courses.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is promoted because the childminder recognises and reduces possible risks. She has undertaken a thorough assessment of all areas of the home, identifying any risks and also those risks which arise from activities. The children are safe and secure within the home and garden. Children learn the importance of safety and how to keep themselves safe. The childminder helps them to do this by discussing the possible outcomes of the choices they are allowed to make. Also children practise emergency evacuation procedures regularly. Careful consideration by the childminder about the possible risks on outings and effective steps taken to minimise the risks ensures children's safety is prioritised. Whilst on outings children are closely supervised. They learn outside safety rules to keep them safe when

walking or being transported in a vehicle. Safety reins are worn as appropriate, and children are suitably restrained when travelling in pushchairs or in the car.

Young children can move freely and are protected from harm within the home. The space inside and out is organised effectively, creating a child-friendly environment which enables children to explore and take risks while being appropriately supervised. They can independently select activities from an extensive range of high quality resources and equipment. The resources they use are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The childminder has attended training in child protection this year and in this way has ensured that her practice is underpinned by a good and up-to-date knowledge of signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the correct procedure to follow should she have any concerns. She has a clear policy about child protection and uses the Area Child Protection Committee action flow chart for reference. This helps to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are settled, extremely happy and relish the time spent with the childminder. They are motivated in their play and excitedly participate in the activities offered. The children's day is structured to provide interesting activities, both indoors and outdoors. Play group visits and school collections are incorporated within the daily routine. The childminder cleverly uses these visits to enhance the children's day, talking about the environment, meeting up with other child minders and going to the park, and because of this the children look forward to these parts of the day.

Children benefit highly from the broad range of activities they undertake. These are planned to build upon what the children know and can do, their interests and ideas. Plans are flexibly applied to take account of events which may arise unexpectedly and lead to different learning opportunities. The activities are stimulating and enable children to learn new skills, make connections with other experiences, and talk and listen while involved in the activity. Children are encouraged to explore and investigate objects. They are creative and use their imaginations. They are keen to count and use mathematical ideas within their play.

Children are enthusiastic in their play. They link up with others and play happily together. For example two boys aged two and nearly three helped one another to construct a wooden train track. They then asked the childminder for their tickets in preparation for their train journey. Together they acted out a train journey, based on their own first-hand experience. They had recently travelled by train to the next town with the childminder. Children benefit from the many activities planned outside the setting. They catch the bus into town, to visit the shops and docks. They walk to the park and library and have travelled to the local airport. Children are keen to recall such visits.

The children are supported extremely well by the childminder who knows instinctively when to play an active part in children's play and when to stand back and let them

play freely. Children are able to play at their own pace and should they lose interest in what they are doing the childminder happily suggests alternative activities and asks the children for their own suggestions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Each child is welcomed into the childminder's home and showered with warmth and affection. They each have a place to hang their coat, individual flannels and towels to use and examples of their art work adorn the walls, which gives them a sense of belonging. The childminder has an excellent knowledge of each child's individual needs, likes and dislikes and uses this knowledge effectively to promote their all-round development. The relationships children have with the childminder are excellent. They are independent and are very confident individuals. Those children who initially lack confidence are nurtured by the childminder and they too soon gain confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to try to do things for themselves and to take pride in their achievements.

Children benefit greatly from activities and resources which help them to value diversity. They see positive images of culture and ethnicity and planned activities help children to learn about the lives of others. Children relate well to one another and enjoy their time together. They are very well behaved and polite. They take turns during games such as with 'the fishing game' when children took turns to use the fishing rod to catch the magnetic fish submerged in a bowl of water. The atmosphere within the childminder's home is calm and very happy. The childminder herself provides an excellent role model to children. She helps children to gain an understanding of right and wrong and to be considerate of one another.

Children's care is further enhanced by the excellent partnership the childminder has developed with their parents. Parents have clear information about the setting and how their children have been whilst in the childminder's care. They are given information which aids their understanding of their children's progress. This includes scrapbooks of children's art work, photographs and other evidence of progress. Also each parent receives a compact disc of photographs as a permanent memento for each child of their time with the childminder. It includes milestone achievements such as 'first day at playgroup'. These are highly valued by the parents as something to treasure and a way of being involved in their children's care and learning. Parents speak admirably of the childminder and are delighted with the care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is enthusiastic and competent in her role. She shows commitment towards her own personal development and improves her knowledge by attending relevant courses and workshops. She uses her knowledge effectively to provide children with

a wide range of learning experiences.

The childminder has created a welcoming environment for children and utilises indoor and outdoor space extremely well. This enables children to enjoy a wealth of play opportunities. She also understands the value of taking children out into the wider community and does this regularly. The childminder also links up with another childminder to promote children's social development. The childminders also share their resources which ensures that children are offered variety in their play and are sufficiently stimulated.

The outcomes for children in the care of the childminder are outstanding, because the childminder regularly reviews her practice and happily adapts it to meet the needs of the children. She has thoroughly considered all aspects of her provision and the impact upon the children in her care. This ensures that all children receive high-quality care, helping them to become healthy, happy, enthusiastic individuals.

The childminder has clear policies and procedures and maintains all legally required documentation appropriately. Records are clear, up-to-date, easily accessible and stored securely.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to monitor her practice to develop the high level of care currently offered.

It is evident that the childminder does monitor her practice and incorporates any ideas she has for improvement into her future planning. In this way she ensures that all children continue to receive high quality care and that activities she plans build upon what the children already know and can do helping them to progress further.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards

of care are outstanding.

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