



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101241
Inspection date	19 July 2005
Inspector	Jennifer 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 1977 and may provide care for six children under eight years and overnight care for one child at any one time. One of her adult daughters is registered to work at the same address and another works as an assistant. The childminding team are formally known as Orchard End Childminding Services. They currently care for three children under four years on a full-time basis; two children under three years on a part-time basis, five children between five and eight years before-and-after school and one child of seven years during school holidays.

The lives with her three teenage children in the St. Marks area of Cheltenham. The whole of the house is available for childminding. The main areas used for play are the two playrooms and living room. Upstairs bedrooms are used for sleeping and supervised computer play. There is an enclosed rear garden with grass, patio and orchard areas for outdoor play. The family has ducks, chickens, six guinea pigs, two rabbits, a dog and a cat.

The childminder has completed the Developing Childminding Practice and first aid and child protection training. There are play parks, shops, a library within the locality. The childminding team attend various childcare groups throughout the week and take and collect children from various playgroups and schools. The childminder is a member of the Cheltenham and Cotswold Childminding support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a healthy diet and develop a good awareness of healthy, nutritious food. They learn about where fruit, vegetables and eggs come from. Children help to pick fruit from the orchard, collect eggs from the chickens in the garden, watch the vegetables grow and make weekly visits to the fruit and vegetable market. Meal times are inclusive and used effectively to help children enjoy their food, and as a social occasion for everyone. The childminder liaises closely with parents to ensure food they supply is healthy, heated and served appropriately. A drink is offered to the children regularly to ensure none remain thirsty.

Children enjoy a wide range of energetic physical activities all year round that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from daily fresh air, learn to listen to their bodies and are able to rest and be active according to their needs. They develop self confidence in their large and small muscle control as they gain new skills. For example, they use bats and balls, pedal wheeled toys, climb, dig in the sand, use pencils and pour their own drinks.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained home. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene because the childminder is proactive and encourages children to wash their hands after using the toilet, before meals and after playing outside to help prevent the spread of infection.

Children learn to care for themselves in hot and cold weather because the childminder talks about the importance of wearing sun hats and warm clothing to protect their well being.

Children are happy, settled and express their feelings and preferences confidently. They develop a healthy independence as they learn to do things for themselves, with the knowledge that the childminder is ready to support and help if needed. Children receive cuddles and reassurance to support their emotional needs and help children feel a sense of belonging.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play within a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Posters, children's pictures and photographs adorn the walls to make play areas inviting to children and parents. The childminder protects children from potential hazards through close supervision, implementing good safety measures and discussing clear, well understood rules and boundaries. As a result, children move around freely, and independently access age-appropriate resources from boxes, shelves and tables at child height to keep themselves safe. However, practise of the well-thought through emergency escape plan does not take place to help children learn about appropriate, safe action to take in an emergency.

Positive questioning and reminders, such as "Do you think this is enough space?", increase children's awareness of everyday safety in the play areas. The childminder takes positive and consistent steps when children travel in a vehicle or participate in outings and visits to promote children's welfare. As a result, children learn to look both ways and cross the road safely. Children are well protected. The childminder has a competent approach to child protection and is clear to record details of existing injuries and any concerns, and to follow appropriate procedures to minimise any risk to the child.

Children play with a good selection of toys, games and equipment. These are in good order, safe and well maintained by the childminder and children. Children help to check safety and cleanliness of toys and play materials which, helps them learn to look after resources.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in a broad range of good quality activities and experiences to support and encourage the next steps in their learning. Children are confident communicators and share ideas in their play as they make up imaginative stories with small world toys and improve their communication skills in singing and musical activities. The childminder uses questioning effectively and provides suitable challenge for children to extend their play ideas and recall experiences. For example, the childminder collects a small frog from the garden to show children while colouring pictures of frogs, "What did he feel like when you touched him?", "What do frogs eat, do you remember?". This helps make experiences real and meaningful.

The childminder has a secure understanding of an appropriate range of experiences to help all children use their senses, creativity and imagination. As a result, children enjoy their play and respond well to new challenges. Children explore with paint, sand, play dough and cornflour as they add objects and different media to investigate different textures. This helps children to represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

Children learn to care for living things. They help to feed the guinea pigs and rabbits

and collect eggs from the chickens. Children are friendly and learn to play co-operatively together as the childminder provides useful support and encouragement to take turns and share as they use the tennis rackets, cricket bat and pencil box. Children have a strong sense of belonging because the childminder has a close relationship with them and a good understanding of their needs. Children learn to socialise with other children and make positive relationships through regular weekly visits to childminding support groups and various local childcare groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected which means their individual needs are well met. The childminder has a clear knowledge of the children and adopts an inclusive approach. Children benefit from good communication and close links with the childminder and parents. Photographs, displays of activity plans, routines and children's pictures, regular newsletters and daily informal conversations help keep parents well informed about their child's care and progress.

Well-planned experiences help children to investigate the world around them and to care for their environment. For example, regular visits to the library to share books, building sites to observe and contributing to the family compost and recycling different media enhance children's development. Children develop a generally good cultural awareness through access to a sufficient range of resources to reflect our diversity and through celebrating and talking about Chinese New Year.

Children behave well, are polite and show pride in their achievements. The childminder is calm, consistent and manages children's behaviour appropriately to support their welfare. She is sensitive and adapts the methods she uses according to children's individual needs. Regular praise and encouragement helps promote children's self esteem. Children are familiar with daily routines and respond to the childminder's sensitive reminder to help tidy away toys before going outside to play.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised setting. The childminder is motivated, enthusiastic and committed to her work with the children. She works successfully with her daughter to support children's welfare. The children are happy and confident because the childminder is well qualified and takes advantage of additional training, workshops and childcare conferences to up-date her knowledge of good practice.

All records and documentation for the efficient and safe management of the childminding are accurate, well maintained and shared with parents. Children's individual records are stored

alphabetically in individual sleeves to maintain confidentiality. The childminder records emergency contact details and keeps them with her at all times to promote

children's safety in an emergency.

Indoor and outdoor play space is organised to provide a stimulating environment. Space is used purposefully to enable children to access a full range of play opportunities to support their care and development. The childminder has a good knowledge of regulatory requirements to protect children's welfare. Overall, the needs of all children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended that other childminders and assistants' attendance was clearly recorded; medication records were kept for a minimum of two years, and written permission from parents for emergency medical advice or treatment was requested.

The childminder has made good progress to protect children's health and safety and ensure they are well cared for. Attendance and medication records are accurate, well maintained and shared with parents. Written permissions for emergency treatment are in place and all records date back more than two years.

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.

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):

- practise the emergency escape plan to help children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe in an emergency.

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