



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136339
Inspection date	07 September 2006
Inspector	Kay Roberts
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 first registered in 2001 and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and six years. They live in a three bedroom house in a quiet cul-de-sac, close to the main road in Longwell Green. Children have access to the lounge and kitchen/diner on the ground floor. Bathroom facilities are located on the first floor. All bedrooms are available to minded children. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have fish in a tank. Registration is for a maximum of five children under eight years. Currently there are nine children on roll, seven of whom are under five years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and aware of the rules, children take their shoes off before coming into the house. They learn the importance of hygiene through the daily routine as they wash their hands before eating. A small step is provided so that children can independently reach the wash hand basin. Children know which picture towel is theirs as they choose at the beginning of the day. The risk of infection is minimised as the childminder follows hygienic procedures, for example, providing individual cot sheets and using anti-bacterial wipes. The childminder's policy for excluding children who are sick is shared with parents. Parents are also alerted to communicable diseases within the setting. Children's welfare is promoted as the childminder has good procedures for managing both accidents and medication.

Children have many opportunities to play outdoors and to take regular exercise. They are protected from the elements. When it is sunny, they wear hats and sun screen is applied. Parasols are attached to buggies so that babies do not get burnt. In the winter months children are dressed for the weather and do not get wet when they go splashing in puddles as they wear wellington boots. Children remain interested in playing outdoors as the childminder provides a range of interesting resources, such as a sand and water tray, tents and tunnels. The childminder creates obstacle courses so that children's large muscle skills are developed. Children walk to the local school, go on nature trails and regularly visit the park where skills are extended as they use larger equipment; climbing frame and swings. Children do not become overtired. After a story children are relaxed and quickly fall asleep in the slightly darkened room on the first floor.

When thirsty, children help themselves to their beakers of water. On some days children eat a healthy, home cooked meal, which takes into consideration special dietary requirements. On other occasions children make their own sandwiches. Parents have some knowledge about the type of food their children eat, as a sample menu is included in the childminder's information pack. Children are encouraged to eat their lunch as they are rewarded with a sticker. Recent topic work has helped children to develop a fuller understanding of how to promote their own good health. They have sampled various fruits and as they coloured in pictures of fruit the childminder explained that the fruit and vegetables are good for their teeth and bones. Similarly children develop some understanding of what foods are less healthy because of the sugar and this was supported in a story about a little boy having to visit the dentist for a filling.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming environment. Children enjoy sharing the regularly updated photographs of themselves, with their parents. The main area for play is in the lounge where furniture is placed to the side of the room to maximise the space available for play. Opportunities are provided so children develop independence, for example, placing coat hooks at children's height. Children confidently help themselves to the clean, safe resources which are placed within reach in drawers and on shelves. Children remain interested in the toys and books as

resources are regularly supplemented with items from a toy library which children help to choose. Children benefit from access to the back garden which is mainly laid with turf.

Children play in a secure environment and are only released to authorised adults. The risk of children having an accident is minimised as the childminder uses suitable equipment, such as safety gates. The childminder is vigilant and quickly alerts children to potential hazards. When children place themselves at risk the childminder reminds them of the house rules; not to run. Children quickly learn and advise their peers that they should not run in case they bump. Children are suitably protected in the event of a fire. The childminder has a clear appropriately detailed written procedure, but has yet to practise the drill with children. When looking at books the childminder points out to children that an iron is hot and should only be used by an adult. There is a safe procedure for outings and children learn from an early age the importance of road safety and not to talk to strangers. Children are further protected from harm as the childminder has a good understanding of local child protection procedures, having recently completed further training on the subject.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make good progress as the childminder is knowledgeable about Birth to three matters. She makes regular observations of children, which are supported with photographs, and assesses their development. The childminder plans relevant monthly themes, such as 'all about me', which she adapts according to the age and ability of children. Many opportunities are provided for children to learn from first hand experience as they visit Willsbridge Mill, local parks and go on nature trails. Children's social skills are extended as they regularly visit toddler groups and the homes of the childminder's colleagues.

Children are given the time and opportunity to be independent; they collect the post and when they have finished their drinks, replace the beakers on the table. Children are beginning to develop their imagination as they copy what adults do; they pretend to pour cups of tea from the tea pot, push dolls in a buggy and offer the dolls a bottle of milk. Fine muscle and problem solving skills are used to fit shapes into the shape sorter. Children are keen to continue as the childminder shows appreciation of their success. Minded children have good communication skills. The childminder promotes language well through her constant gentle interaction; she asks questions to make children think, and encourages them to pronounce new words. Children listen to stories and as they do so count the number of animals. Some young children know the sequence up to three and later when constructing a tower count to two without prompting. Children enjoy singing rhymes, particularly the ones where the childminder uses finger puppets, for example 'Five Little Ducks'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children new to the provision are relaxed as there is a very gradual settling in period. Children have a sense of belonging and are proud of their photographs which are displayed. Confidence is developed knowing they are all valued and included. The childminder listens to what children

have to say and praises their achievements. Children learn right from wrong as the childminder provides clear guidelines so that children are polite, well behaved and considerate to others. Unwanted behaviour is sensitively managed through discussion and distraction so that potential conflict situations are diffused before they can escalate.

Children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world. The childminder helps children to foster a love of nature as they study the trees at Blaise Castle and go on walks to collect leaves and acorns. When children go into the kitchen/diner they say hello to the fish and whilst eating lunch watch the bird in the garden. They have the opportunity to see things grow as they plant cress and sunflower seeds. Children develop an understanding of the local community as they visit parks, toddler groups, the toy library and Willsbridge Mill. Children learn to appreciate difference as they play with a range of readily accessible resources reflecting positive images of diversity. As they play the childminder points out that one figure is in a wheelchair and that another figure is an old lady. Planned activities at times of cultural celebrations help children to develop an awareness of the lives of people who are different to themselves.

Children are emotionally secure knowing there is a close working relationship between their parents and the childminder. Parents comment positively about the provision "very impressive organisation" and "children are happy". Parents are very well informed of the childminder's practices as they receive a well presented, comprehensive prospectus and are regularly updated via a newsletter. The registration certificate and other pertinent information is displayed in the porch. At the end of the day parents are updated both verbally and via a detailed daily diary. Parents are able to view their children's progress records at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is appropriately qualified and enjoys her work with children. Keen to extend her practice she has undertaken a considerable amount of training and this month is due to commence training for the Developing Childminding Practice certificate. She is able to assess her own provision and has identified areas for improvement, for example encouraging school age children to devise their own rules. Paperwork is regularly reviewed, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents, so that children's health, safety and welfare are promoted. Documentation complies with regulatory requirements and the National Standards. The childminder provides a welcoming home environment for children, where they have space for relaxation and play. She offers children a high level of support and plans an interesting range of activities, including many outings, so that children make good progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made very good progress against the three recommendations made at the last inspection. She has extended the range of play resources, particularly those reflecting diversity, by accessing local toy libraries, so that children remain interested in what is available. Children's understanding of healthy eating has been extended as the childminder has followed through on training on this subject. For example, creating boats out of jacket potatoes for

which the children made flags. Children's listening skills and concentration have been improved as the background noise has been reduced.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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):

- improve fire safety by practising the emergency evacuation procedure.

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