



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY257453
Inspection date	15 October 2006
Inspector	Shirley Ann Jackson
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 was registered in 2003. She calls her childminding business, Little Monkeys.

The childminder lives with her husband and two children aged four years and 20 months. Their home is a modern five-bedroom-detached property in the Abbeymead area, approximately two miles from Gloucester City centre. The family home is within walking distance of the local shops and primary school. The family have pet fish. There is currently one child on roll aged 13 months.

Minded children may use all areas of the home, although the ground floor lounge, dining area and play room are the main play areas. An enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). She has completed compulsory childminding and first aid courses. She has also attended child protection and food hygiene training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where they learn about personal hygiene. This is done through well established daily routines. For example, children wash their hands and dry them on individually coloured towels, younger children use flannels. This encourages children to develop independence skills as well as learning about good hygiene procedures. Children take off their jackets and shoes on arrival to help to keep the environment clean.

The childminder has a written policy in place regarding children who are ill or sick. This is shared with parents to help to prevent the risk of catching infectious illnesses. Clear procedures are in place in the event of accidents to ensure children's welfare. Personal care for younger children is carried out promptly and following parent's wishes. This ensures the comfort of the children.

Meals are provided by the parents of the child currently attending. These are appropriately stored and heated as required. This ensures that children eat their own familiar foods. The childminder is willing to offer meals, if parents request this. She demonstrated through discussion a good awareness of the importance of healthy eating.

Children move confidently within the available space, for example, moving between the lounge and the playroom. Children have opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise as they regularly walk to a nearby park to feed the ducks. The childminder has a suitable range of outdoor play resources in her garden which the children can use.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely within the childminder's home as she has minimised potential risk to children's safety. For example, the front door is secure to prevent unauthorised access and to prevent the children leaving and stair gates and a fire guard are in place. They move safely within the secure environment. The childminder has produced detailed written safety procedures and fire evacuation plans. Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder uses effective procedures. For example, when children travel in a vehicle they are suitably restrained.

Children play in a warm, bright and cheerful environment. An attractive mural featuring well-known children's characters adorns one of the walls in the playroom. This provides children with a fun space to play and a good talking point to stimulate communication skills. The childminder provides an excellent range of toys and resources which are good quality and well maintained. Most resources are stored where children can independently select them, leading to independence and giving children choice over their play.

The childminder has completed safeguarding children training and she has a sound knowledge of the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. She is aware of the procedures to follow in order to safeguard the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle and are comfortable in the childminder's home. They build warm relationships with the childminder and her own children which builds self-esteem. The childminder knows the children well and is aware of their individual routines. For example, she knows which children like noisy toys and toys which move. This ensures consistency of care and helps the children to feel secure. Babies and young children receive lots of cuddles and have a strong bond with the childminder which increases their sense of well-being.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners as they are given choice over what they play with. The childminder has a wide range of toys and resources, most of which are stored in low-level storage. This gives children some ownership over the toys as they are encouraged to get out and put away. Children's early communication skills are well supported through good adult-child interactions. Their language is well fostered by the childminder who constantly talks to them, listens to their sounds and responds appropriately. Children are able to enjoy a range of activities which contribute to their imagination and creativity such as art and craft activities, cooking, playing musical instruments and small world toys. The childminder is able to highlight which toys particular children enjoy. For example, she knows which children like noisy toys and toys which move.

The childminder is calm, caring and shows a genuine enjoyment in the company of the children. The childminder has looked through the Birth to Three Matters framework, but this is not being used on a regular basis. Babies and young children do not have many opportunities to explore natural objects and resources which promote sensory development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder values children as individuals and helps to build their self-esteem. For example, children's work is displayed on a wall in the kitchen. In addition, photographs of the children at play are frequently taken to be shared with parents. The childminder has a calm and re-assuring manner. The children follow this lead and the environment is calm and happy. The childminder uses praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour and to build confidence.

The childminder supports individual children well as she has a good knowledge of their particular needs. The childminder is keen to offer an all inclusive setting and to support children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Children learn about the local environment as they go for regular walks to feed the ducks close to the childminder's home. They begin to learn about diversity in the community as they play with a good range of resources which reflect positive images of society.

Children benefit from the detailed information which the childminder shares with parents. The childminder chats to parents at the end of each day to share all relevant information. In addition, she completes a daily diary which details what the children have done and how they've been. This is used as a two-way communication tool between parents and the childminder. Parents

report that they are very happy with the care their children receive. Children benefit from this strong partnership.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her home effectively to help to make the children feel welcome and to help to build their independence skills. Time is organised to give children time to play outdoors and to enjoy free, unstructured play indoors. The childminder is enthusiastic and caring and clearly enjoys spending time with the children.

All legally required paperwork is readily to hand for inspection. The registration and insurance certificates are displayed in the playroom for parents to see. The childminder has produced comprehensive written policies to reflect her practice. These are shared with parents to ensure that they are well informed about the provision. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to: encourage children's involvement in the planning of after-school activities and consider different approaches in the preparation and execution of activities for school-age children.

Children's care has improved as the childminder has involved school-age children in activities offered and asked for their ideas when planning outings.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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:

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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):

- increase the opportunities for babies and young children to explore natural objects and resources which promote sensory development

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