

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290355
Inspection date	15 August 2007
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 2004 and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and four years, in a semi-detached house in Weston, Bath. The family have a hamster. The childminder's home is within walking distance of local facilities including shops, toddler groups and parks. All areas of the house are used for childminding including the flat rear garden. Registration is for a maximum of four children under eight years and currently there are three children on roll, all of whom are under five years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is actively promoted. They play in a clean environment and understand that they must take off their shoes before entering the home, as their shoes may be 'wet and muddy'. Three year old children understand that things must be clean. Children help to put dishes in the dishwasher and after feeling the leather sofa comment that it is sticky so fetch a wet wipe for themselves and the childminder to clean it. Children learn the importance of

hygiene through the daily routine and stories, such as 'Dr Dog' which explains germs. They clean their hands with a wet wipe before touching food and then throw it in the bin. Children wash their hands after using the bathroom. The risk of infection is minimised as the childminder follows hygienic procedures, for example, providing individual towels. The policy for excluding children who are sick is shared with parents. The childminder also holds details of notifiable diseases. There are good procedures in place for managing both accidents and medication so that children's welfare is actively promoted.

When thirsty, children help themselves to a drink of water in clearly distinguishable beakers and cups. They eat healthy meals and snacks, which take into consideration special dietary requirements. For example, they create pizzas and make fresh fruit salads. They smell and feel the texture of the fruit, which they are able to name. Three year olds cut up the fruit using a blunt knife and babies watch with interest. Babies begin to assist by taking small pieces of fruit from a plate and placing them into a dish. Babies are given the opportunity to be independent at other times as they feed themselves, sometimes with a spoon and at other times using their fingers. Children are beginning to understand how to promote their own health as they name the food which is good for them and recognise that less healthy options should be eaten only as a treat.

Children have daily opportunities to be in the fresh air. Minded children know that they should dress according to the weather and when it is wet should wear a rain coat and wellington boots. When it is hot they know that sun screen should be applied and are beginning to rub in the cream themselves on their arms and legs. They wear hats and know that sun glasses are also worn when it is very sunny. Children remain interested in playing outdoors as the childminder provides many resources, for example, a play house, small canal system and swings. They develop co-ordination as they kick a football into the goal mouth and are pleased when they achieve success. Children regularly go for walks and visit local parks, sometimes taking bikes and scooters with them. Large muscle skills are extended when children climb and stretch at the local indoor play centre and participate in a weekly music and movement group. Three year old children recognise when they are tired and relax as they listen to a story. Babies do not get over-tired as the childminder follows their home routine and on a daily basis talks to parents about sleep requirements. They sleep peacefully in a darkened room, undisturbed by their peers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children relax as they play in a welcoming environment which is decorated and maintained to a high standard throughout. Children move around freely between all rooms on the ground floor and as furniture is placed to the side of the rooms, space available for play is maximised. There is much natural daylight and the conservatory is particularly bright and colourful with displays of children's art work and educational posters. Opportunities for independence are maximised, for example, by placing coat hooks at child height. Activities are attractively organised on tables and shelving and children confidently help themselves. Other clean, safe resources, which cover all areas of learning are readily accessible in boxes which are labelled with both words and pictures so that children make informed decisions. Children remain interested in playing as the childminder supplements her resources by regularly using a toy library where children choose the toys they wish to take with them. Children benefit from having direct access to the garden and in summer are able to choose whether they play in or outdoors as the patio doors are left ajar. Babies and young children are protected outdoors as they are provided with a separate decking area.

Children play in a secure environment so they cannot leave the premises unnoticed. There are systems in place so that children are protected from people not vetted and are only released to authorised adults. The risk of an accident is reduced as the childminder makes daily checks of her environment to ensure there are no potential hazards, uses appropriate safety equipment, such as gates, and supervises children closely. In the event of a fire, children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they regularly practise the drill. Children begin to understand how to keep themselves safe, and explain that they must sit on chairs properly. On outings, for which there is a safe procedure, children know that they must stay with the childminder and that they must look before they cross the road. When riding bikes in Alice Park children use the play road area to practise road safety. The childminder is suitably informed about local safeguarding procedures so that children are further protected, however, she has not updated her knowledge and understanding since registration.

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 and uses this effectively to plan for children's next steps in learning. She focuses on specific weekly themes and uses a variety of teaching methods so that learning is reinforced in a number of ways. Children are emotionally secure in the relaxed relationships with both the childminder and her family. Babies are curious and watch what is happening around them. They explore toys by pushing them along the ground. Babies use hand-eye co-ordination to press buttons on an electronic toy and then watch a small animal pop out of the box in response. Babies particularly enjoy pushing around a toy shopping trolley and after pretending to go shopping offer toy food to their peers and the childminder. All minded children are interested in looking at books. As babies point to the pictures, the childminder names the animals and encourages them to make the animal sounds. Older children listen to stories with interest and show good concentration. When listening to the story 'Finger Foods' children correctly match the fruit mentioned in the story with that in a box. Children are beginning to develop pencil control as, with the assistance of the childminder, babies mark make and older children draw around fruit. Good hand-eye co-ordination is demonstrated as they accurately place clothes and shoe stickers over small figures. As they do so language is encouraged as the childminder encourages them to talk about what the figures are doing and where they may be going. Minded children have good communication skills and clearly express their needs. Children recognise the sounds of the letters of the alphabet and are able to say if a word does or does not start with a particular letter. As children fit one Russian doll inside another they show some recognition of size and explain that they know it fits because it goes all the way round. The childminder extends children's learning by explaining that it fills the space. They name colours and accurately count to five. Children are beginning to use their fingers to count and subtract. With suggestions from the childminder they use problem solving skills to complete a 35 piece jigsaw puzzle and are pleased to receive applause for their success. Children make decisions about what and when they eat as well as the games they play. The time and opportunity are provided so that children become independent. Learning is more fun as the childminder participates in games, such as 'Elefun', when children use hand-eye co-ordination to catch small butterflies in a net. Children also benefit from having opportunities to learn from many excellent first hand experiences, for example, as they go on nature walks and in the bakers are given the opportunity to pay for their purchases.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children new to the provision are reassured as there is a gradual settling in period and the childminder follows their home routine. They have a sense of belonging as their art work is displayed. Children develop confidence knowing they are all valued and included. They are praised for each achievement, receive a high level of individual support and, the childminder listens and responds to what children say. Children learn from the childminder's example to be respectful of others and when the babies offer toy food they take it. They are polite and well behaved. Children show a respect for their environment by tidying away toys they have finished playing with and place used wet wipes in the bin. Children develop a positive attitude to difference as they play with resources and listen to stories reflecting images of diversity; there are many opportunities so children begin to appreciate that some cultures are different as they participate in planned activities, for example at Diwali they coloured in pertinent pictures and created clay candle holders.

Children develop a respect for nature and help to care for the childminder's hamster. They enjoy feeding and cleaning out the hamster, and explain that it needs bedding. Children go on nature walks and study insects and snails. In autumn children collect leaves which they use to make a collage. They begin to understand life cycles as they study frogs and butterflies via stories, such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. Learning is enhanced as children benefit from accessing resources in the local community; they regularly visit the book and toy library, shops, parks, school, nursery and toddler groups.

Children are emotionally secure in the relaxed relationship between the childminder and parents. Parents written references comment very positively about the provision, explaining that the childminder has a 'wealth of experience with children, and this clearly shows not least in the enormous amount of kindness, patience and understanding that she has for the children in her care' and that she provides 'a safe, caring and stimulating environment' with 'an excellent range of age appropriate and culturally diverse toys'. Parents are aware of the childminder's practices as they have sight of her well presented portfolio, which includes policies and procedures. The fully detailed contracts and child record forms ensure that all parties are clear about their remit. Parents are verbally updated about their child on a daily basis and are welcome to view the attractively presented children's progress records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides and has a system in place for notifying the regulator of significant changes. She has many years of experience working with children and is appropriately qualified. Keen to extend practice she has undertaken further training since the last inspection on Birth to three maters, safety, singing and signing, and observations. The childminder is very well organised. She provides a child focussed, inviting home environment where children have space for play, relaxation and physical activity. The effective planning cycle and broad range of age appropriate activities, which often incorporate first hand learning opportunities, facilitates children making good progress, so that they are social, confident, have good communication skills and are knowledgeable about the wider world. Paperwork is organised, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents. Documentation complies with both the National Standards and regulatory requirements.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to meet two recommendations. Low level glass no longer poses a hazard to children as safety film has been applied. Children also have greater access to resources reflecting positive images of disability as the childminder has extended her range of books and toys in this area.

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

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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):

- extend knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect.

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