



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304580
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Miriam Sheila Brown

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and three years. The family live in a four-bedroom house in Charlton Kings, on the outskirts of Cheltenham. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden to the rear of the property for outside play. Occasional use is made of one first floor bedroom and the bathroom. The family have a cat and some goldfish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years and there are currently four children on roll, cared for at varying times throughout the

week. The childminder provides a drop-off and collection service for minded children who attend the local primary school. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene as they are reminded and encouraged by the childminder to wash their hands prior to eating and after playing in the garden, or using the toilet. They understand that this is because they may have germs on their hands. Other aspects of individual health care, such as diet, are clearly recorded. Accident and medication records are shared with parents, although their permission for emergency medical treatment has not been sought. The childminder has completed first aid training and has a first aid kit which is not yet fully stocked to trainer's recommendations. Family pets are cared for appropriately, assisting in maintaining a clean and healthy environment for children to play.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snack foods such as cheese, toast, raw carrots, apples and a variety of other fruits. These and other similar foods, assist children in developing healthy eating habits. Snacks are nicely presented and children sit with the childminder for meals and snacks. Drinks are easily accessible to older children although younger ones currently ask for drinks outside of planned times.

The well-resourced and secure garden provides children with daily opportunities to develop their large muscle control and physical skills, using a range of equipment which include a trampoline with safety netting, and wheeled toys. They also enjoy daily walks to the local school. There is no written permission from parents for children to use the trampoline. Indoors the childminder provides times for children to rest and relax, helping them to become aware of their bodies physical needs, for example, after a busy day at school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained and welcoming home where practical organisation of play areas and generally good use of basic safety equipment minimises risks for children. For example, the childminder ensures that areas not used by children, such as the majority of the first floor, are inaccessible to them. The childminder has extended play space since registration and there is now a further playroom, providing children with a pleasant area in which to watch television or play games. Resources and toys are readily accessible to children and are stored mainly at ground level. They are appropriate to the ages of the children cared for and meet safety standards and regulations.

The childminder has an effective and clear emergency evacuation plan in place. This, together with basic safety equipment such as a smoke detector on the ground floor,

and a fire blanket, help to maintain children's safety in her home. However, there is no smoke alarm on the first floor and the front door is not always secured when the childminder leaves the house. Outside of the home, children are assisted in learning the safe way to cross a road when walking to and from school.

The childminder demonstrates a good awareness of the signs of abuse or neglect and knows the procedures to follow should concerns arise. This assists in ensuring that children are well protected and cared for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's home. She works to an outline plan for each day which provides a good balance of free and adult-led play opportunities to extend children's knowledge and assist in their development. For example, while joining in with their construction play, she develops their language using words such as 'flexible', when referring to 'bendy' pieces. Plans are amended according to children's own spur-of-the-moment ideas for art and craft work and their choices for snack times. Throughout activities children learn about colour, number, shape and size as the childminder instinctively includes these aspects into their play. Older children enjoy a wide variety of age-appropriate games and excellent opportunities to discuss the things they have done at school during the day, helping to extend their knowledge and develop their self-esteem.

Children learn to share and take turns as they play, and are beginning to form positive relationships with each other. They are clearly very at ease with the childminder, asking for assistance and including her in their play. Children enjoy drawing, colouring and craft work, using their imaginations to create pictures to take home. Their physical skills are enhanced by regular use of the garden to develop large muscle control, and small muscle control is developing and refining through play with magnets, small construction toys and assisting in the preparation of snacks and meals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals and their needs met effectively through the childminder's knowledge and understanding of young children. They are assisted in developing a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world through discussion and their play with a range of resources and toys. These include books, videos and small world toys which are used as an integral part of their everyday play. All toys and resources are equally and easily accessible to all children. Their knowledge of the immediate community is enhanced through regular local walks. The childminder has a clear understanding of how to care for children with special needs, although none currently attend.

Children are encouraged to think of others as they tidy their toys before moving on to

another activity and take turns with favourite toys. They listen to the childminder and follow instructions, for example, when getting ready for snack, and seek her assistance with personal care. Positive behaviour is encouraged as children receive appropriate praise from the childminder and they enjoy her interest in their achievements. They are gently reminded if behaviour is inappropriate and clear explanations are given. Should this prove ineffectual a short 'time-out' is well managed and executed, helping children to learn to take control of their own behaviour. House rules are few and consistently applied.

Parents are given clear information about all aspects of care offered. The childminder works closely with them and other outside agencies, when required, to ensure that children's individual needs are met appropriately and effectively. All parents have good opportunities to speak with the childminder at the end of the day. Children's personal details are regularly updated and confidentiality maintained.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is well organised, helping to ensure that children feel at home and able to relax and enjoy their time. This contributes to their growing independence and makes it a safe place to try new things. All those connected with the household have received suitable clearance and children are effectively supervised at all times. The childminder demonstrates her commitment to maintaining children's health and wellbeing through completing an Introduction to Childminding Practice course and maintaining a business-like approach to her childminding. She ensures that play areas are suitable and has recently re-organised these to provide children with an extra play room. The childminder plans her time well to provide all children with a balance of activities throughout the week. Paper work is generally well maintained although attendance records are not up-to-date and there are no permissions for outings in place.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- request parents written permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice, and their permissions for children to use the trampoline and go on outings.
- ensure there is a working smoke alarm at every level of the house.
- ensure attendance records are up-to-date and reflect actual times of children's attendance.

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