

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342971
Inspection date	08 August 2008
Inspector	Ruth Tharme
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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder lives in a three bedroom terraced house in the Hesters Way area of Cheltenham. She shares her home with her adult daughter. The whole house is used for childminding, with main care taking place in the lounge, kitchen and conservatory. The upstairs is used when children require a rest. The family have racing pigeons, these are housed in lofts in the garden, children will not have access to these. Local amenities within walking distance include a Family centre, Children's centre, Hesters Way Primary School and Arthur Dye Primary School. The childminder is registered to provide care for six children under eight years of age. There are currently nine children attending for a variety of sessions throughout the week. No overnight care is provided. The childminder has completed a Council for Childcare and Education Awards Diploma in Nursery Nursing.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Generally, children's health is suitably promoted. There is a sound standard of cleanliness throughout the property. A daily cleaning routine is implemented to reduce the risk of infection.

Children learn about personal hygiene as some effective routines for hand-washing are implemented. However, children sometimes share the same towel when using the up-stairs bathroom which means that there is some risk of cross infection.

Children go outside every day which means that they have regular access to fresh air and exercise. They make use of the garden and local amenities such as a nearby play park. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has first aid equipment readily available so she is suitably equipped to deal with minor injuries. Sick children are cared for appropriately as their parents are called to collect them as soon as possible. Those with infectious diseases are excluded to prevent illness spreading.

Children have access to water throughout the day as the childminder frequently offers children a drink. Dietary needs are met as the childminder ensures that she is well informed and adapts meals effectively to ensure that they meet children's requirements. Meals are prepared freshly each day and include healthy choices such as pasta, baked potatoes and fruit. This means that children generally receive a well balanced diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel at home in the welcoming environment provided. They have their own coat pegs and boxes with their picture on where they can put their own items from home. The play areas are suitably clean and tidy and space is efficiently organised to ensure that children have room to play in comfort.

The childminder takes care when selecting resources to ensure that toys are age appropriate and are in good working order so children can use them safely. Shallow storage boxes are used which means that children can reach their playthings easily.

Some effective precautions are in place to ensure children's safety. Stair gates, a fire guard and socket covers are all used successfully to keep children safe. The garden has been risk assessed, with gardening equipment locked away and secure fencing for children's protection. Evacuation procedures are practised regularly so children know what to do in an emergency. Smoke alarms are fitted and a fire blanket is readily to hand which reduces the danger from fire. However, the sleeping area has not been sufficiently well risk assessed as children can reach curtain ties from the cot. This poses a potential risk, although routines ensure that a visual check is carried out every ten minutes when children are sleeping.

The premises are suitably secure and the childminder ensures that no unauthorised visitors are able to enter so children are suitably protected. A password system means that children are only collected by those authorised to do so.

The childminder is able to recognise possible indicators of abuse which means that she is well placed to identify a child who may be at risk. She has completed a relevant child protection training course so she is clear about the action to take to protect children should the need arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a varied range of activities whilst in the childminder's care. Art and craft activities including modelling with recyclable materials, baking muffins and fruit cakes, dressing up and role play, and reading books and stories are all enjoyed on a regular basis. Children make choices for themselves about their activities as they request particular toys or resources and the childminder responds positively to their needs. She sometimes uses children's interests to develop their play, for example, organising a 'bug hunt' when children found a snail in the garden.

Children are interested and want to play with what is available, exploring boxes of construction toys and selecting books from a low shelf for themselves. Outings to parent-and-toddler groups, the local museum, play park and soft-play centre broaden children's experiences.

Children are settled in the childminder's care. She has a relaxed and calm manner which puts children at ease and ensures that children make friends quickly and feel comfortable in each other's company.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder takes time at pre-care visits to discuss children's individual needs. This means that she is suitably informed and able to meet religious, cultural and medical requirements. There is a sound range of multi-cultural resources and a small selection of books which present positive images of ethnicity and disability which help to promote children's knowledge and understanding of diversity.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are suitably supported. The childminder speaks with parents to ensure that she is well aware of particular needs and adapts her practice so children can take part in activities. Care is taken to ensure that children's dignity is maintained, for example, by ensuring children have privacy when carrying out personal care.

Children have developed their own house rules such as 'be kind to each other' which means, with gentle reminders, they generally implement them satisfactorily. The childminder discusses the rules and strategies for managing behaviour with parents before care commences which helps to promote a consistent approach for children at home and in the setting.

There is a sound partnership with parents. The childminder ensures that children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes by requesting their written consent before outings, car travel, the use of large play equipment and the giving of any emergency medical treatment. The provision of written contracts and an information pack for new joiners means that parents are generally well informed about the care provided. The childminder makes time to speak with parents each day and regularly shares photographs and examples of children's work so parents know how their child is progressing. The poster for parents is clearly displayed in the hallway so they have access to information on how to contact Ofsted should they wish to.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has completed relevant training which means that she is suitably qualified to provide care for young children. She has gained qualifications in childminding practice, first aid and child protection and holds an additional level 3 qualification.

All those working on the premises have had suitability checks completed and the childminder takes care to keep children within her sight or hearing at all times so they are protected from those who have not had clearance. Ratios are maintained in line with the conditions of registration which means that children receive appropriate levels of adult support. The daily register is clear and accurate so it provides an up to date record of children's attendance, but no such record is maintained of when an assistant is present which means it is not always clear which adults are working on the premises at any given time.

Children's confidentiality is suitably maintained as their individual records are kept in separate files and are stored appropriately. Documentation is regularly shared with parents who countersign entries to acknowledge that relevant information has been passed on. The certificate of registration is appropriately displayed in the hallway so it can easily be viewed by parents.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure that children do not share the towel in the bathroom so the risk of infection is reduced.
- take steps to ensure that all hazards to sleeping children are identified and addressed

- keep a record of the hours that an assistant is working on the premises

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