

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY359621
Inspection date	02 July 2008
Inspector	Ruth Tharme
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder registered in 2007. She lives in a house on the outskirts of Cheltenham. She lives with her husband and three children aged eleven, seven and one year. The childminder works with another childminder at this address. The childminder has overall responsibility for childminding practice. Her co-childminder works in a supportive role.

The whole of the property is used for childminding, at the childminder's discretion. There is a garden available for outdoor play. Care is provided on a full or part-time basis throughout the year. There are currently seven children on roll, four of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The childminder's home is within walking distance of a school, library and shops. The family have two pet rabbits and a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of the Gloucestershire Cluster of Children Come First Quality Assured Childminding Networks.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is actively promoted. The childminder takes steps to ensure that standards of cleanliness are high and procedures prevent the spread of infection. For example, children are provided with their own individual bedding, flannels and changing mats. Well implemented hand-washing procedures mean that children learn about personal hygiene. Precautions, such as ensuring the sand pit is covered and pets receive all necessary veterinary treatments, minimises any potential health hazards posed by the animals.

Arrangements ensure that children who are ill receive appropriate treatment. Clear and comprehensive documentation provides an accurate record of any medication administered. An exclusion policy is implemented effectively, which ensures that sick children do not pass illness to others.

Healthy drinks are readily available as each child has their own, easily recognisable cup at hand throughout the day. Fresh fruit is available at all times so children can always have a healthy snack. Parents provide packed lunches but the childminder takes steps to ensure that the contents are healthy and nutritious. She gives helpful advice and guidance to parents on what to include.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder's home provides a warm and welcoming environment for young children. It is attractively decorated with examples of children's work and has an inviting playroom with free access to the garden. Care has been taken to plan the use of available space in order to best meet the needs of the children. Toilet facilities are close at hand and a separate sleep area is available so children can rest undisturbed.

The toys and resources provided are well maintained. Regular checks are carried out which means that equipment is safe and suitable for children to use.

The childminder demonstrates a high level of risk awareness which means that she takes steps to identify and address potential hazards to children effectively. The comprehensive risk assessment programme is reviewed regularly to maintain safety standards. Children are well supervised as two childminders are usually present at any given time. Arrangements for outings include taking first aid equipment, a register, mobile phone and parent's contact details, all of which help to promote children's safety.

The childminder has attended child-protection training and has a clear knowledge and understanding of the issues. Effective procedures are in place which means that a child at risk can be promptly identified and protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children take part in a wide variety of play experiences. They make choices for themselves from a range of readily available and easily accessible activities. Role-play equipment, books, puzzles, craft activities and outdoor play are freely available throughout the day.

Care is taken to speak with parents before care commences, and on an ongoing basis, which means that children's routines are consistent with home. Adults in the setting have a good relationship with the children in their care. However, babies are not always given the opportunity to interact with one key adult throughout the day as both childminders in the setting take a turn in the feeding and changing routines.

The ready access to the garden and frequent outings to the school, park or local places of interest mean that children benefit from regular access to the fresh air and exercise.

Children are happy and contented in the childminders care. She is warm and affectionate, helping children to be confident and relaxed in her company.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their learning.

The childminder has attended a range of training opportunities which means that she has a good knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones, early learning goals and how children learn. Her planning is based on children's own interests, which encourages children to be more engaged and promotes their learning and development. The programme of regular observation means that children's progress is effectively monitored. The use of time is carefully planned to ensure that children have time to finish their activities fully. Learning experiences are well resourced, allowing all children to take part. For example, children are able to practice their balancing skills as a plastic egg and spoon is provided for each child to try to race with.

Children have a strong exploratory impulse. They are keen to experiment, for example, testing which materials will be best for making a boat by checking which float and which sink. They show concern for themselves, demonstrating good levels of self-confidence and esteem. They enjoy listening to favourite rhymes and are prompted to develop their language for thinking as the childminder skilfully asks open and thought provoking questions. Good use is made of books, as children show an interest in illustration and print, enjoying reading picture books together, and on their own. Number rhymes and songs develop children's mathematical skills and they confidently use size and positional language in their play. For example, describing the location and size of play tunnels in the garden. Designing and making skills are developing as children make use of recyclable materials to construct with a purpose in mind, for example,

making model boats. The small range of resources and relevant play experiences means that children's knowledge and understanding of the culture and beliefs of others is limited. They do, however, have a good awareness of a range of healthy practices, such as hand-washing procedures. They make good use of tools, materials and equipment to develop physical skills. They use their developing imagination in role-play, for example pretending to be dinosaurs, and enjoy exploring a range of readily available media and materials, such as sand and water.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as the childminder takes time and care to discuss specific arrangements with parents before care commences. Clear records are maintained to ensure that all adults in the setting are well informed and able to support children effectively. However, children develop only a basic knowledge and understanding of culture, gender and disability as resources and experiences to promote this are limited.

Care is taken to organise activities and resources to promote the inclusion of all children. For example, craft activities are laid out on the floor so babies and very young children can access them readily. The childminder has developed strong links with other professionals, such as development workers and special needs coordinators, to ensure that all children are effectively supported.

Children are well mannered as they follow the strong example set by adults. Behaviour is sensitively managed according to children's age and level of understanding and praise is used effectively to promote children's ongoing good behaviour.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. They are well informed about the provision through regular newsletters, a clear prospectus and daily contact with the childminder. They receive a written report each term informing them of their child's progress and are given ideas for activities to try at home which promotes parents involvement in their child's learning.

Arrangements for dealing with concerns raised by parents are clearly stated so they are aware of the options available to them. The policy on confidentiality means that children's records are only shared with their own parent.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Arrangements ensure that those living or working on the premises are suitable people to have access to young children. Household members and co-worker have all had appropriate checks completed. The childminder is well qualified to provide care. She holds a relevant level 3 qualification and demonstrates a clear commitment to ongoing training in order to develop her knowledge and skills.

The childminder's performance is effectively evaluated by the childminding network. Regular unannounced visits are carried out to check the quality of the provision and recommendations for the improvement of practice are made by a foundation stage advisor. The childminder attends focus group meetings to share good practice, and regularly reflects on her work, carrying out self-evaluation as part of a commitment to ongoing improvement.

Procedures ensure that policies are shared with co-workers and are implemented consistently for the benefit of children. The daily register is used effectively to ensure that a clear record is maintained of children's attendance and to clearly note which adults are present at any given time.

All necessary records are in place and entries are routinely signed by parents to acknowledge that relevant information has been appropriately shared. The certificate is clearly displayed in the entrance hall where parents can easily view the conditions of registration.

The provision meets and care and nursery education 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.

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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):

- take steps to ensure that babies receive care from a consistent adult in order to develop key relationships

- improve the availability of resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- plan and provide opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others

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