



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	111124
Inspection date	08 May 2006
Inspector	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two school-age children, one of whom is under eight years. They live in a house in Otterbourne, on the southern fringe of Winchester. The house is situated close to local parks, schools, and shops.

The whole of the property is available for childminding. The ground floor of the house comprises a kitchen, lounge, conservatory and toilet. The first floor comprises the bathroom, and three bedrooms which can be used for sleeping. The loft room is available as a playroom. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The family have some minor pets. The childminder currently minds four children under eight years, and four children over eight years on a part-time basis. She helps to run a local parent and toddler group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop their physical fitness and stamina through daily walks to their local school, toddler group, or park. The childminder believes in daily fresh air and walking exercise. Children have regular opportunities for play and exploration in the house, garden, and parks, weather permitting. They enjoy sport games like 'rounders', 'dodge ball' and skittles; ride-on toys; and large equipment for climbing and sliding. Toddlers also benefit from weekly music and movement sessions at a play centre. All these activities are conducive to children developing their physical fitness, balance, and co-ordination.

Children benefit from a clean, well furnished, and comfortable environment. The childminder cleans and dusts daily, and encourages all visitors to remove their shoes at entry, to maintain cleanliness and hygiene in the house. Children are given daily opportunities to develop independence in personal hygiene. They practise hand washing after toilet and before meals, though inconsistently before snack time as it often merges with play. Toddlers receive good encouragement and support from the childminder during potty training, and work towards their various development milestones.

Children's dietary and health needs are met well due to close liaison between the childminder and parents. Children have ready access to drinks such as water and juice in bottles, which are refilled throughout the day. Toddlers know where to access their drink bottles on their own initiatives, and prevent dehydration. Children are provided with a good range of foods for snacks, cold lunches, and hot evening meals, which help them work towards a balanced and healthy diet. Children are introduced to healthy food options such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and develop some health awareness. Parents are welcome to bring their own foods, and their special requirements regarding diets and allergies are respected and met effectively. The childminder has put in place procedures for promoting children's health and safety. All accidents are reported back to parents verbally, though the written record is sparse and covering only those which are felt to be significant. The childminder records medicines and parents' permission for them, although the blanket consent for some non-prescription medicines such as Calpol, is not the best practice for protecting children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are given good attention and support so that they can play in a safe and secure manner. Children have good space for safe movement and exploration on the premises. The house and rear garden are safe and secure for the current minded children, while the front garden is used for play only with close supervision by the childminder. Young children access readily low-level play resources in the lounge. On the occasions when there is not enough natural light, the childminder is aware of maintaining a well lit environment with extra lighting. The childminder shows safety awareness, and supervises children within her sight or hearing. School-age children benefit from extra play space and toys in the well equipped play room on the second floor,

which they can access safely. Toddlers also enjoy a change of play environment and toys there, but only when the childminder accompanies and supervises them directly.

The house is equipped with a few smoke alarms for fire detection. The childminder has a detailed plan for fire emergencies, which the children practise to gain an awareness about fire safety. The childminder is vigilant about safety during outings. Children develop road safety awareness during daily walks to and from school or the toddler group. They know to stop and look carefully at the traffic before crossing the road. The childminder is qualified in first aid, and able to assist children who may be involved in accidents and emergencies. She shows sound knowledge of child protection procedures, though her brief written policy does not state clearly ways of obtaining advice and referring concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children feel happy and secure in the homely environment. Toddlers receive good physical contact such as hugs and cuddles for reassurance. Toys are easily accessible even for the youngest children, and toddlers have lots of fun building duplo models, and pushing their 'shopping trolley' or dolls in 'prams'. Children are well stimulated by a good range of age-appropriate play resources, which they choose themselves for satisfying free play. Children derive pleasure from good quality children's books; construction; dolls house; small worlds; board games; and children's computer programmes and DVDs. Children enjoy creative play including play dough, drawing, and music at a children's centre. They also take part in weekly outings to the local toddler group, park, and swimming. These give children extra opportunities for play and learning, while developing social skills and confidence through mixing with other children and adults.

Children have good opportunities to become skilful communicators and competent learners during play. The childminder talks to and interacts well with children. Toddlers relish their fun time with the various animal characters like Boris the bear, during music and movement sessions. The childminder builds on children's interests, and prompts them to recount such experiences. Children access books and use them for pleasure themselves, because they are regularly read to by the childminder. Toddlers are happy and involved; they show good concentration and imagination when building duplo models of trains that carry animals in their carriages. Children learn about caring for pets when they help to feed the guinea pigs with carrots. They also practise looking after the resources by tidying up their toys before lunch time. The childminder does not have the Birth to three matters training pack, but wishes to access it to further improve her planning and organisation of purposeful activities for toddlers and babies.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is familiar with individual children's needs, characters, and abilities. They receive sensitive care which promotes their development and well-being. Some children have been minded since they were young babies, and have bonded well with the childminder. She also has good communication and liaison with parents, and meets their preference and

requirements regarding children's diets, rest, and care routines. She uses contracts and written agreements with parents, who are also made aware of her up-to-date policy on complaints. Each child is valued, and treated as an individual with equal concern by the childminder. She demonstrates a positive attitude towards including children with a range of needs and abilities. Minded children learn to respect differences among themselves and other people through her good role model. They also gain an appreciation of differences in gender, culture, and ability, through good quality resources with diversity themes, such as children's books and dolls.

Young children are well occupied and engrossed in their play. They respond well to the childminder's praise and encouragement, and increase in their self-esteem. Toddlers show emerging confidence in linking up with each other for support. They play well individually, as well as together. The childminder has a sound policy on behaviour. Children thrive on her clear boundaries, and behave well generally. They practise good manners, and learn to share and take turns. Any unwanted behaviour is sensitively dealt with, using strategies discussed with parents, and which are appropriate for children's maturity, such as distraction, explanation, and time out.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is suitably experienced and trained in childminding. She is also qualified in first aid. The childminder is familiar with many children and families in the local community, as she helps to run the local toddler group. Children and parents experience a friendly and organised service, as the childminder uses her time, space, and resources appropriately for meeting children's needs. There is some key information for parents including a few brief childcare policies, though the child protection statement requires more details. She promotes children's health and safety through keeping required records and parental agreements. However, the procedures for recording accidents, and for obtaining consent for some non-prescription medicines require improving. The childminder does not have all relevant reference publications, such as the Birth to three matters framework, and child protection guidance. She is motivated to obtain them to further improve her knowledge and skills in childcare. 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 was asked to extend her understanding of child protection; and to increase the amount of equipment that promotes equality of opportunity. Through discussions and a brief policy statement, she demonstrates a sound understanding of child protection procedures, though the statement requires more details still.

She has since acquired some good quality resources with diversity themes, such as children's books; multi-cultural dolls and play figures. These help children to gain a positive appreciation of differences in gender, culture, belief, and ability.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

The childminder 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 good. 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):

- improve health and safety procedures regarding accident recording, and the consent for non-prescription medicines such as Calpol
- obtain all relevant reference publications, such as the Birth to three matters framework, and child protection guidance; and improve policy statements such as on child protection.

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