



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	108835
Inspection date	18 July 2006
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 has been registered since 1989. She lives with her adult son in a house in the Nythe district of Swindon. There are shops and parks within walking distance of the home. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She takes the children out on daily walks and bus trips to local amenities. The family have a caged bird and tropical fish.

The childminder is registered to care for no more than six children under eight years, with no more than three under five at any one time. She is not registered to provide over night care. She currently cares for 10 children, six of whom are under eight years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the childminder generally follows satisfactory procedures that reduce the risk to children of illness and cross-infection. For example, she does not normally care for children who are unwell and has researched information on common childhood illnesses. She provides shade in her garden to protect children from the sun and explains why they must wear a sun hat. She does not however consistently check with parents as to whether children have had sun cream applied, which puts them at risk of sun burn. Children are taught about the importance of personal hygiene but sometimes wash their hands in a shared bowl of water and dry them with the same towel. She washes her hands after nappy changing but does not consistently wash her hands between changing nappies and this increases the risk of infection.

Drinks are freely available to children at all times and during hot weather, the childminder regularly reminds them to have a drink. The childminder prefers parents to bring their child's food, which she stores in the fridge.

Children enjoy a great deal of physical play. They use the garden when ever the weather permits and have a wide range of outdoor play equipment to choose from. There are plenty of wheeled toys which avoids squabbles. They also regularly visit the local park, which has more challenging climbing equipment for the older children. These enjoyable activities help to keep children physically fit and encourage them to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a generally satisfactory awareness of safety and has identified most hazards to children and taken steps to reduce them. For example, gates prevent young children from using the stairs or from reaching toys unsuitable for their stage of development. Children learn how to behave near traffic and how to cross the road safely. However, the childminder is not sufficiently vigilant at all times. For example, at times children are unsupervised in areas of the house where there are bottles of alcohol, trailing cables and uncovered electrical sockets. Children play near glass cabinets where the childminder is uncertain whether or not the glass is toughened. There is a smoke detector on the ground floor but not on the first floor. The front door is secure but keys are left in the lock where children could reach them.

Children are able to play with a satisfactory range of good quality toys. There is a wide selection of outdoor equipment, which the youngest children especially enjoy. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring children only play with toys that are suitable for their stage of development.

The childminder understands her responsibility to protect children's welfare. She would be able to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect but she is unsure of the agreed procedures to follow but would seek advice if she had concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the childminder's house. They move freely between the house and garden and they are confident to go to the childminder for comfort and help. They especially enjoy playing in the garden with the wide selection of outdoor toys. The childminder shows the children warmth and affection. She spends some time talking and playing with them but does not always interact with them in a way that helps their development. For example, she does not routinely ask simple open questions to encourage them to think and develop their ideas. This also does not help them fully develop their communication and language skills. Older children are able to choose from the range of toys available, which allows them freedom to follow their own interests and encourages them to make choices and become independent in their play.

Children benefit from regular outings, for example, to the park, friends' houses and toddler groups, where they enjoy new experiences and have the opportunity of socialising with other adults and children.

The childminder has attended training on the Birth to three matters framework, which gives guidance on the care of children under three. However, she is not yet putting many of the aspects of good quality care, as outlined in the guidance, into practice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well behaved and play co-operatively together and the childminder helps them learn to share and take turns. However she does not consistently explain to children the consequences of unwanted behaviour, for example, she often tells children 'no' without explaining why.

The childminder spends time each day talking to parents about their children and the time they have spent together. She follows parents wishes regarding sleep and meal times but does not have their written consent for children to travel in a vehicle. She has not made sure that parents have given her all the necessary information to fully meet children's needs, for example, regarding the use of sun cream. Children with special needs are fully included and the childminder is sensitive to their additional needs. She talks to all the children about disability, which helps them understand and raises their awareness of others needs.

Children learn about their local community as they visit shops, parks and toddler groups. However, there are few play materials or activities to help them learn about the wider world and appreciate similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her day so that children enjoy and benefit from taking part in a variety of activities and outings. Her adult son occasionally works as an assistant and the childminder arranges this for the benefit of the children.

She has most of the required paperwork in place to promote children's health, safety and welfare, although not always in sufficient detail. For example, her record of attendance does not show when children have arrived earlier or been collected later than usual. She has written parental consents for various aspects of care provided but not to travel in a vehicle. She has a complaints procedure but has not told parents what it is. She has her registration certificate on file for parents to see but it is not displayed as is required.

The childminder attends relevant training courses each year and enjoys meeting with other childminders to share aspects of good practice. 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 ensure that the premises are secure so that children cannot leave them unsupervised. The side gate can now be locked so that children cannot open it. The front door is kept locked but keys are left in the lock within children's reach.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received on 14/11/2005. The concerns related to over minding and not taking adequate care of minded children during school runs which gave rise to further safety concerns. These concerns related to National Standards 2 (organisation), 3 (care, learning and play), 6 (safety), 11 (behaviour management) and 14 (documentation). Ofsted conducted a visit on 5/12/2005 to address these concerns. The childminder was found to be caring for more children than her registration allows. As a result, a formal warning letter was issued to the childminder. She remains qualified for 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

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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):

- ensure hygienic procedures are consistently followed for hand washing and drying and for nappy changing
- ensure that children cannot access alcohol, trailing wires and uncovered electric sockets
- ensure there is a working smoke detector on each level of the house and that low level glass in the dining room cupboards is not a hazard to children
- display the registration certificate and ensure that all records and procedures for the safe and efficient care of the children are maintained in sufficient detail; with particular reference to the attendance register, complaints procedure, parental consent for children to travel in a vehicle and information from parents regarding children's individual needs
- provide more resources and activities to help children appreciate differences in culture, ethnicity, ability and the roles of men and women in society

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