



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111180
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 May 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 2000. She lives with her husband and two school-age children, one of whom is under eight years. They live in a house in Colden Common, on the southern fringe of Winchester. Local amenities such as schools, shops and parks are all within walking distance.

The whole of the property is available for childminding, though the main areas used are downstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have no pets. The childminder currently minds two toddlers and four school-age children, all part-time, during the week. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder has an NVQ Level 3 qualification in Early Years Care and Education.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy daily fresh air and exercise during walks to and from school or the park. Babies and young toddlers are actively encouraged to develop their physical strength and balance through movement and exploration, such as when they crawl, stand or walk with or without assistance. The garden has been thoughtfully created as a stimulating outdoor play area for children. They can play happily with a wide range of equipment such as a ball pit; ropes; ball games; playhouse; trampoline (sunk into the ground); slide and climbing frame; ride-on toys; and with sand and water. All these activities enhance children's physical fitness and development.

The childminder has good procedures in place to promote children's health and hygiene. There are excellent practices in nappy changing and disposal to help prevent cross infection. These include the use of disposable gloves, unshared nappy mats, and a purpose-made disposal unit. Children access personalised rather than shared flannels for good hygiene. Even young toddlers who are still in nappies are introduced to hand washing in a bowl of water before eating and after playing. Other children learn to access toilet and hand washing facilities themselves, sometimes with a step stool; and develop independence in personal hygiene during the daily routine. Areas and surfaces used by children are regularly cleaned or disinfected to provide a generally clean and comfortable environment, though the current toilet flooring may not be best suited for easy maintenance in terms of hygiene. The childminder keeps records of medicines and accidents to monitor children's health and safety.

Children have ready access to drinks such as water and milk, which the childminder provides throughout the day to prevent dehydration. Young toddlers are able to help themselves to their trainer cups, which are placed in an accessible position. The childminder works with parents to help children work towards a balanced and healthy diet. She happily assists those parents who provide their own foods; some prefer to supply all meals for their babies and toddlers. The childminder provides a varied range of snacks including nutritious options like fresh fruits and vegetable. Children enjoy simple meals at tea time, usually sandwiches or pasta dishes. The childminder shows clear understanding about meeting any special dietary and health requirements requested by parents.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children receive good attention and supervision from the childminder to ensure that they are safe on the premises and during outings. Young toddlers enjoy safe movement and exploration within the lounge and kitchen/diner, and when they crawl or walk from one room to another. There is well organised storage of the wide range of toys and books, so that children can access them safely at low levels and make choices in their own play. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring that when a mixed age group of children are present, small and sharp items that may be hazardous for babies and young toddlers are not within their reach. The childminder is pro-active in ensuring safe play in the garden, which has many different levels. Young children are accompanied there, for example, during play with sand and water on the top patio. One of

their favourite pieces of equipment, the trampoline, has been specially designed so that it sinks into the ground for safety, and is very well protected on all sides with a vast number of gym mats for protection.

The childminder has undertaken health and safety training, and carries out risk assessments of the house and garden every six months. Potential hazards have been reduced through safety devices, such as a fire guard, stair gates, socket covers, smoke alarms, and cupboard locks in the kitchen. Certain risks arise as babies and toddlers become more mobile and inquisitive, such as when they pull up onto a small light-weight table, or hold onto the opened and moving porch door when visitors come through from the front entrance. This therefore warrants a more dynamic approach to risk analysis, with specific reference to the changing needs, behaviour and activities of the youngest children.

Young children benefit from age-appropriate equipment for their care generally, such as buggies, and safe seats with suitable harnesses at the table or in the car. However, buggies are used for sleeping currently with parents' approval, and partly because the upstairs has not been available for sleeping. The childminder has now made safe the stairs, banister, and upstairs windows; allowing the option of children being accommodated upstairs with appropriate furniture for sleeping.

Children have good opportunities to develop safety awareness during the daily routine. They are instilled awareness about stranger danger and road safety 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. When playing on the trampoline, children know that only two persons should be on it each time due to safety precautions. Children also practise fire safety according to the childminder's detailed emergency fire plan; they do this through regular fire drills, which are recorded and adapted for their understanding and maturity. The childminder is qualified in first aid, and able to protect children who may be involved in accidents and emergencies. She has undergone advanced training in child protection, and has drafted a detailed statement, showing sound knowledge of the signs of abuse and neglect, and procedures for child protection.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children have excellent resources and opportunities for play and learning, which are appropriate for their age and development. They thrive in a child-friendly and stimulating environment, and receive outstanding support to become competent learners. The childminder has regard to the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework for planning purposeful activities for children. They develop their imagination and creativity through a wide range of activities, including art and craft, which the childminder is skilled at. They enjoy rich learning experiences when growing vegetables from seeds, first indoor, and then in the childminder's vegetable garden. They derive much pleasure from watering and looking after the tomatoes, courgettes and runner beans as they grow. This also stimulates children to think about the foods they eat, and gain an awareness about the value of vegetables and fruits in their diets.

Young toddlers are extremely involved and engrossed in their play, as they benefit from stimulating activities that focus their interest and help them develop superb concentration.

They show strong curiosity and exploratory instincts during heuristic play with a treasure basket, and relish in the sensory experiences of a wide range of natural and everyday objects of different textures, shapes, and colours. A young toddler's eyes sparkle when she holds up and swings a string of shimmering beads, or when she bangs two shiny bangles together making a sound. Another toddler amuses himself by dangling a bunch of metal keys, and then shows great motivation to run to the back door to try fitting one of them into the key hole. They have consistent opportunities for developing very good manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Toddlers respond very positively to the childminder's constant encouragement, and develop varying levels of independence, such as when learning to hold a feeding spoon, trainer cup, or finger foods. They delight in imaginative play with a wide range of small worlds, such as Thomas, the tank engines; cars and garage; farmyard animals; and dinosaurs in the wild (presented on a bed of porridge oats). They also love the fun experiences of attending the local toddler group, music sessions, baby gym and library story time, where they gain confidence and social skills through mixing with other children and adults.

Babies and toddlers are constantly encouraged to express their feelings and emerging ideas through gestures, cooing, babbling, facial expressions and words. The childminder interacts and engages very well with children. She helps young toddlers learn new words by prompting them with questions such as 'what's this?' and 'how does it feel?' when handling a seashell, or looking at their face in a mirror. They have lots of fun playing the game of 'touch your nose/mouth/ears' when given the verbal cue by the childminder, for example, during nappy changing. Toddlers have daily opportunities to recognise their own names on the pegs, and learn that print and pictures carry meanings. All these activities are conducive to young children's emerging skills in communication and speech. The childminder observes young children for an insight into how they play and learn. Developmental records based on the Birth to three matters framework are kept on them, and are shared with parents, some of whom reciprocate by providing the childminder with their own observations and insights on their toddlers' needs and achievements. This impacts on the childminder being able to build on the children's interests for meeting their needs effectively, and for enhancing their play and development.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children settle well into the friendly and homely setting, because the childminder is familiar with each child's needs and interests. She communicates and liaises well with parents to promote children's care, play and learning. The childminder is flexible with diets, and assists parents if they wish to supply their own meals. Any special dietary and health requirements are carefully recorded and met effectively. There are very good practices of informing parents about her childminding operation and policies, for example, on behaviour management, health and safety, sickness, learning through play, complaints, and equal opportunities. Apart from keeping parents well informed orally, the childminder also shares developmental records of her observations on the under-threes. This impacts on their close partnership in helping babies and toddlers work towards the various developmental milestones, such as crawling, standing, walking, and using words and phrases.

The childminder is skilled with promoting good behaviour and positive relationships among children. Children of a wide age range, from baby to primary school age, enjoy socialising with one another during play, or over meals and birthday celebrations. This helps all of them to learn from one another, and develop a sense of belonging. Young children, including toddlers, are instilled a sense of responsibility, when they are encouraged to tidy up their toys or look after the play resources. Children develop their confidence and self-esteem through the childminder's enthusiastic praise and encouragement. They thrive on the her clear boundaries for good manners and behaviour; these simple rules are displayed and presented in a child-friendly manner with colourful pictures on the wall. Children sometimes apply these simple rules themselves during negotiations to resolve disagreements in a positive manner, for example, when someone does not share or play nicely. The childminder values all children, and has a positive attitude towards including children of a wide range of needs and abilities. Children can access resources with diversity themes, like good quality children's books, dolls, play figures, a world map, wall poster, and a few artefacts from foreign travels. Together with discussions and festival celebrations, children gain an understanding and appreciation of different genders, cultures, beliefs, and abilities.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder has good experience of working with children from baby to primary school age. She is well known in the local community, having been involved with a local playgroup for a number of years. She shows an excellent and professional attitude to childminding and training. She has completed a vast number of relevant training courses, such as NVQ Level 3 in early years, behaviour management, food hygiene, observations into how children learn, and focus on under-threes. She is also pro-active in updating herself about the latest guidance regarding children's play and learning. In her porch, there are numerous reference publications, such as relating to the Birth to three matters framework, and the Foundation Stage of learning. This impacts on her being able to plan and organise stimulating activities appropriate for individual children's needs and stage of development.

Children and parents experience a welcoming and well organised service for children's play, care and learning. Both the indoor and outdoor environments offer diverse and rich learning experiences through a wide range of stimulating play resources and books. Children's care routines are generally well planned to meet their individual needs; toddlers have a quiet rest after active play on the premises or during local outings. However, the current equipment and arrangements for sleeping require reviewing to enhance children's health and comfort. The childminder carries out risk assessments diligently, though they can be further linked to the increasing mobility and changing needs of the youngest children. All required documentation is in place, and is comprehensive, well organised, and stored in a secure manner, thus preserving confidentiality. 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 increase her knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. She has since undertaken advanced child protection training, and demonstrates a sound knowledge of the relevant procedures, and of the signs and symptoms

of abuse. She was also asked to increase the amount of toys that reflect equal opportunities. The childminder now has some resources like dolls, play figures, and plenty of good quality children's books with diversity themes on 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):

- enhance children's health and safety by reviewing the equipment and arrangements for sleeping; and by linking risk assessments to the changing needs, behaviour and mobility of the youngest children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)