



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265639
Inspection date	03 August 2006
Inspector	Elaine Simmons
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 has been registered since July 2003. She lives with her husband in a house, located in Horsham. There are shops and a park within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor, plus the conservatory are used for childminding. Toilet facilities are upstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have two cats and some tropical fish.

The childminder currently minds eight children on a part time basis they are aged from 16 months to six years of age. Some children attend before and after school, term time only.

The childminder attends the local childminding group, of which she is the Chair person. She also regularly attends parent and toddler groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's exemplary hygiene routines. She ensures surfaces are cleaned daily with an antibacterial spray. Children are provided with liquid soap and their own individual hand towels, they also have access to disposable hand wipes. The childminder uses hand washing gel when on outings to clean their hands so that she can ensure good hygiene is maintained at all times. The children enjoy having a story book read to them by the childminder called 'Germs' this story explains in very simple terms what germs are, and how they are spread. This story helps to explain the importance of good hygiene. The childminder further protects the children by cleaning her toys and nursery equipment every week. Children are given clean bedding and this is very well organised and stored in a container ready to use as required.

The childminder is aware of the health implications that pets in the home can cause and she ensures these are substantially minimised successfully. Accidents and sickness are dealt with consistently and any medication administered is stored and recorded appropriately. She has been very forward thinking in regard to children's wellbeing when outside the home. The childminder keeps details of the children and herself in a folder in her bag. This is to ensure that if a child or herself are involved in an accident or taken ill the emergency services can quickly provide the required care and contact the children's parents promptly.

Children are given lots of opportunities for regular physical exercise. They walk to and from school and the park with the childminder and are able to play outside in her garden undercover so that outside play can take place even in wet weather. She provides suitable music tapes for children to dance to which means children's physical health is effectively promoted.

The childminder provides children with healthy and nutritious meals that are well balanced and meet the needs of the varying age groups. Children are offered home cooked meals with a variety of fresh fruit, salad and vegetables. Their individual needs and preferences are recorded at the initial interview with parents and any special diets are researched by the childminder so that their individual needs can be consistently met. She is very aware of the need for children to drink plenty of fluids especially in hot weather, and is very proactive in ensuring children's good health is supported, by providing plenty of water for them to drink.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure in the childminder's well organised home. She has very good procedures in place to ensure children's safety at all times and provides close supervision both at home and when outside. The children benefit from having a very wide range of clean, safe toys and equipment which the childminder provides to meet the needs of a varying age group. Children are able to access toys independently and are encouraged to discuss with her what toys they would like to play with the next day. Consequently this helps to involve them in the planning of the days activities.

The childminder keeps herself up to date with new legislation. For example, she is aware of the new laws regarding the requirement for older children to be in safety seats while being transported in a vehicle. She is able to provide sufficient safety seats for all the children she cares for. Children are further protected by her clearly thought out strategies when on outings with a group of children. She ensures their well-being by providing them with coloured bibs and identification tags so that they can be easily identified.

The childminder carries out risk assessments on any new venues before she takes children to visit. Children are routinely taught road safety procedures and take part in fire drills at the childminder's home. She discusses stranger danger with children and helps them to understand about keeping themselves safe by talking about dangers when visiting rivers and ponds.

Children's welfare is very well protected by the childminder's clear understanding of all child protection requirements. She understands the signs and symptoms of abuse and who to contact if concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children have access to a wide and interesting range of activities organised enthusiastically by the childminder. She ensures children of all ages can take part at their own level of understanding. Children are taken on lots of outings to places of interest these help to promote their learning and give them lots of enjoyment. For example, the children had enjoyed the previous day an outing to a local nature reserve with the childminder and the local childminding group, where they were able to do pond dipping and walk around the nature trail looking for bugs. This was called 'looking for the birds dinner' and the children had been provided with a sheet of things to look for and as they found them they ticked them off. The childminder followed up this outing with a painting and creative activity at her home. The children had collected feathers at the reserve and these were used, with cut out paper shapes joined together to make a bird. The children were enthusiastically printing with the bright red paint they had chosen, using their hands and a sponge.

Children also enjoy visits to local museums, the beach, park and local farms with the childminder. She provides opportunities for cooking activities and children make apple pies using apples they pick from the apple tree in her garden. They also have opportunities to play and socialise with other children at toddler groups.

The childminder successfully supports children as they play, sitting on the floor with them assisting them as required. She encourages children's speech and language by talking to them gaining their interest in the things around them and including them in all aspects of the day. The childminder meets their individual needs by being aware of how they are feeling and altering her planned activities to fit in with what they would like to do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have access to a good selection of resources that reflect the world around them. The childminder has small world toys that reflect other cultures and disability. She supports equality by encouraging children to play with any toy providing it is suitable for their age. The children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards people who are different from themselves. Parents are given ample information in the copies of her own clearly written policy and procedure on equality of opportunity for all. She is confident and able to discuss with parents aspects of behaviour that she is unwilling to accept and give clear explanations to children as to why some expressions are hurtful and unkind.

Children's individual needs are really well met by the childminder. She is aware of their individual family situations and is supportive and understanding with parents. She is willing to work with other professionals and support families with children who have special needs. The childminder researches using the library and the internet to obtain relevant information on particular needs so that she can provide the best possible care at all times.

The childminder provides parents with ample information about her behaviour management techniques. Children generally behave well because unwanted behaviour is ignored, providing it does not cause a danger to anyone, and good behaviour is rewarded with praise and encouragement. Children are encouraged by the childminder to use good manners, to say 'please' and 'thank you'. She uses distraction and gives good clear explanations which helps children to achieve the behaviour required.

Parents are provided with lots of information about her childminding service. They are given copies of her policies and a copy of Ofsted's poster that gives contact details to enable parents to compliment or complain. She completes daily diaries that go between home and herself. Parents value these as it enables them to keep in touch with what their child has been involved in and gives them the opportunity to write down any relevant things that have happened at home. A regular verbal exchange of information also takes place at the start and end of the childminding day this helps provide the children with consistent care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and secure in the childminder's home. She organises her home so that children can play safely, move freely and access toys independently. The childminder is pro active in attending training and is currently waiting to start a National Vocational Qualification in Child Care and Education level three. She attends workshops and conferences to ensure that her knowledge and understanding of all child care issues are kept up to date to enable her to care for children successfully.

The childminder understands and maintains the adult to child ratios and ensures these are adhered to at all times. Children are given good supervision and are conscientiously protected by the good procedures she has in place regarding their collection by third parties, or when strangers call at her home.

Most of the childminder's documentation is up to date and efficiently organised. It is stored securely to maintain confidentiality. However, she does not hold a current first aid certificate as it has expired. A course is currently being arranged for September 2006 to allow her to update her knowledge and meet the requirements of the National Standards. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous Child Care inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that low-level glass panels in the greenhouse are safe or inaccessible.

The childminder has put safety film over the glass on the greenhouse door and put chicken wire over the side panels to protect the children should the glass break.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since last inspection.

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.

Complaint dated 28/02/2005

Concerns raised were of a contractual nature. Parents did not wish to complain but wanted help regarding getting out of paying the childminder. Ofsted has recorded the information on file and informed complainant that contractual issues fall outside Ofsted's remit and hence will be taking no further action at the moment.

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):

- ensure a current first aid certificate is held at all times

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