



## Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 111697                     |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 24 August 2006             |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Wendy, Elizabeth Lightfoot |
| <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 has been registered since 1994. She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years and currently cares for six children, three of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder lives with two adult children in a house in Alton, Hampshire. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom upstairs is used for childminding.

The family has a pet cat and a dog.

The childminder attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a comfortable family home and areas used for the children are maintained in a hygienic condition. Family pets have regular immunisations and treatments and children cannot access pets' feeding bowls. Children learn about personal hygiene by washing their hands with antiseptic hand-washing gel after using the toilet, but do not access running water for this purpose.

Children's health is supported by the childminder's knowledge of any medical conditions or allergies. Children's parents give advance consent in writing for emergency medical advice or treatment and the childminder telephones parents if their children become unwell. Children are protected from cross-infection as the childminder ensures parents are aware of her exclusion policy for those who have an infectious illness. Children receive prompt support in the event of an accident as the childminder maintains a current first aid qualification.

Children receive regular drinks throughout the day. Their dietary health is protected as the childminder keeps records of any dietary needs and of parents wishes for their children. Current children bring packed lunches and the childminder is happy to provide fruit for snacks, or to offer a second breakfast for children who have a very early meal at home, before arriving at the childminder setting.

Toddlers emotional well-being is well-supported and they enjoy interaction with the childminder and with older children. They are well-settled and play confidently. Children of all ages regularly visit parks and woodland adventure play centres for a variety of physical play opportunities. They get fresh air when playing in the front garden and in the local park, running, playing ball, chase, hide and seek, sliding and climbing.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy play in the lounge diner which allows space for them to spread out for floor play, sit at the table for art and craft and sleep in their own reclining pushchairs or on the settee. Kitchen facilities are available for food preparation, but children do not usually access this area, as they do cookery at the dining table. Children are comfortable in warmer weather as windows allow good ventilation while preventing children from exiting unnoticed. Shade is available in the front garden in the form of a play tent.

Children access a range of toys for free play and enjoy a variety of planned activities, both in the childminding setting and through daily outings to toddler groups. Toys are supplied in good quantities and are appropriate for children's stages of development. Some are organised in boxes at low level, for them to access independently. The childminder interacts well with the children, responding to their interests and offering further resources, as their play suggests these might be appreciated. Children sit comfortably at the dining table for art and craft activities. They spread out on the floor for extensive construction activities and enjoy good

resources for imaginative play. Toddlers sleep well in their lie back pushchairs, or on the comfortable settee.

Children are safe indoors as hazards are minimised, for example, by the judicious use of safety gates and the childminder provides good supervision. Children's security is protected as external doors are locked, with the key nearby, at adult height, in case of emergency. Older children learn the childminder's fire evacuation procedures. Children are safe on outings as the childminder has assessed risks and puts appropriate safeguards in place. Children learn rules for their own safety and are reminded of these before each outing to child friendly venues. Children's security is helped by the childminder's understanding of child protection issues and steps to take if she is concerned about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children have good relationships with the childminder, engaging her in their play, asking for more resources and receiving prompt responses. Children develop good creative skills through pre-planned activities. They are enabled to play at their own levels. Younger children's shorter attentions spans are respected and they are quickly offered fresh activities, so they remain happily occupied and relaxed. They are motivated to greater efforts by watching older children, supported by the childminder's good understanding of their readiness to persevere.

Children gain mathematical understanding through daily activities such as number games or counting pens, so each child has the same number. A number chart is displayed and older children supported to do their homework. Children gain confidence and learn social skills at the childminder toddler group when mixing with other adults and children. Toddlers engage the childminder's attention confidently using sounds and gestures. Their language development is supported throughout as the childminder names toys and colours, acknowledges their interest in toys and maintains regular conversations with them.

Children giggle when the childminder joins in their imaginary play with a toy telephone and pretends to ring their parents. Toddlers learn life skills when experimenting with different ways of holding a realistic baby doll, until they can feed the doll with a feeding bottle. Children's self-esteem grows as the childminder praises them for their efforts, or for asking to go to the toilet. Children develop control of their bodies through daily opportunities for physical play.

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

The provision is good.

Children of different ages are all treated with equal concern and children and families of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds are welcomed. Children learn about diversity in society through positive images in books and playing with dolls of different skin tones. They take interest in other countries in the world by marking on the world map where they or their parents have travelled.

The childminder is happy to accept children with special needs and is competent in using sign language in communicating with a deaf child. The childminder values a good exchange of

information with parents to ensure she thoroughly understands children's needs and how best to support them. She understands the importance of making play accessible to all children, to help them progress. Children are helped to understand each other's needs and to be confident around each other, so they do not acquire prejudices.

Children behave well at the childminder's because she meets their needs effectively. Their behaviour is managed in positive ways. The childminder regularly notices and acknowledges what children are doing and uses praise so they know they are on the right lines.

Children benefit from close partnerships between the childminder and their parents as they quickly settle and see their parents are valued. Good hand-over procedures encourage the sharing of information about children's routines, activities and well-being. This helps ensure children's needs are met and gives parents the confidence that they are leaving their children in good hands. Developmental changes are discussed to support children's safety, such as children developing the ability to get out of a cot. All aspects of children's care are discussed and agreements reflected in contracts made with their parents. the childminder understands that some parents' work patterns lead to them needing flexible care, in terms of times of arrival and departure.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care.

Children are cared for by an experienced and well-qualified childminder who has a good understanding of how children learn and progress. The childminder has an NVQ 3 qualification in Early years Care and Education and maintains a current first aid qualification.

Space is well-organised to meet children's needs and toys are accessible at low level, giving children free choice and encouraging independence. Time is organised effectively to provide children with a broad range of experiences, both at the childminding setting and at local attractions, such as the childminder toddler group, where the childminder organises the art and craft activities.

The childminder maintains an accurate record of the days and times of children's attendances. The childminder's record keeping suffers a little from her lack of confidence, so some records do not contain sufficient detail, including some of the policies and procedures underpinning the care of the children, which she shares with parents. However all appropriate parental consents are in place to ensure children receive appropriate care, in line with their wishes, and parents are well-informed, verbally, of children's progress and well-being.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure an Incident Record is kept and shared with parents, and to ensure a signature of acknowledgement is obtained after administering medication.

A book is ready for recording any behavioural incidents which may arise and the childminder undertakes to share this with children's own parents.

The childminder says she has not recently needed to administer medication but she has provided a new record book in readiness for this.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the 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.

## **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 documentation has all important detail, such as contact telephone numbers for the local child protection team, and that it is organised to be easily accessible
- ensure children can wash their hands in running water after using the toilet.

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)