



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131304
Inspection date	08 August 2006
Inspector	Clare Moore
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 1991. She lives with her husband and an adult son in the Shirley area of Southampton. Most areas of the property are used for childminding including the enclosed back garden.

She is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time. At present she cares for four children under five years of age and four children of school age. All the children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

She is a member of an approved childminding network and holds the Children Come First quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle. They are offered nutritious food with fruit, vegetables and biscuits at snack times and a packed lunch is normally provided by parents. There are frequent drinks of water, fruit flavoured drinks or milk available to quench thirst. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise. They use a wide range of equipment to climb, ride, balance and slide both in the garden and on outings. This helps them to keep fit and active and also gives them frequent opportunities to refine and develop their physical skills.

Children are cared for in a home that is clean and comfortable. They learn the importance of washing their hands through consistent guidance from the childminder. They practice good hygiene and the childminder's comprehensive policies and procedures regarding hygiene and sickness help to prevent the spread of infections.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children spend their time in a very welcoming and secure environment. Risks to children are significantly minimised with excellent supervision, safe storage of medicines and cleaning materials and carefully considered and regularly practised fire safety procedures.

Children find out about keeping themselves safe in the sun through talking with the childminder and being vigilant about using sun creams and hats and making use of a gazebo that provides shade. They become valuable partners in actively keeping themselves safe on outings because the childminder encourages them to take responsibility. When they are out and about they talk about plants that are harmful and take an active part in road safety. They look and listen for traffic before deciding with the childminder if it is safe to cross. The childminder carries emergency contact details and a mobile phone. There is a well stocked first aid kit in the home and a portable one for outings which ensure children can be assisted whenever necessary.

In the home children become aware of safety issues as they take part in a cooking activity and talk about being careful when the oven is hot. They also find out about how to handle tools safely, for example sharp knives and scissors which helps them to protect themselves and others.

The childminder has a comprehensive understanding of Child Protection Procedures and a clear policy shared with parents which help to ensure that children's needs are met. She raises and discusses important issues with children such as avoiding approaching strangers and dogs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending often selecting their own freely chosen activities. They concentrate well and are fully involved when they bake jam tarts, weigh out the ingredients, mix the margarine with the flour, roll out and cut the dough, place it in the tin and fill with jam. The

childminder talks to the children asking questions and giving encouragement. This helps children to predict, explore texture and observe change. It also helps them to develop maths and language skills in a fun and interesting way with a tasty result that is looked forward to eagerly by the children. They are also absorbed playing a game with quoits and use their imagination exploring a small world mushroom house with furniture and figures.

Other interesting activities children take part in include books and stories, songs, play-doh, rhymes, board games, painting using different methods to apply the paint and a variety of construction including junk modelling. There is a very wide range of toys and resources for children to choose from. Children spend much of their time outdoors in the garden and at the park where they find bugs and sometimes grow plants from seed and help harvest tomatoes.

The childminder makes notes and observations of children's progress using child record books. She liaises well with parents to ensure children experience continuity in their activities and development. She has started to explore the 'Birth to three matters' framework and would like to further develop her expertise in the area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy because the childminder discusses their individual needs carefully with parents so that she can settle them in carefully and avoid disrupting familiar routines and comforts. Their behaviour is good. They take turns, share resources and they are supported when they need encouragement. They co-operate with expectations by removing their shoes indoors and helping to tidy away toys for which they are warmly praised. Children play together and alongside each other very well, enjoy each other's company and are at ease with the childminder.

Children develop a positive attitude to difference because the childminder shares books about different cultures and beliefs, for example "All Kinds of People". She provides resources such as small dolls with disabilities and talks about different cultures, disability and gender roles.

Children enjoy consistency of care and routines because there is a trusting partnership between the childminder and parents with regular discussion. Parents are given a parent welcome pack which includes the complaints procedure. The childminder shares a folder of further information with them to ensure all elements of the service are covered. Parents' views are actively sought and parent letters and references demonstrate that they highly value the service that the childminder provides. Parents are well informed about the care their children receive and the progress they make.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Documentation is presented in a professional way, records are accurate, well ordered and easily accessed. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures is clearly set out in writing and is reviewed on an annual basis.

Confidentiality is well respected and there is a written policy to cover this which is shared with parents. The childminder is strongly motivated to develop her service and the level of professional skills and knowledge which she has attained. She attends further training courses and is working towards a higher level qualification. She organises her time well spending much of it playing with and supporting the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to increase opportunities for young children to self select play materials. Children are now able to choose from a wide variety of resources including a selection of puzzles in plastic wallets which helps to promote choice and independence.

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):

- continue to develop skills and knowledge regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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