



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	145145
Inspection date	29 August 2006
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder lives with her four children aged 14, eight, seven and four years in Ludgershall, Hampshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years at any one time and is currently looking after five children on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. The family has two dogs, two cats, a tank of fish and a hamster.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the childminder's care. They have daily chances for fresh air and exercise whilst walking or bicycling to or from the local primary school. In addition, children play in the enclosed front garden, where they can use a range of climbing apparatus that offers suitable challenge.

Children are learning about hygiene issues, such as washing their hands after toileting. They benefit from the good role modelling shown by the childminder, her understanding of first aid and her awareness of the correct administrative procedures to be followed if accidents occur. There are a range of measures in place to promote children's health. For example, children use individual towels to dry their hands and written parental permission has been obtained to apply sun cream or to seek emergency medical treatment. However, parents do not sign the medication record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication and the cat litter tray is accessible to the children. As a result, children's good health is at risk.

Children increase their awareness of healthy eating through the nutritious snacks and meals they eat whilst in the childminder's care. Dietary requirements and allergies are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting. Any needs are recorded and accommodated. Children are able to access fluids at all times, which helps to ensure they drink liquids in sufficient quantities to meet their differing needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children play and relax within premises that are adequately clean and maintained. There are a variety of safety measures in place to help keep children safe and prevent accidents. For example, stair gates are positioned at the entrance to the lounge and kitchen and socket covers are fitted to exposed electric points. However, the premises and garden are not secure and children can leave the provision unsupervised. In addition, children are not adequately supervised when riding bicycles in the local area, smoke detectors on the ground and first floors are not in working order and sharp knives in the kitchen are accessible to children. As a result, children's safety is at risk.

Children are able to access an appropriate range of clean, suitably maintained equipment. They benefit from the childminder's understanding of safety issues regarding the purchase and ongoing maintenance of resources. As a result, children play with toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's welfare is supported by a childminder who has a secure understanding of child protection issues, the correct procedures to be followed if concerned about a child and the need for confidentiality. There are effective arrangements for ensuring parents are aware of the childminder's child protection responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting. Children's well-being is actively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children appear settled and 'at home' within the provision. They freely make decisions for themselves regarding the activities and resources they wish to explore, such as playing on climbing apparatus in the garden or investigating small world resources. Children are developing their social skills. They are learning to play cooperatively together, to share resources and to take turns.

The children have a positive relationship with the childminder. This friendly interaction helps children to feel at ease and enables them to develop a sense of belonging, whilst in the childminder's care. Children take part in a varied programme of age appropriate outings, such as to the library, Finkley Down Farm, Paulton Park and 'toddler swim'. Such opportunities enable children to increase their understanding of the world around them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder knowing them well, understanding their differing needs and having an awareness of their home circumstances. They access a suitable range of resources, to help them increase their awareness of diversity. Support given to children with additional needs is appropriate to support their development.

Children generally behave well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. They benefit from the childminder's use of positive strategies, such as distraction or explanation, to help promote their appropriate behaviour. Children are developing their awareness of right and wrong whilst in the childminder's care.

Children benefit from the positive rapport that exists between parents and the childminder. Parents are provided with detailed written information about the childminder's policies and procedures prior to their child commencing in the setting. In addition, there are regular opportunities for informal discussion about children's achievements or any childcare issues. This helps to promote a consistent approach to children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The childminder is an experienced early years practitioner, who has undertaken required training. Children's personal documentation is easily accessible to support their care, such as in an emergency.

However, not all adults who have unsupervised access to children have been vetted. In addition, the daily register of children's attendance is not always accurate or up to date. As a result, there is no permanent true record available of when children are actually in the childminder's care.

Overall, the childminder does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last inspection, the childminder was given a non-regulatory action and recommendations to help improve the provision. The action required her to ensure the premises are adequately clean and maintained. Recommendations requested her to ensure unvetted adults do not have unsupervised access to children, to make sure children's activities are suitably managed and organised and that they have access to quiet activities to support their development. In addition, the childminder was asked to improve safety by making sure the hallway runner, tiled fire surround, cat litter tray and plug in air fresheners, do not pose a hazard to children.

The premises are now adequately clean and maintained. Activities and resources are appropriately organised to enable children to explore quiet activities. The hallway runner, tiled fire surround and plug in air fresheners have been removed. All of these improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children. However, unvetted adults have unsupervised access to children and the cat litter tray is positioned in an area accessible to children. As a result, children's welfare and health are at risk.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received one concern relating to National Standard 3- Care, Learning and Play and National Standard 12, Partnership with Parents. Concerns were raised regarding a breach in confidentiality and individual care needs not being met.

Ofsted wrote to the childminder and asked her to report back on the concerns raised. A response was received, that was reviewed. It was decided no further action was required. The childminder 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- take positive steps to promote children's safety and to help prevent accidents

- ensure that no person who has not been cleared through suitability checks by Ofsted is allowed unsupervised access to minded children at any time.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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