



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131361
Inspection date	21 September 2006
Inspector	Lisa Ellis

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 registered in 1995. She lives with her two daughters in a house in the Woolston area of Southampton, Hampshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The childminder has cats and other small pets. She is a member of the Southampton childminding network and attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis. The childminder is registered to provide care for six children and currently has 11 children on roll who all attend on a part time basis. Of these, nine are aged under eight years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's dietary needs are met as the parents supply all meals and snacks for their children. The childminder ensures food is stored at the correct temperature as she puts perishable items in the fridge until the children are ready to eat. Drinks are provided throughout the day to ensure children remain suitably hydrated.

Children are learning good hygiene procedures such as washing their hands after messy activities and before eating. The childminder acts as a positive role model to support this by washing her own hands after changing nappies and cleaning the table before children have their lunch. Children are protected from the spread of infection as the childminder follows her written procedure which excludes children with contagious ailments. The health of the children is promoted by the childminder keeping comprehensive records of any accidents. She is able to care for children suitably following accidents as she has a current first aid qualification and keeps an appropriately stocked first aid kit.

Children make good use of the garden and local parks to practise their physical skills. They use slides and ride on toys to develop their gross motor skills and use bats and balls to promote hand eye co-ordination. Frequent visits to the park enable children to get regular fresh air and exercise to help promote a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where potential hazards have been identified and made safe, for example with the use of stair gates and cupboard locks. The house and garden gate are kept locked to avoid children leaving or visitors entering unnoticed.

Children's needs are met as there are appropriate facilities for eating, resting, toileting and playing. They can access all areas of the house with supervision but mainly play on the ground floor where there are rooms for quiet play and sleeps as well as the main play room that is well used for general play, messy activities and meal times. The main play room houses most of the equipment which is well maintained and suitable for the age range. Resources are bright, stimulating and cover all areas of learning. Toys are stored accessibly so children can self-select resources which increases their independence and confidence.

Children are learning good fire safety procedures as they practise fire evacuation every couple of months. Smoke detectors are checked regularly and the childminder has recently had a visit from the fire brigade to increase her awareness of fire safety for the benefit of the children.

Children are protected from the risk of harm whilst in the childminder's care as she never leaves them unattended with unvetted persons. She has a written child protection policy which is shared with parents and outlines her duties as a registered childminder so all parties are aware of what she would do if she had a concern regarding a child's welfare

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and relaxed in the childminder's care. Interaction between them is very good as she knows them well and they are responsive to her, chatting and sitting close to her throughout their play. Children are able to choose their own activities although the childminder helps them if they have trouble settling into something themselves.

Children are provided with a good mix of home based and out of the home activities. They regularly attend local toddler groups and meet up with other childminders to extend their social skills by interacting with their peers. When in the home children select activities from the wide range on offer including art and craft activities, outdoor play and imaginative play. Throughout their play the childminder talks to the children to increase their learning, for example when talking to a young child during a stencilling activity they spoke about the picture of a tractor and linked it to animals they may see on a farm and the noises those animals make.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs are met as the childminder discusses individual circumstances with the parents to ensure they can be met effectively. Children benefit as the childminder assists them with additional support, such as speech therapy, which helps children to reach their potential. Children are treated with equal respect and use equipment that reflects diversity in the wider world, such as ethnic dolls, books and puzzles depicting positive images from different countries and cultures.

Children are well behaved due to the firmness of the childminder and the established behavioural boundaries which help ensure consistency. Children are praised for positive behaviour to encourage them in the future.

The childminder works in partnership with the parents to promote the welfare of the children. New families have visits before the children start which helps them to settle into her care. Parents have access to an informative folder which outlines all of the childminder's policies and procedures so that they are aware of how she runs her business. This enables parents to be clear on how she cares for the children. Parents receive verbal feedback on a daily basis of what their children have been doing and how they have been.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides care. She is an experienced childminder who shows a commitment to training and personal development by joining the local childminding network and enrolling on additional courses to increase her childcare related knowledge, for example, child protection training. She has identified her own areas for improving by seeking funding to provide additional resources that reflect equality in our society to promote children's understanding of the wider world.

The childminder's home and documentation are well organised to promote children's well-being. All of the required paperwork is in place and is mostly very well maintained, although the register of children's attendance does not reflect all children's full names. Ratios are maintained at all times to promote the safety of the children. Paperwork is stored confidentially and accessibly and is shared with parents as appropriate.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and has updated her information for parents following the recent addendums to them. This ensures parents are provided with up-to-date information which in turn promotes the welfare of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were raised. The first was to ensure all hazards both inside the home and in the garden were made safe for children and the second was to improve knowledge of special needs.

The childminder has improved safety for children by ensuring potential hazards such as razor blades are inaccessible to children. She has also improved children's safety when using the garden as she has fitted padlocks to the gate and shed to reduce the risk of accidents. The childminder is currently caring for some children who have minor special needs, she meets their needs effectively by discussing individual requirements with parents and working with them to ensure continuity of care for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 the register of attendance reflects children's full names

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