



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131294
Inspection date	01 November 2006
Inspector	Carole Gronow

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 1995. She lives in the Lordswood area of Southampton with her husband and two children who are both over the age of eight and attend school. All areas of the property are used for childminding however, this normally occurs downstairs and there is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time. She is currently caring for three children all of whom are of preschool age. One child attends full time in term time and the other two are both part time, one being term time only and the other solely during school holidays. She walks to a local preschool to take and collect children and attends a parent and toddler group and takes children to the nearby parks.

The family have goldfish.

The childminder is a member of the Southampton Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where they learn about good hygiene practices and routines. They wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet as well as after playing in the garden. Children use paper towels and routinely come out from the cloak room and put the used ones in the bin. The childminder holds all the necessary signed consents and has the appropriate forms to be able to appropriately care for children if they hurt themselves, become ill or require medication. She ensures that she formally reviews individual health forms with parents on a regular basis. However, the sheet on which any requests for the administration of medication is recorded has been used for several children which means that individual details are not confidential.

Children's good health is further safeguarded because the childminder ensures that she maintains a current first aid qualification and has an accessible first aid box. Children have regular opportunities for outside play and physical exercise both in the garden and also when they attend toddlers groups and visit soft play centres. They walk to and from school and preschool and go to nearby play parks where they play on a range of equipment which helps them to develop both their balance and their coordination. Children's individual dietary needs are respected and the childminder ensures that she finds out about anything specific that is required which she discusses with parents. The childminder is aware of the importance of children having a nutritious diet and she routinely provides them with fresh fruit. Children get regular drinks of either water or juices with no added sugar and confidently ask for another when they are thirsty and their beaker is empty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well supervised by the childminder. She has addressed the vast majority of the potential hazards that she has identified within her home. For example a lock is fitted to the knife drawer in the kitchen and blind pulls are raised, all of which ensures their safety. Although the childminder accompanies younger children when they visit the downstairs toilet, older children who go alone are able to lock themselves in as there is a low bolt on the door. Children access a range of play provision both indoors and out that is modern, in good condition and is regularly checked by the childminder. The childminder is aware of potential dangers to children in the secure garden and has taken steps to reduce these, for example, the swing is hooked up when younger children are out there to prevent them from being hurt by it. In part of the garden there is a dedicated play area with a range of appropriate toys and equipment which are sited on a bark surface which means that children can access it all year round.

Children learn about how to cross the road safely as they practise using 'stop, look and listen', when they are out walking with the childminder. They are also learning how to respond in an emergency. The childminder routinely tests the smoke detectors in their presence so that they are aware of the sound. She explains to the younger children that they must get out and takes them to the door and she practises evacuations with the older ones. However, one smoke

detector was disabled because it had gone off when cooking and therefore children's safety in the event of a fire is at risk. Children are secure at the childminder's because the door is kept locked and only the childminder answers it. The childminder has sufficient understanding of child protection procedures to be able to act in children's best interest in areas of concern. The childminder has a written child protection procedure to follow concerning the children in her care, but she has not updated it in line with current guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely well settled. They have an excellent rapport with the childminder and flourish in her care partly due to the high level of individual attention that they receive. Children make choices about what they want to do and the childminder supports them in their play, for example reading to them when they ask for a story. They snuggle up on her lap and engage themselves in the book participating when there are familiar words or to anticipate what is going to happen. The childminder adapts activities so that even very young children can join in the messy play and enjoy being creative, for example with painting and sticking. Children are developing their independence and the childminder encourages this for example they put their rubbish in the kitchen bin. Children enjoy mutually respectful relationship with the childminder and they fondly tease the childminder calling her names that they consider funny. Children confidently approach the childminder asking for her help and for a drink, knowing that they will receive the childminder's attention.

Very young children's speech is developing rapidly. The childminder constantly talks to them introducing new words into their vocabulary such as triangle and circle. She sensitively repeats words to them that they say incorrectly or are unclear, so that they will hear the correct way of saying them. Children are encouraged to learn and to try new things because the childminder always responds positively to them for instance, at snack time when they shake their own raisins from the box into their bowls and she ignores the ones that land on the floor. All this means that children's self esteem is developing and this is further promoted by the childminders as she encourages and praises children whenever possible.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about their local community as they visit places of interest such as the woods, where they gather leaves to print with and look at ant piles, watch for deer and play in puddles. They walk to the shops where they look at and discuss different vegetables and they make visits to the farm and the beach as well as going on routine outings to the local parks and to toddlers groups. The childminder provides a range of resources such as, games, puzzles, small world figures and books to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. All children are valued and respected as individuals and their needs are well met. The childminder finds out about these in discussion with their parents and ensures that she is fully informed, so that she can provide the most appropriate care for each one. Children follow their normal daily routine as discussed with their parents, such as sleeping times and routines for feeds.

Children are very happy with the childminder and do not want to go home when their parents arrive to collect them. They respond well to the childminder's consistent expectations about how they should behave and to her positive methods for managing behaviour. This helps children learn to understand about behaviour boundaries. Children immediately and happily respond to her requests to help her tidy away. They are very polite. Even young children know that they should say please and thank you and are beginning to do so without the childminder prompting them, for instance, when they chose what drink they would like. Children benefit from the very good relationships that exist between their parents and the childminder. Children's achievements, their activities and care issues are discussed with parents on a daily basis and they take home things such as paintings that they have done. The childminder supplies parents with copies of her policies and discusses these with them, which helps with continuity of children's care. This continuity is further ensured as the childminder makes time during school holidays to meet up regularly with children who she cares for only in term time. This is so that she will still be familiar to them and therefore settle more easily back into her care when a new term starts.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by an experienced childminder who has worked with children for a number of years and who holds a child care qualification. She considers carefully the number of children that she cares for at any one time so that she can offer them individual care and attention in order that she can meet their needs. The childminder ensures that her registration certificate is on display and she has developed policies which are in a portfolio and which she shares with parents. The childminder is aware of the need for confidentiality within her work and stores the personal details of each child separately. She holds all the required information, which she regularly updates, as well as signed consents, however the record of attendance is not completed upon children's arrival to show they are present.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, for all children. She now holds individual consents for them all which means that children can receive appropriate care in the event of an emergency even if she not be able to contact parents promptly.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- further improve children's safety by ensuring that smoke detectors are always working when minded children are present and that they are unable to lock themselves in the toilet
- ensure that the record of attendance is promptly completed to show the arrival and departure times of children and that the records of administration of medication for individual children are confidential.

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