



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY297327
Inspection date	01 May 2005
Inspector	Pauline Ford

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 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged 5 years and 11 months in Swindon, Wiltshire.

The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding three children under 5 years on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children. She attends the

local toddler group and takes children to the local outlet village play park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and meets regularly with other childminders and their children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from regular physical activity which is appropriate to their stage of development. The older children walk to playgroup and school and the childminder takes them to visit the local outlet village play park which further develops their physical skills and enables them to take part in energetic activity. She has a large garden which is very well resourced with outdoor toys and this encourages children to be active and to enjoy outside play. She does however, bear in mind that some part-time children may already have experienced a very busy morning and takes this into consideration when planning their day.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home which is child-friendly. The childminder provides very appropriate settling-in periods for the children who attend, which have taken into account the children's individual needs. This has resulted in children who are very secure and settled with the childminder in a relatively short period of time. The children are confident in her care and the childminder promotes a healthy independence in the children. Children's individual sleep patterns are respected and quieter times are ensured for those children who need rest. Babies are cuddled when being fed and the childminder responds very well to their needs. She makes good eye contact with the babies and responds enthusiastically to their first sounds, which reinforces their vocalisations. There is plenty of warm interaction with the children, with smiles and positive verbal encouragement, to reinforce good behaviour.

The childminder tries to encourage healthy options, but sometimes offers biscuits for snacks. Lunches are provided by parents in lunch boxes. These tend to be eaten when sitting on the settee and not all children are always reminded to wash their hands before eating. Drinks are, however, readily available to the children throughout the day and children are increasingly encouraged to think about the benefits of a healthy diet as suits their age and stage of development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has completed a very thorough risk assessment of her home and discusses issues with parents so that children can be cared for in a safe and secure environment. Children are thus able to move around freely and independently. When outdoors, the childminder again takes very sensible precautions and ensures that children are aware of potential dangers so that they develop an ability to keep themselves safe. Equipment is checked by the childminder and cleaned regularly to ensure that children are safe when using it. The childminder encourages the children

to play with one another, however she supervises closely so that they are never able to inadvertently hurt another child. The children are aware of their boundaries with regard to behaviour as this is discussed with them by the childminder. This results in children who are very well behaved.

The childminder has an adequate knowledge of child protection procedures and indicates her responsibilities in this respect to parents as part of her information sharing. She has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. This is easily accessible in case of emergencies, and is stored with due regard for confidentiality.

All appropriate clearances have been undertaken and the children's safety is maintained by never being left on their own with anyone who has not been suitably cleared.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are able to self select from a good range of resources which are easily accessible to the children in the lounge area. Children's preferences are taken into account when planning the following day's activities and the childminder is then flexible to enable the children's own interests to dictate the pace and direction that the next session takes. Children's individuality, imagination and creativity are encouraged and she uses good questioning techniques to encourage children to think about what they are doing and how things work. Children are encouraged to make choices.

She divides her time between the children extremely well, especially bearing in mind that two of the children present at the time of the inspection are under one year old. She has a calm and well organised approach to her work with the children and this ensures that the children are happy, stimulated and have the necessary support at the appropriate time. She knows the children well and thinks about which activities would assist them in their development. The children are comfortable in her presence and seek her approval and encouragement when they have completed a piece of work. She listens to the children carefully and is sensitive to their needs, which means that the children are developing positive self-esteem. She gives very positive encouragement to the children as a spur to their efforts, and this makes them persevere with a task. The childminder is about to start using the Birth to Three Matters framework, to supplement her already good practice.

The childminder takes the children to a local toddler group so that they gain experience in socialising in a larger group. She also encourages children to share and to take turns so that their social skills are enhanced. The children relate very well to each other and enjoy their time spent in the childminder's care. Children develop a sense of right and wrong by the childminder discussing such issues with them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder uses very positive behaviour management strategies which ensure that the children behave well and understand why they should do so. She gently encourages the older children to help to look after the younger children, which assists in developing the children's sense of belonging and responsibility for others with whom they socialise.

While the exchange of information with parents is in the main verbal, it is effective. Parents are encouraged to give their views on the care provided by the childminder and to be involved in this way in a two-way exchange of information about the child and how s/he is being cared for.

Children's individual needs are well identified and well addressed. The childminder encourages the children's individuality and supports the children to try new activities. Children's well-being and development is fostered by this approach.

Equal opportunities issues are reasonably well addressed, however, there is a limited range of experiences and resources which promote positive images of other cultures and disability. This means that the children are not currently being given regular opportunities to develop an awareness of the wider world.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very well organised which means that the children benefit from a familiar routine in which they feel settled and secure. Including when caring for two children under one year, the children's individual needs are very well met, and the childminder's time is well divided between the children to ensure that they all receive the support from her that they need. She organises the space in her home so that the children can move freely around, whilst maintaining the safety of the children at all times.

All records are well maintained and are stored confidentially. The childminder also has a range of policies and other information which are made available to parents which ensures that children benefit from consistency of care. She adheres to all aspects of regulation which safeguards the children. Despite only being registered for a relatively short period of time, the childminder has completed her Introduction to Childminding Practice course and First Aid course so that children interests are well safeguarded.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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 that all children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily, regular routines of hand washing prior to eating, and that mealtimes are developed to become more of a social occasion.
- develop knowledge and understanding of equal opportunity issues, with particular attention to promoting positive images of cultural diversity and disability, through a range of suitable experiences and resources.

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