



Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY333647 |
| Inspection date | 04 October 2006 |
| Inspector | Elly Bik-Kuen Wong |
| 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 2006. She lives with her husband and their two children, one of whom is a baby over one year and the other a school child under eight years. The family live in a spacious house in the Winchester area, together with a friend and lodger, who is accommodated in a self-contained annex there. The childminder is able to walk to the local shops, school and parks, and she also uses her car for childminding.

All areas of the property are available for childminding, although the main areas used are downstairs. The top part of the large rear garden is fully enclosed for outside play. The children are taken to local parks for daily exercise. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young children's health and growth is promoted extremely well because the childminder puts a lot of time and effort into preparing wholesome, nutritious and balanced meals for them. The childminder shows a very good understanding of what young babies and toddlers need in terms of nutrition. She ensures that they have easy access to drinking water in individual training cups/beakers throughout the day. This helps them to prevent dehydration and promote their body's healthy metabolism. The childminder routinely prepares nutritious snacks and cooked meals with good quality ingredients including fresh fruits and vegetables. Toddlers and babies anticipate very happily their snack and meal times, and visibly enjoy eating the foods which appeal to them. This is because the childminder varies certain ingredients of the same dish to meet with individual children's choice and preference. Children with special dietary allergies and requirements have their needs met extremely well. These are clearly recorded, and the childminder provides very good support to parents by dishing out their special foods for individual children. When necessary, she also obtains from shops the special brands that the children need in order for them to thrive and develop healthily.

Children benefit greatly from a very clean and hygienic environment as the childminder takes steps to reduce germs and infection through her rigorous cleaning routines. The floors and rugs are vacuumed daily while surfaces used by children, for example, for eating, are cleaned and disinfected throughout the day when needed. There are sound hygienic procedures for nappy changing that prevent the spread of germs - the childminder wears disposable gloves and provides each child with their own nappy mat, which is disinfected after each change. Toddlers and babies are given consistent daily opportunities to learn about good personal hygiene. They are given a clean flannel each for wiping clean their hands before eating and after playing, and learn that it helps them to stay healthy. The toddlers in particular are very enthusiastic in practising self-care, which benefits their own health and development.

Young babies and toddlers show strong exploratory instincts, and have lots of fun touching, holding and exploring toys, cardboard books and household objects, whilst at the same time develop good manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Children enjoy fresh air, exercise and outdoor games in the garden and local parks, weather permitting. They also have ample space and opportunities for their safe movement and exploration indoors. Babies and toddlers benefit tremendously from the daily opportunities to help them reach their development milestones - they practise crawling, bending, pulling up, standing and walking. A newly purchased indoor slide is useful for practising their skills for climbing and sliding. Those who have only recently started to walk are clearly delighted with their new mobility, and are well encouraged and supported by the childminder to further improve their skill. Even the youngest children enjoy shaking and moving their body to music whilst listening to music tapes or handling toy musical instruments. All these activities are very helpful in developing young children's muscle strength, physical balance and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure manner. The childminder shows good safety awareness; she applies reactive risk assessment to meet the changing needs of babies as they become mobile through crawling and walking. The childminder has removed hazards to provide sufficient clear floor space for babies/toddlers to crawl, pull up, stand or take their first steps safely. They practise safe movement and exploration within the lounge and dining room, and as they move between them and through the hallway. Toys and books are well organised and stored either on the floor or in low-level storage boxes/drawers for young children to access safely. The childminder is vigilant and ensures that excess toys are cleared away from the floor to prevent tripping hazards for children during play. The safety of sleeping babies in travel cots upstairs are ensured through a baby monitor and through regular checking by the childminder in person. She helps toddlers to develop safety awareness by asking them not to play with toy cars that have sharp corners, in the presence of babies. The childminder has good systems in place to help her care for a number of babies/toddlers safely at the same time. When she needs to be in a different room temporarily, for example, to prepare the children's meals or put a baby to sleep, she uses a play pen and/or barrier gate to a room for ensuring the children's safety in the meantime.

The childminder has reduced risks in the environment for children through safety devices such as a stair gate, socket covers and smoke alarms. The kitchen is completely sectioned off with a set of double barrier gates to prevent accidents or contact with hazardous materials within it. Currently children only use the upstairs for sleeping and the childminder ensures children's safe supervision on the stairs and landing. However, there are still potential risks posed by the gap in the banister (on the landing) and upstairs windows in the rooms made available for minding. The top patio in the garden is completely enclosed by suitable iron railings and wooden fencing to provide a safe outdoor play area for children. Exit doors and garden gates are locked to keep children secure, while their keys are conveniently located to ensure safe evacuation if needed. The childminder has thought through an emergency fire plan, which was formulated after discussion with the local fire safety officer to improve fire safety for children. She has good systems in place for keeping records on medicines and accidents to ensure children's health and safety. The childminder shows good awareness of child protection procedures, and knows how to obtain advice and refer concerns in order to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children are happy and relaxed in the homely environment. They benefit from stimulating and age-appropriate resources placed at low levels, which they explore and access easily for free play. Babies and toddlers have daily opportunities to become competent learners. They have fun doing imaginative role play with toy tea sets, and pots and pans. These young children benefit from routine opportunities to play alongside and with one another, thus building good relationships with their peers. Babies and toddlers enjoy making sounds by pressing the keys of the toy piano, or handling other musical instruments like bells and shakers. They respond to music by shaking their body and legs, while 'wriggling to the music'. Toddlers are involved

and engrossed in their play. They show good concentration, for example, when they build train tracks and manipulate the different carriages to link them up as a train. Toddlers practise counting and recognising colours, while developing a concept of size when encouraged to observe which toy frying pan is the largest. Babies happily explore with their senses and develop good hand-eye co-ordination by touching and holding toys and cardboard books, and sometimes even tasting them. The childminder intends to but has not yet put together a 'treasure basket' for extending the youngest children's sensory play with a wide variety of textures and materials.

Children under three years receive good attention and opportunities to develop their communication skills. The childminder talks to and interacts well with babies and toddlers, so they are motivated to 'converse' and communicate their feelings and emerging ideas through facial expressions, gestures, babbling, or words and phrases. Young babies and toddlers anticipate happily their mid-morning snacks by smiling, cooing, making intelligible noises, or saying repeatedly words such as 'chacks' to call for snacks. The childminder asks them skilfully "who's/what's this?" when sharing a cardboard book with a 'mirror' to prompt their thinking and teach new vocabulary. Toddlers and babies develop good listening skills and learn to follow instructions through her encouragement, such as when babies open the small lid of their individual drink beaker. The childminder supports the youngest children to acquire and develop their language in a positive manner through daily and spontaneous opportunities. The childminder is a very experienced childcarer, though she is not yet familiar with the Birth to three matters framework for further enhancing the play and learning experiences of babies and toddlers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled and secure with the childminder, who went into their own home to care for them as a nanny initially. She communicates and liaises well with parents, and is very familiar with their children's needs, likes and dislikes, as well as any dietary or health requirements. As a result, young babies and toddlers are happy and content because there is good continuity of care for their sleep, feed and play. The childminder is flexible and sometimes goes to the children's family home locally to collect them in the morning. She supports working parents well by providing their babies and toddlers with wholesome and freshly prepared meals that help them work towards a balanced diet.

Children are confident and at ease because the childminder praises and encourages them constantly. Toddlers feel a great sense of achievement when praised for building a tall tower with wooden bricks. Children thrive on the childminder's clear boundaries for good manners and behaviour. They know what is expected of them, and are reminded about saying 'please' and 'thank you' during daily activities. Through the childminder's encouragement, young toddlers are enthusiastic in tidying up and learn to look after the resources. Children also learn to be considerate and how to play safely, for example, by not placing near the babies their small toy cars with sharp edges, or the pointed chopsticks used for kitchen play.

Children are encouraged to play in a social manner by sharing and turn taking. With the childminder's persuasion and encouragement, the toddlers happily share with their younger friends some of the train carriages that they did not want to part with initially. The childminder

is perceptive about allowing the older children to play away from the babies during certain construction activities, so they have the time and space to complete them with less disruption. All children are happily occupied; they behave well as they are never idle or bored. The childminder handles unwanted behaviour in an age-appropriate manner, using positive strategies such as distraction, re-direction and explanation. All children are valued and treated with equal concern. There are some posters and age-appropriate books and toys, including dolls, role play toys, puzzles and play figures to promote positive images of gender, culture and disability.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children relish their time at the welcoming and friendly setting, and benefit from the childminder's good use of her time, space and resources for their care and play. The childminder is suitably trained in childminding. She is newly registered and due to take part in first aid training within the same month of the inspection to obtain a current first aid certificate. The childminder has long experience of working with young children, but has not begun to use the Birth to three matters framework for enriching the play and learning experiences of babies and toddlers. Children's safety is enhanced by the various safety measures in the house and garden, though there are still potential hazards affecting those children who access the first floor.

All required paper work is in place, and there are good systems in place for recording medicines and accidents, using appropriate stationery that helps to preserve confidentiality. However, the children's register lacks accurate arrival/departure times for monitoring children's presence effectively. Parents are well informed verbally as well as through some written information about the childminder's operation, including a few brief statements on core procedures. This promotes good understanding and partnership between the childminder and parents in promoting the welfare and development of children. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder 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):

- reduce risks for children posed by the gap in the banister on the landing, and by the windows in the upstairs rooms accessible to minded children
- record more accurate times of arrival/departure in the children's register; and familiarise with reference publications such as the Birth to three matters framework to further enhance play and learning experiences for babies and toddlers.

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