



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335622
Inspection date	08 November 2006
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 lives in the Old Town district of Swindon. The whole of the property may be used for childminding, although most care takes place on the ground floor. There is no outdoor play space but the childminder takes children out to local parks each day. There is a pet rabbit which lives in the house and is accessible to children.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is not registered to provide over night care. She currently cares for two children under five years. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She attends the local carer and toddler group. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home, where the childminder takes appropriate steps to promote children's good health. Children are protected from illness and cross-infection, as the childminder gives parents information about common childhood infections and she does not care for children who are unwell. The childminder has attended first aid training and would be able to act in the children's best interests, if there were an accident. Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene, for example, they are shown how to thoroughly wash and dry their hands before eating and after using the toilet, 'to get rid of the germs' a four-year-old says. Children enjoy playing with the house rabbit, which does not pose a risk to their health.

Parents supply main meals for their children, which the childminder serves. She provides a range of healthy snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Children sit together at mealtimes and the childminder talks to them about foods that are good for them, for example, a child laughs as he tells her he will 'grow to the roof' if he eats all his fruit and vegetables. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the day, which is beneficial to children's good health.

There is no garden available for outdoor play. However, the children routinely enjoy physical exercise, for example, by walking to and from school each day and visiting the park and play areas, where they can develop physical skills, such as climbing, balancing and running.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure home, which has a separate well organised playroom. There are well maintained play resources and equipment to meet children's needs. The childminder makes children's safety a high priority. She has made a thorough risk assessment of her home and outdoor activities and she has taken steps to minimise the risks to children. For example, she uses safety gates and ensures children cannot reach sharp or toxic materials. However, heaters are not always adequately guarded to protect children.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. For example, they regularly practise fire drills, during which the children choose where to place a picture of a fire, before deciding the safest route out of the building. They learn how to safely use the stairs and cross the road. The childminder achieves a good balance between allowing children to become more independent whilst setting safe limits.

Children's welfare is well protected by the childminder who has a thorough understanding of child protection issues. She has a good knowledge of the agreed procedures and would be able to act in the children's best interests should she have a concern. She informs parents of her responsibilities regarding safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy the time they spend with the childminder. They take part in a wide range of interesting and worthwhile activities and outings, which they enjoy and help them learn. The childminder spends a great deal of time talking to the children about what she is doing and encouraging them to communicate their thoughts and ideas. She develops children's language skills well, as she listens attentively and gives them time to express themselves. There is a separate, attractive playroom, where examples of children's art work are displayed and play resources are stored where children can reach them, which encourages their independence.

Children develop their imagination well, for example, when playing with the good selection of dressing up and role play materials. A young 'pirate' is delighted to discover how things look different through opposite ends of a telescope. They play co-operatively sorting the treasure in the chest made by the childminder. Children enjoy using books for stories and for learning about things. They love looking at the dinosaur book and together learn the meaning of new words, such as vegetarian and extinct. The childminder often plans activities around a theme, which helps children make connections in their learning. She has the Birth to three matters guidance but is not yet making full use of it in the care she provides for the youngest children, for example, she does not fully encourage independence at meal times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and valued as individuals. The childminder works closely with parents from the outset so that she can accommodate their wishes and the children's needs in the care she provides. She makes sure that her play materials and other resources reflect children's backgrounds and experiences to help them settle and develop a sense of belonging and self worth. Children learn about their local community and socialise with others through regular outings, for example, to the town, the museum, library and toddler groups. They learn about the wider world, through planned activities and playing with a variety of resources that help them appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.

The childminder has a firm but gentle approach in helping children to learn right from wrong. She is quick to praise any achievements or acts of kindness and always explains the consequences of poor behaviour. She supports young children well as they learn to share and take turns. They become aware of others' needs, for example as they learn to be gentle with the rabbit or help care for a younger child.

Parents receive good information about the care provided. There are several written policies and procedures which are shared with parents. The childminder keeps daily written diaries for each child, which records how children have been and what activities they have taken part in. She also takes photographs of the children during the day to share with parents. This good level of communication helps build trusting relationships which is beneficial to the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for in this well organised home. The childminder has created a welcoming and safe environment where children can move freely and initiate their own play from toys they choose themselves. She plans her day well to take account of children's needs and interests and provides a good balance of child and adult led play.

The childminder has a level 2 qualification in childcare and has a current first aid certificate. She uses up-to-date reference material to keep abreast of current early years issues and to give interesting and useful ideas for play activities.

All of the required documentation to promote children's well-being is in place, although the complaints procedure lacks sufficient detail. 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 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 that children are adequately protected from heaters
- ensure that your complaints procedure fully complies with Children's Act regulations, particularly in relation to the timescale of investigating complaints and to sharing of information with parents

- continue to develop your care of young children, by using guidance set out in the 'Birth to three matters' framework

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