



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142324
Inspection date	16 October 2006
Inspector	Mary Daniel
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1997. She lives with her husband and two teenage sons in a semi-detached house situated in the village of Walton. Minded children have use of all downstairs rooms, comprising a kitchen and dining room, conservatory and associated facilities. There is also a downstairs lounge, which is only used for sleeping children and a converted garage area where they can go to watch television. There is an enclosed garden at the back of the house for outdoor play activities.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time, and there are currently eight on roll.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children become familiar with suitable hygiene routines as they wash their hands regularly before eating. They use liquid soap and have individually named towels within easy reach, which supports the prevention of the spread of infection. Children's health is monitored through use of accident and medication records. Accidents are detailed appropriately and any administration of medication is recorded. However, parental permission to give medication is not clearly identified. The childminder talks with parents about managing any emergency situation and records telephone numbers of doctors, but she has not obtained written parental consent for children to have any emergency medical treatment that may be required. This impacts on children's continuity in care.

Children dietary needs are managed appropriately. The childminder recognises any particular allergies or requirements in liaison with parents. Children bring their own lunchboxes and enjoy their mealtimes together. The childminder provides healthy meals if required, for example, offering a lunch of mackerel, rice and peas. Children have puddings of yoghurts or fruit. They go blackberry picking together and then use these to make some nice 'crumbles'. Children go shopping with the childminder and help her by counting out the fruit and vegetables that she needs. As a result, they start to develop some awareness of nutritious foods. Children are often taken for walks to a local park or nearby woods where they can run and climb. They sing and dance to favourite nursery rhymes indoors. This means they have opportunities for regular exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming home. Rooms are organised to create comfortable play areas and children play happily on the floor with their cars and a road mat, or sit at the table to do a painting. They can snuggle into a bean bag for a rest with a soft toy or book. As a result, children feel at ease and are confident in moving around the home. Children play with toys and resources that show as clean and in reasonable condition. Equipment is appropriate for children's ages, for example, a small step is provided to help younger ones to reach the sink. This supports them in maintaining suitable hygiene routines and developing their independence skills.

Children's safety is satisfactorily observed overall. The childminder ensures her car meets recent seat belt legislation, as she has obtained sufficient booster seats for all younger children and has relevant restraints for the older ones appropriate to their ages. This helps to keep children safe on outings. Children's safety indoors is supported. For example, lower cupboards in the kitchen are kept locked and the childminder asks children not to go into this area. However, risk assessments are not completed to identify possible dangers and fully support children's safety and wine is sometimes stored at a low level, in a fitted rack within the kitchen. Smoke alarms are fitted and fire drills are discussed with children, although emergency evacuation procedures covering different exits have not been fully established. Children's attendance is

noted, but the system used does not clearly reflect these times, which may compromise their safety in an emergency. The childminder has a basic awareness of child protection issues, such as some possible signs and symptoms that may cause concern. However, clear procedures to follow any issues arising are not established and written information to support the management of a concern is not available. Consequently, some areas of children's well-being are not fully promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have fun playing cars together on a brightly coloured road mat. They line up their cars and chat with each other about which one goes fast or slow. Children talk about the trains they saw at the station earlier in the morning and read stories to each other. This helps them in forming their early friendships and they settle easily to play. Children benefit from a variety of outdoor experiences. They go on exciting outings to an adventure play ground or nearby woods where they can build their own tepees. They enjoy their indoor games and spend time doing a favourite puzzle. The childminder supports younger children in their activities, encouraging their awareness of number and colour in general play. For example, in a painting activity where they paint a 'blue aeroplane' and 'blue boat' with a 'red fish' in the sea. Children are praised for their artistic attempts, which helps them feel achievement in their play.

Children respond easily to the childminders gentle sense of humour and caring approach. She recognises when they are hungry or need a change in activity and this keeps them happily occupied. Overall, their basic needs are catered for well and they are comfortable within the home. Children can easily access some toys and resources independently, which supports them well in making their own choices in play. However, this choice is sometimes limited in variety and some activities are not always sufficiently extended to broaden their play experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and welcomed in the childminders home. They have their own named towels and hang their coats on hooks at their level. The childminder forms friendly relationships with the parents, and maintains daily liaison to keep them informed of their children's activities. This helps maintain clear communication to support children's care, but parental agreements regarding the childminding arrangements are not fully detailed or reviewed. Children join in activities relating to festivals, such as Chinese New Year, when they make spring rolls together. This helps them become familiar with some differences within their world, but other aspects of diversity are not so well reflected within children's general daily play.

Children start to develop an awareness of right and wrong from the clear explanations given by the childminder. She has reasonable expectations for the different aged children and acts as a good role model, talking calmly with them. As a result, children behave well and recognise the boundaries set, such as not getting down from the table until everyone has finished eating. Children's particular needs are discussed with parents and managed appropriately, for example, any food allergies. The childminder manages these well as she provides alternative ingredients

for a cooking activity to ensure all children can take part. This promotes integration and shows children's individual needs are respected.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children are provided with a balance of quiet and active times. For example, they play quietly with a favourite jigsaw puzzle and then go for a walk to fetch their friends from school. They are familiar with the general daily routines, such as sitting at the table to eat their snacks. This helps children feel secure and at ease within the home.

Most required documentation is in place and stored securely. However, some records, such as the entries of administration of medication and accidents, are not recorded with regard to confidentiality. The childminder is experienced and is aware of necessary checks that should be processed for her registration, and she ensures these are completed. She organises her minding arrangements appropriately to meet her registration conditions, while also being flexible to meet parents' needs. This helps to maintain consistency in care for children and promotes their overall welfare.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was set relating to taking children on outings. The childminder now obtains written parental consent for transporting children and taking them on any outings. This helps in working with parents and maintaining children's continuity in care.

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 any complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain some 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 satisfactory. 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 written parental consent for administration of any medication and any necessary emergency medical treatment for their child is obtained, and clearly identified on the relevant record forms
- establish a risk assessment system to monitor all areas of the premises to support children's safety and develop further understanding of child protection issues
- develop parental agreements to include full details of childminding arrangements, and enable parents to record all their child's individual needs
- ensure all children's records and documentation are used with regard to confidentiality

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