



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161061
Inspection date	12 December 2006
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and three years, in the Ferndale area of Swindon. It is within walking distance of shops, community facilities and parks. All areas of the property except the second floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under the age of eight years at any one time and is currently minding five children on a part-time basis. She walks children to and from local schools and pre-schools and attends a carer and toddler group. The family has a cat and a guinea pig.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an accredited network childminder. The childminder has a National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Childcare and Education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle whilst in the childminder's care. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise whilst walking to and from the local school and pre-school or when attending activities in the locality. They frequently use a wide variety of play equipment, including a trampoline, swings and wheeled vehicles, when playing in the childminder's fully enclosed garden. In addition, they go on outings, such as to the local park or soft play centre, where they can explore additional resources to help develop their large muscle skills. Children improve their fine motor control and coordination through the safe handling of a range of tools, including threading laces, pencils and knives.

Children increase their understanding of healthy eating through the varied menu of nutritious snacks and freshly prepared meals that they enjoy on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to try new foods, such as pomegranates or melon and thus develop their awareness of food tastes. Dietary needs or parental wishes are discussed prior to a child commencing in the setting. These discussions are recorded and any needs accommodated. Children are frequently offered drinks, which helps to ensure they are consuming fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their needs.

Children learn good hygiene practices as part of the daily routine. For example, they are aware of the need to wash their hands prior to eating or after toileting and to place their hands over their mouths when they cough. They benefit from the good role modelling demonstrated by the childminder, her knowledge of first aid and her awareness of the correct administrative procedures to follow if accidents occur or children require medication. Hygienic nappy changing arrangements are in place. There are a range of procedures to support children's good health and to protect them from peers who are unwell. For example, children use separate hand towels to reduce the risk of cross contamination, the sick child policy is shared with parents as part of the registration process and written permission is in place to apply sun cream. However, written parental permission has not been obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice. As a result, children's health may be put at risk.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and relax within premises that are very clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Children's artwork and photographic displays of children involved in activities provide a colourful, welcoming environment for children and parents. Children are able to visit the toilet independently, which helps them to build their confidence and self-care skills. A designated bedroom is available to enable children to have uninterrupted sleep. There are a wide range of measures to support safety and help prevent accidents both within the provision and when taking children on outings. The premises are secure, hazardous materials are

inaccessible to children, stair gates prevent children having unsupervised access to the stairs and smoke alarms are kept in working order. Children are learning safety awareness as part of the setting routine. For example, they take part in emergency evacuation drills and know they must hold hands when crossing the road.

Children freely help themselves to an extensive range of stimulating resources. Such free choice opportunities help children to build their confidence and sense of belonging within the setting. They benefit from the childminder's good understanding of safety issues regarding the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment. As a result, children play with clean, well maintained, age appropriate toys that are safe, suitable and help to support their development.

Children's well-being is supported by a childminder who has achieved a Btec Advanced Award in Safeguarding Children. She has a clear understanding of child protection issues, confidentiality of information and the correct procedures to follow if concerned about a child. There are effective arrangements for making parents fully aware of the childminder's child protection responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting. Children's welfare is actively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the provision. They appear settled, relaxed and 'at home'. They have ownership of the setting, pursue their own interests and make independent decisions. For example, some children decide to build with construction materials whilst others choose to engage in role-play. They are developing their social skills, learning to share resources, such as when exploring musical instruments and to take turns. The children have a very positive relationship with the childminder. They benefit from her active involvement in their play, for example, when helping them to lace cards or joining in when singing to taped music. The childminder has a good understanding of how children learn through practical experiences. She completes written plans, using the Birth to three matters framework. This enables her to provide a balanced range of opportunities to support young children's learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. She plans and provides a varied programme of practical activities to cover all areas of learning and to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. She undertakes daily written observations of the children, evaluates the success of activities and completes three monthly assessments using the Swindon Record Keeping System. However, the planning does not include the learning intent of activities or their links to the curriculum.

Children have practical opportunities to count and use number as part of the daily routine. For example, children are asked to cut the sandwiches they have prepared into four pieces, place a specific number of grapes on their plate or calculate the number of bowls needed at snack time. They increase their awareness of shape, space and measure through activities, including completing puzzles, exploring play dough or comparing the lengths of laces when engaged in a threading activity. Children converse confidently with peers and adults and through practical

activities, such as placing their coats on labelled pegs, learn to recognise familiar words in print. They enjoy using the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme and confidently tell the childminder of the correct actions to complement different letter sounds. Children spontaneously investigate books and listen attentively to stories read by the childminder.

Children develop their awareness of the natural world through projects such as planting up tubs of flowers or growing marrow and potatoes in the childminder's garden. They enjoy designing and building with a range of construction materials, freely access a wide range of information and communication technology resources to support their play and enjoy completing a daily weather chart. They increase their awareness of the wider world through practical activities, including sampling sweet doughnuts or making dragons as part of Chinese New Year celebrations or designing clay diva pots during a topic on Diwali. Children regularly explore a variety of media including play dough, shaving foam, collage and paint. They thoroughly enjoy singing and enthusiastically use musical instruments to accompany their songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are acknowledged and treated as valued individuals. They benefit from the childminder knowing them very well and having a good understanding of their differing needs and varying home circumstances. For example, activities and outings are carefully planned around children's individual sleep patterns. They access a range of resources, including books, dolls, puzzles and small world figures that reflect positive images of diversity.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident, independent and demonstrate good self-esteem. They are building their social skills, learning to be helpful, to share and to take turns. They increase their understanding of diversity through themed topics and practical activities, including food sampling and craft. Children take part in a variety of stimulating outings and bus journeys, such as to Lotmead Farm to pick strawberries, the library or the Cotswold Wildlife Park, which help them to develop their awareness of the wider world.

Children behave well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. They benefit from a range of positive strategies, including praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement, to help support their behaviour. The childminder acts as a good role model in the friendly and courteous manner in which she communicates with others. Parents and the childminder discuss behaviour techniques to be used, which helps to ensure children are treated in a similar manner, both at home and when in the childminder's care.

The relationship between the parents and the childminder is good. Parents are given comprehensive written information about the setting, its policies and procedures, prior to their child commencing in the provision. There are currently no minded children attending who are in receipt of early education funding. However, evidence suggests that the partnership with parents is satisfactory, should there be such children present. Planning is on display for parents. Daily diaries, containing observations of what children do each day, are used to enhance links between home and the childminder. Scrap books of children's writing and artwork as well as displays of children's creations, are freely available to parents. In addition, there are daily

opportunities for informal discussion about any childcare issues or children's progress and achievements. This positive rapport helps to ensure a consistency of approach to children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care, learning and development is supported by an experienced, skilled, well qualified early years practitioner, who regularly undertakes targeted training to enhance her professional knowledge. The available space is well-arranged to enable children to have ownership of the provision as they make independent choices regarding the resources and activities they wish to explore.

Children's records are confidentially stored and easily accessible to support their care, such as in an emergency. However, the daily register of children's attendance is not consistently kept up to date. In addition, a minded child has been left in the care of an adult, who has not been vetted by Ofsted, which is a breach of registration.

Evidence suggests the organisation of the nursery education is good. She completes daily written observations of the children and evaluates the success of planned and spontaneous activities. She receives regular support visits from her network coordinator and makes use of all available training opportunities. She has a very positive approach to developing the quality of care and education offered to the children. She has plans for future targeted training courses, including an early years degree, to further develop her skills.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last inspection, the childminder was given one recommendation to help develop the quality of the provision. This referred to making sure the door key is accessible in an emergency.

The door key is now easily accessible to the childminder in the event of an emergency. This improvement has had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- obtain written parental permission for the seeking of any necessary future emergency medical treatment or advice
- make sure children are appropriately supervised at all times and that persons having unsupervised access to children are suitable to do so
- make sure the register of children's daily attendance is kept up to date

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the planning of the educational provision to ensure that plans include learning intents of activities and are linked to areas of the curriculum.

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