



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	150743
Inspection date	15 March 2007
Inspector	Helen Mary Ball

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 outstanding. 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 2000. She lives with her husband and two school-aged children, in a house in the Bishopstoke area of Hampshire. The ground floor of the childminder's house is primarily used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five all day, and three children over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group and local childminding groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive at this setting because the childminder recognises the causes of cross-infection, and is meticulous in reducing risks. For example, she provides individual bedding and hand towels which are embroidered with children's names. Children learn why they must wash their hands, and the childminder organises the environment so that children can become independent in self-care routines. Children learn about healthy living, and the childminder ensures that the children have ample opportunities for physical play, both indoors and out, which helps them learn to move with control. Children's health and welfare are very effectively underpinned because the childminder maintains meticulous records, and she has a current first aid qualification. The childminder has written a medical emergency plan, and a sick child policy. This means that, in the event of an emergency, parents are fully aware of what steps the childminder will take to ensure their child's well-being. Children's individual routines are consistently met, because the childminder ensures that she has all necessary information from parents. As a result children receive continuity of care.

Children are extremely well nourished because the childminder offers a healthy snack. She encourages children to make choices, and she provides suitable cutlery so that they can prepare their own snack. This means that children can control their own portion sizes and develop independence. The childminder actively promotes a healthy eating ethos, and children are keen to try new fruits and vegetables because the childminder rewards them with a merit certificate. Children take pride in their certificate, and their photograph is published on her monthly newsletter. The childminder uses innovative ways to help children to track how many portions of fruit and vegetables they have eaten each day; children enthusiastically stamp their "My 5-a-day chart" each time they have eaten, and learn to count how many stamps they have earned each day. Parents are kept fully informed about what their children have eaten, because the childminder records all aspects of each child's day in a daily diary.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are eager to attend and relish their time in this vibrant and safe setting which puts them first. They settle quickly and enjoy the happy and harmonious atmosphere. The childminder helps children to feel welcome by providing low level coat hooks, each showing the children's photographs. Children feel valued in an environment where their work is displayed and celebrated; their art work covers the playroom walls, which creates a bright, stimulating area for them to play.

Children play with an abundance of toys and equipment, and they are motivated and confident in selecting resources. Toys are well organised in labelled boxes, and meets the developmental needs of all children. The childminder consistently reviews and replenishes the toys, and has recently introduced heuristic play, using a treasure basket. Children help the childminder to make resources linked to topics. For example, they have made paper mache cocoons, together with caterpillar and cellophane butterfly; this activity supported their topic on life cycles.

Children's care is effectively supported by the provision of a wide range of equipment, including ample car seats for children of all ages.

Children are very effectively protected on outings because the childminder is totally committed to their safety. Children wear identity tags, and the childminder carries an identity card. Young children wear "Little Life" back packs, which contain emergency supplies and attach to the childminder via a long wrist strap. This means that the children are kept safe, but can still move freely. The childminder has effective systems to ensure that only authorised adults collect children, and she maintains a visitors book. The childminder successfully uses innovative ways to encourage children to understand, and take responsibility for their safety. She has introduced a "road safety monitor" badge, and children take turns in telling the others when it is safe to cross the road. This helps children to develop a sense of awareness and responsibility. Children's safety is successfully underpinned because the childminder is vigilant in ensuring that she maintains all appropriate documentation, such as risk assessments and insurance. Overall, children are very well protected because the childminder has an exceptional awareness of safety.

Childminder are effectively safeguarded because the childminder is proactive in ensuring that she is fully aware of the current guidance for safeguarding children. As a result, the childminder has written a safeguarding children policy, which she shares with parents. She is meticulous in her record keeping, and has a sound knowledge of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder inspires children by offering an abundance of praise and encouragement and they blossom at this setting. They are animated and enthusiastic and make choices about their activities and care. The childminder places good quality, purposeful play as a high priority. As a result, she plans a broad range of themed activities that excite and interest children. For example, children learnt about Halloween and made pumpkin faces. They thoroughly enjoyed a trip to Exbury Gardens, when they had an opportunity to ride on an open-top bus, and on the ghost train. The children dressed up, and relished having a photograph taken when dressed as a skeleton. Children are enthusiastic about the range of craft activities, and they carefully make Mothers Day cards using a range of materials. The childminder is aware of each child's capabilities, and gives sensitive support to enable younger children to take part in the activity.

The childminder shows an excellent understanding of children's language development. She encourages children to talk about what they have been doing, and what they would like to do. She supports younger children's communication skills, and reinforces their developing vocabulary by repeating words back to them. This helps children to communicate effectively and this reduces frustration. The childminder uses the Birth to three matters framework to effectively plan suitable activities. She maintains a file for each child where she charts their progress, and uses careful observations to plan children's next stages in learning. The childminder shares these folders with parents, so that they are kept fully informed about their children's progress.

Children feel good about themselves because the childminder offers an abundance of praise and encouragement to children, throughout their activities. She displays their art work on the playroom walls, as well as making a huge scrapbook for each child which they can take home.

She maintains a number of annotated photograph albums, and the children delight in looking through these and recounting their many experiences, such as strawberry picking and paddling in the river.

Children become engrossed in a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which provide high levels of challenge appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, older children enthusiastically bounce on the full sized trampoline and younger children bounce on a small trampoline. They pedal using a variety of bikes, trikes and push along toys. The childminder takes children to a wide variety of outdoor locations, such as parks, beaches and activity centres, where they can practise their running, jumping and climbing.

The childminder photographs children's developmental milestones such as "first steps" because she understands that parents like to have a record of their child's achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are very effectively met because the childminder actively promotes close liaison with parents. She treats each child with equal concern, and enthusiastically promotes collaborative play, so that younger children are included in all activities. Children develop an understanding of the wider world because the childminder provides an abundant range of books and resources to support their learning. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome at this setting, and the childminder has some experience of caring for children with additional needs. She has written a comprehensive inclusion policy to support children's care.

Children gain a high level of self control. They express their needs appropriately, learn to negotiate conflict and become sensitive and respecting in their interactions with others. Children are helped to achieve this because the childminder discusses house rules and shares a behaviour policy statement with parents. This means that children receive consistent boundaries. The childminder promotes positive behaviour by offering plenty of praise and encouragement, and she uses her range of books to promote discussion about sharing, caring for each other and discussing feelings.

A superb partnership between the childminder and parents ensures that children's well-being is significantly supported. They are kept fully informed about every aspect of their child's day via a detailed daily diary. The childminder provides a colourful monthly newsletter, which keeps parents informed about planned activities and includes photographs of what their children have been doing. References from parents show that they highly value the professional care and education the childminder provides. Partnership with parents is successfully underpinned because the childminder shares her wide range of policies and procedures with parents, and she maintains contracts with them all. This means that parents are fully aware of all aspects of the childminder's business.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is accomplished in her role and shows continued enthusiasm and zest for working with children. She is self-motivated and committed to updating her knowledge and understanding of a range of childcare issues. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the childminder's exceptional organisation skills. All policies and procedures are individual to the setting, robust and fully support the expert practice of a highly skilled and knowledgeable childminder. Her home is organised so that children can move and play freely, within a safe and stimulating environment. She understands each child's individual needs, and ensures that their own routines are followed, so that children feel safe, secure and supported.

All written records are meticulously maintained and well organised into folders. This means that children's details can be quickly found in the event of an emergency.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made for the childminder to ensure that information given to parents reflects what happens in practice, regarding leaving the children with unvetted persons. The childminder now has a visitors book in place, which is completed by all visitors to her home. She has named her husband and two other registered childminders as her emergency back-up. Parents are aware of her emergency procedures through her emergency action plan. The childminder has implemented a system to ensure that only authorised adults collect children. She does not leave children unattended with any unvetted adults. This means that children are safeguarded.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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