



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285285
Inspection date	17 January 2007
Inspector	Sheena Bankier

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 was registered in 2004. She lives with her family in Finchampstead, near Wokingham. Childminding takes place on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for four children under eight years with no more than one child under five years of age. She is currently caring for eleven children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks and drives to the local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds recognised early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy home-cooked nutritious meals which encourages healthy eating. They benefit from a choice of fruit for snack times and treats are agreed with parents, such as chocolate and ice cream, which are sometimes given to the children. Children have regular access to drinks and are given choices of water or squash. This ensures they have sufficient intake of fluids. Children enjoy a range of physical exercise both in and out of doors. They go for walks, visit the park and soft play centre and in the home have fun dancing to music and action songs. This supports the children's good health and promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Children sit together for meals and snacks which develops their social skills. The childminder gives suitable encouragement to toddlers who are beginning to develop their self-feeding skills, for example, giving them a spoon to try and use and praising their efforts. This provides appropriate support for their developing skills. Younger children's routines, such as sleeping, toilet training and eating are discussed with parents on an on-going basis to ensure consistency in their care. The childminder is flexible in her approach to ensure she meets the children's changing needs.

Children are cared for in an environment which is clean and where overall, good hygiene practices are followed. Children are put at risk of cross-infection as the childminder changes the children's nappies on the same blanket which can not be cleaned between changes. Children learn about good hygiene through discussion and regular hand washing routines. This makes them aware of the importance of personal hygiene.

Most paperwork to support children's good health is in place. However, not all records are complete with necessary detail, such as names. There is no clear consent in place from parents for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. In the event of an emergency this could put children at risk of not receiving the care they need.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is well-considered. There is appropriate equipment in place, such as cupboard locks, socket covers and a safety gate at the kitchen door, which ensures children can not access the kitchen unsupervised. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through regular tidy up routines to minimise trip hazards. They practise road safety and gain understanding about safety through discussions with the childminder, for example, to stay away from the oven as it is hot. The childminder has a written emergency plan in place which is shared with parents. This details her procedures in an emergency situation. Fire safety equipment is in place and the smoke alarm is tested weekly. An evacuation plan is devised although not yet practised as the childminder has recently moved to her new home. The childminder has not gained clear consent from parents for children to travel in a vehicle or to take children on outings.

Children enjoy a warm and welcoming environment where they can relax and feel at ease. Low pegs for the children's belongings are in place and there is a step-up stool for use in the home. This encourages the children in their independent skills. Children can move safely and freely within the home, for example, between the playroom and the living room and older children can visit the toilet by themselves. There is a good range of well-maintained toys and equipment. These are regularly checked and cleaned by the childminder which ensures they are in good condition for use by the children. Resources for children are effectively organised and are easily accessible to them as they are stored in clear, low level storage units. This means that children can make choices and decisions and are able to initiate their own play.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection, including signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child's welfare. She holds a current first aid certificate which ensures she is able to attend to children's minor accidents and injuries appropriately. This safeguards children's health and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good range of toys, activities and outings which support their development well. Children develop social skills from regular visits to toddler group where they develop confidence away from the home. Children enjoy outings, such as to feed the ducks, walks around a lake and visits to the park. This contributes to their understanding of the local environment and the world around them.

Children are happy and settled with the childminder. Children enjoy the childminder's time and attention and confidently approach her, for cuddles or play. The childminder extends the children's learning, such as letters, colours, numbers and shapes through play, for example, they build towers with coloured bricks and identify colours and count the bricks. Children also enjoy 'wipe-clean' books with themes such as transport and animals. These help to develop pencil control and further children's understanding about letters and their formation. This provides a fun introduction to more formal learning. Children developing language skills are increased through on-going discussions with the childminder and by singing songs together.

Toddlers and babies have access to a good range of resources which encourage their curiosity and exploration, such as cause and effect toys. Physical skills are developed through push and pull toys and a large activity toy where they can crawl through a arch and pull themselves to stand. A fixed bead threading toy encourages their hand-eye co-ordination and also includes the very young children in a group activity, where the older children thread beads onto laces.

Children learn about the world they live in as they have free access to small world toys, such as a play kitchen, dolls, cars and a farm. Children develop imagination through this play. Children's creativity is supported through regular activities, such as painting and gluing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children freely access a variety of play resources which promote the wider society and equal opportunities. These include books, dolls, small world toys and dressing up clothes. Children have equal access to all age and developmentally suitable resources. The childminder ensures she is well aware of children's needs as she seeks information from parents about likes, dislikes, home language and individual requirements. She benefits from close communication with parents which keeps her updated on a daily basis. The childminder has given good consideration as to how she would manage the care of a child with learning difficulties or a disability.

Children's behaviour is mostly good. The childminder has a good understanding of appropriate ways to manage unacceptable behaviour. Children are encouraged to develop understanding of sharing and turn taking by the childminder. They learn about being responsible as they help out, such as carrying the snack items to the table and help to tidy up. Children's self-esteem and confidence is underpinned with frequent praise for their achievements, efforts and good behaviour.

There is good communication with parents. The childminder provides detailed written information about her childminding business, such as policies, setting details and newsletters. This ensures parents have a clear understanding of the service on offer. Parents benefit from feedback about their child's progress and day as the day's events are discussed and a diary is written for them. This ensures parents are well-informed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has attended the courses in line with regulation and in addition to this holds recognised childcare qualifications. This supports her knowledge and understanding of childcare practice. The childminder effectively meets children's needs as she interacts closely with the children and has good communication with parents. Children gain from the childminder's time and attention which supports their development. Children extend their learning through the range of activities, toys and outings the childminder offers.

Most required paperwork is in place, although some lack the necessary detail. The childminder does not have clear consents from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for children or to take children out in a vehicle. Some records have no names entered on them or only a first name. Records are at times completed in pencil which does not ensure a permanent record.

The records lack some organisation. This makes it difficult to find documentation relating to individual children and also puts confidentiality at risk.

The childminder has understood her responsibilities regarding regulations and has informed Ofsted of significant events and changes.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for she they provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection four recommendations were made. Two of these related to paperwork, including gaining written consent from parents, one was in regard to resources to reflect equal opportunities and one was regarding fire safety.

The childminder has moved since her last inspection and has ensured that she has complied with the National Standards regarding fire safety. There is a smoke alarm in place and a fire blanket. The childminder also checks the alarm on a weekly basis and has devised a new evacuation plan for her new home. This ensures children's safety.

The childminder has extended her range of resources which represent equal opportunities and the wider society. There are dolls, books, dressing up clothes and small world toys available for the children to freely access in their natural play. This develops the children's awareness and acceptance of others different to themselves.

The childminder has not fully completed the recommendations relating to paperwork. She now carries written contact details for parents on outings in case of emergency. However, she still does not have in place a clear consent from parents for children to travel in a vehicle and to be taken on outings. Parents understand through the childminder's policy that their children go on outings and are taken in vehicles. This does not fully meet the requirements of the National Standards.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 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 cross-infection is minimised by using an appropriate surface for nappy changes

- ensure paperwork is completed fully, for example, with names entered and full names used and is completed to ensure a permanent record is kept
- obtain written consent from parents for outings, to seek emergency advice and treatment for children and for children to travel in a vehicle
- organise paperwork to ensure individual children's documentation is easily found and confidentiality is maintained.

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