

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	112698
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Inspector	Gill Moore
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 1992. She lives with her partner and adult daughter in the family home in Greatham, which is a village about eight miles from Petersfield. The ground floor is mainly used for childminding.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time and is currently caring for four children, of which only one is under eight years. The family have a range of pets. There were no minded children present during the inspection.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to understand the importance of taking regular exercise as part of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle. This is promoted through discussions with the childminder and regular visits to the play park after school. They increase their awareness about healthy eating and are encouraged to eat fruit and talk about different foods and how they help their bodies to grow. Children are able to help themselves to drinking water from individual bottles when

they become thirsty. Their dietary needs are met because the childminder obtains written information about allergies and provides children with light snacks after school that she knows they enjoy. For example, children have various toppings on toast and hot cross buns.

Children begin to learn the importance of following good personal hygiene routines because they are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals and snacks. Their health is maintained around the family pets, for example pet food is inaccessible. However, written consent has not been obtained from parents for children to have contact with pets. Children's health is maintained because the childminder has relevant first aid training and suitable procedures are in place to record accidents and the administration of medication, sharing this information effectively with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment where they move freely around the childminder's home. This is assured because potential risks and hazards are minimised, such as dangerous substances. Equipment, such as stair gates are used to prevent children accessing areas within the home. Smoke alarms are fitted on the first floor of the property, however, there is no smoke alarm on the ground floor, which may compromise children's safety. Children freely access a range of equipment and play provision suitable for their ages from low level boxes in the lounge. The childminder implements risk assessments to ensure all furniture, equipment and play provision is clean, safe and well-maintained, which contributes to promoting children's safety.

Children are protected and safeguarded from harm because the childminder has a very good understanding of child protection issues and fully understand her role with regards to protecting children in her care. She has a secure knowledge of different types of abuse and can recognise possible signs and symptoms that may give cause for concern. She is very aware of the records to be kept and knows how to implement local child protection procedures in order to ensure children are protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to choose their own activities during their time with the childminder and are offered a range of experiences. For example, they have access to writing tools and materials and are provided with opportunities to be creative. Children have access to resources, such as dolls and prams, and benefit from opportunities to express their real and imagined ideas through role-play. The childminder supports children with their reading skills listening to them reading their books from school and provides books and jigsaws enabling children to spend quiet times together.

The childminder recognises that some children just wish to rest after their day at school and watch television for a while and she supports older children in doing their home work. Children are provided with opportunities to go on outings and play outside enjoying the fresh air. For example, they regularly visit the local park and explore their surroundings going for walks in the woods. The childminder generally cares for children of school age and recognises they each have individual preferences. Consequently, she encourages them to choose their own activities and make suggestions about where they would like to visit in the holidays.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are very much valued as individuals and the childminder promotes a fully inclusive environment. She treats each child as an individual and uses her knowledge of each child to help her plan and organise activities and experiences that she knows they will be interested in. The childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities and ensures this is reflected through her practice. Children begin to gain awareness of diversity through discussions with the childminder and the use of some resources reflecting a diversity of culture, gender and disability. Consequently, children become aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others and learn to value one another and their peers. They are encouraged to behave in a positive manner and know what is expected of them because they know the rules and boundaries within the childminder's home. The childminder uses continual praise and positive reinforcement, which impacts on children's self confidence and the relationships they build.

Children benefit because there are strong links in place between home and the setting. The childminder recognises the importance of establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with parents. This is developed through flexible registration and settling in procedures ensuring parents and children are happy, settled and feel at ease. Consequently, children are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging and self assurance whilst in the childminder's care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit because the childminder is qualified and experienced in working with a range of children in a variety of situations. She recognises that children have different interests and provides a warm, safe and relaxed environment in which they are encouraged to make their own choices. The childminder plans her time well in order to meet the individual needs of children in her care each day. Children's health, safety and well being is promoted because the childminder has a suitable knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and ensures the requirements and regulations are met. She keeps the documentation required in regulations, although insufficient details are recorded in relation to the times children are being cared for.

The childminder shares information about her practice, and what children have been involved in with parents through daily discussion and the implementation of a portfolio. She has developed some written policies and procedures highlighting how she promotes children's health and safety, equal opportunities, inclusion and behaviour. Children benefit because the childminder updates her skills and knowledge regularly by attending training opportunities. As a result, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the childminder was asked to devise and implement a behaviour management policy, taking into account children's ages and stages of development, and discuss with parents. A written policy has been developed and the childminder discusses this with parents. The policy shows how praise is to be recognised and realistic targets set for individual children. The childminder understands this helps to build children's confidence and self-esteem.

The childminder was also asked to devise and practise an emergency evacuation procedure and make sure that children and parents are made aware of it. Finally, she was asked to obtain written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle. The childminder has developed a written emergency evacuation procedure, which is displayed and discussed with children and parents. This ensures they are well informed about the procedure to follow, although this is not practised with children to ensure they understand how to implement it. Written permission is now obtained from parents for their child to travel in the childminder's car as part of the registration process, which helps promote their safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action 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

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

- obtain written parental consent for children to have contact with family pets
- practise procedures for emergency evacuation with children
- ensure accurate records of children's attendance are maintained
- ensure a smoke alarm is fitted on the ground floor of the property

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