

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118977
Inspection date	12 June 2007
Inspector	Anne Jeanette Faithfull

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 has been registered since 1987. She lives with her husband and adult child in Bracknell, Berkshire. The whole of the ground floor of childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and she is currently minding four children on a fulltime and part-time basis. The childminder walks to the local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the local library and park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family have a pet rabbit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because of the competence of the childminder in following highly effective procedures which meets the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. The exceptional

support and guidance she provides helps children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, she reminds children to wash their hands after playing in the garden and before snack time. Each child is provided with their own hand towel and these are placed at child height to allow them to use independently, children also have their own cot and bedding provided for them to ensure there is no risk of cross infection. The childminder further promotes children's self help skills by asking children to find their own shoes and begin to learn how to put them on before going out in the garden. The childminder displays the latest health protection agency poster for parents to see, this informs them of the latest guidance regarding childhood illness and the health agency contact number should they or the childminder have any health concerns about the children.

Children explore and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor/outdoor activities and experiences, for example, running around following the pet rabbit in the garden and playing the musical instruments. The childminder further enhances children's physical development by taking the children daily to the park to play on the outdoor play equipment or taking them to a local activity centre to climb and use a range of equipment which caters for all ages of children. The childminder links all the physical activities she provides to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure she is meeting the developmental physical needs of the children in her care.

Children have access to drinks throughout the day and enjoy fruit at snack time. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the nutritional needs of children and their understanding is significantly enhanced through her knowledge. The childminder is registered with the food standards agency and has checks carried out by them on her food preparation and the storage of food. All meals provided are home cooked and well balanced. By working closely with parents and the sharing of information, the children's individual dietary needs are consistently identified and met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are kept very safe. The environment in which they are cared for is warm, welcoming and child centred. Risks of accidental injury is minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant and has a thorough understanding of how to complete risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Children receive a high level of supervision within the home. She has extensive procedures in place to ensure children can play in a safe and secure environment; for example, testing the smoke alarms each week. The childminder has a wide range of safety leaflets and information in place to share with parents and children, including a poster displayed on the playroom wall of the latest car safety restraints and legislation.

An excellent range of well maintained toys and resources appropriate to the children's age and stage of development are available for children to use. The childminder gives careful consideration to the presentation of the resources to ensure children of all ages can readily self-select, for example, children went into the playroom and selected the dolls they wished to play with outside. Sand pits are covered when not in use and all toys and resources are cleaned on a regular basis.

The childminder has a first aid certificate and has first aid boxes both in the home and in the car so she can consequently be able to deal with minor accidents and incidents effectively. The childminder has an excellent awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. She has

attended training to increase her knowledge. She has extensive procedures in place to record concerns and is aware of the procedures to follow should she need to refer any concerns regarding a child in her care. This ensures the welfare and safety of the children at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children are secure and supremely confident in the childminder's home, they settle well and are totally at ease in the setting. They have their own dedicated playroom where their paintings are attractively displayed and they can readily access the resources they wish to use. They relate well to each other, show each other care and consideration, play together and meet other children at local toddler and childminding groups to socialise. The childminder provides an extensive range of appealing toys, which the children clearly enjoy, show considerable interest in, and which cannot fail to promote their development and learning in all areas. Children, of all ages, share resources with little or no prompting during their play. For example, they happily look at books together and play in the sandpit.

The childminder recognises the uniqueness of children and is sensitive to their individual needs; children make excellent progress because of the superb support they receive from the childminder. She is aware that children learn through play and provides a good balance between providing the children with opportunities to initiate their own play at home and activities outside the home. She spends time playing appropriately with the children and children are eager to invite her to take part in their play, for example, making sand castles with the children and talking about the sand and what it feels like. The childminder is skilful in extending language and thinking through open-ended questions, dialogue and activities. For example, asking the children to count the number of animals in the book and asking children what noises a frog and duck make. Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as art and craft, painting, music and pretend play.

Children's care, learning and play are enhanced through the childminder's clear understanding of child development. Detailed planning, observation and evaluation systems in place are of the highest quality, and ensures that children have a varied learning environment which contributes significantly to their learning experiences. She has regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this with her own knowledge of child development milestones to successfully plan appropriate activities and experiences for the children. All observations are recorded in tracker books which she provides for each child and she uses these observations to help to plan future activities, to further promote children's learning and development and inform parents of their child's progress. Parents are requested to complete part of the tracker book before their child attends so the childminder is aware of the developmental stage of the child so she can plan suitable activities to further extend their learning and development whilst in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are extremely well cared for and flourish in the calm and stimulating atmosphere; they feel respected as individuals and made to feel good about themselves. All children are welcomed and included in the provision. The childminder has a good understanding about the needs of the children in her care. Children show care and concern for each other, for example

an older child was helping a younger child at snack time and taking a get well card around to another minded child who is unwell.

The childminder provides a meaningful range of activities, resources and experiences to promote a positive view of the wider world and to help children to begin to understand different cultures, for example, parents bring in food from their home country for the children to see and taste and festivals are celebrated. The childminder encourages children to begin to become aware of environmental issues and encourages the children to recycle the items they use such as, putting the empty cardboard box into the paper recycling bin. Children develop a sense of place and learn about where they live through regular outings, for example, to local toddler groups and visiting local parks on the way home from school. She also makes effective use of everyday activities taking place in the local community such as taking children to see some building work taking place at a nearby house.

Children learn about good behaviour because of the childminder's excellent practice of actively promoting their social and emotional development. They are encouraged to play together harmoniously and learn about sharing and taking turns. They are beginning to understand their own feelings and respect the feelings of others because the childminder makes very good use of resources, such as books to talk about feelings. For example, reading a story about a duck who could not find their home and how sad they were and how happy they were when they found their home. Good use is made of praise and encouragement through play and everyday activities to promote children's self-esteem.

Relationships with parents are outstanding which significantly contributes to children's well-being. Children's needs are met by daily verbal and written communication between the childminder and parents. Children are looked after according to parents' wishes. All parents receive a welcome pack which includes all her policies, procedures and includes a parental questionnaire which parents can complete to comment on the childminding service offered. This further enhances her commitment to the parents and their children in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's overall welfare and development is promoted as the childminder is very well organised, arranging space and resources to maximise care, learning and play opportunities for the children. Children are happy and settled in the very calm environment. They move around safely, with independence and effective supervision. They have access to an extremely good range of activities, resources, quiet and active times within their daily routines. The childminder ensures there is a balance between learning opportunities both in the home and when on outings. Children receive a very high level of support from the childminder when playing together and in one to one situations. Thank you cards and letters from children given to her when they leave comment on how happy they were in her care and how they will miss her and her family.

The childminder has a range of robust and comprehensively written policies and procedures in place. All mandatory documentation is in place and regularly reviewed and updated. The childminder keeps detailed records and observations of children's progress, thus ensuring children are fully supported in reaching their potential. These are shared with parents to keep parents fully informed with their child's progress in the childminder's care.

Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated and who regularly attends training courses, she is going to attend the Early Years Foundation Stage training later

in the year. This commitment to continuous improvement ensures she has ongoing knowledge of current childcare practices. She uses her vast experience and knowledge to help train and support potential childminders in the Bracknell area. They share ideas together and this further helps her to enhance her childminding practice. She continually monitors and evaluates her practice. This further enhances the childminding service she offers children and their parents. The childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure children cannot access the chest freezer and to complete a risk assessment on using a stair gate on the stairway. Children cannot access the chest freezer and the childminder has completed a risk assessment on having a stair gate on the stairs.

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