

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161638
Inspection date	18 June 2007
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 1996. She lives with her partner and two children aged 9 and 11 years. They live in a house on the edge of Calne, shops, parks and schools are within walking distance. The whole of the house may be used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a tank of fish.

The childminder is registered to care for no more than six children under eight years, at any one time. she currently has six children on roll. The registration does not include overnight care.

The childminder regularly attends a local toddler group. She is a member of the Calne childminding group and the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this welcoming and homely environment, where the childminder follows highly effective procedures to promote children's good health through diet, exercise and high standards of hygiene. Children are cared for in a very clean home and use well maintained equipment. The childminder has a clear and effective sickness policy which explains to parents that she cannot care for unwell children and gives them information on common childhood illnesses and this greatly reduces the risk of cross-infection. From a very young age, children learn about the importance of good hygiene. They help to wipe tables before meals and are shown how to carefully clean their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

The childminder has attended training in children's nutrition and food hygiene and she uses her good knowledge to ensure that food is stored and prepared hygienically. She prefers parents to provide main meals so that they can take account of any preferences or special diets. However, she does provide a wide range of healthy snacks. Children help in choosing and preparing these and write their own menu for the week. Toddlers are fully involved in helping to make fruit salad, they receive excellent support and encouragement to try new tastes and textures. For example, they are delighted when they eventually taste a juicy plum after being encouraged to tentatively smell and then lick it first. Children learn about healthy eating through cooking activities and making and displaying posters for the playroom. Children are able to help themselves to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Children have plenty of opportunities for vigorous play and fresh air. They make good use of the garden for many enjoyable activities, such as sand and water play and using tricycles and swings. They also regularly visit the local parks, where there is a good range of suitably challenging equipment for all ages to climb and balance on. Toddlers, really enjoy hopping, jumping and crawling as they enthusiastically join in with action songs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and well organised environment, where the childminder takes great care to identify and minimise most hazards in her home and whilst out with the children. Good quality equipment supports the needs of the children. They play with an extensive range of high quality toys, which are very well organised to allow them to choose for themselves from play materials that are safe and suitable for their age and stage of development.

The childminder has made her home safe, for example, by using safety gates to prevent young children accessing the stairs or kitchen on their own and by using recommended seats and restraints to transport children in her car. From a very young age she begins to teach children how to keep themselves safe, for example, by explaining why it is unsafe to rock their chair or teaching them to safely use knives and scissors appropriate for their age. Children regularly take part in fire evacuation practices and talk about the dangers of fire. Most electrical sockets within children's reach are safely covered, except for one in a bedroom where children occasionally play.

The childminder safeguards children's welfare. She has attended training on child protection and clearly explains to parents, her responsibilities regarding this. She would be able to act in a child's best interest if she had concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish the time they spend with the childminder. She uses her excellent knowledge of early years guidance and many years experience of caring for children, to provide an exciting and stimulating range of activities for the young children in her care. She has a clear daily routine that helps the children feel secure and settle quickly. Children take part in an enormous range of well planned and very worthwhile activities that help them make excellent progress in all areas of their development. Activities are fun and the childminder is enthusiastic and encouraging, so that they feel confident to join in and try new experiences. For example, toddlers are totally engrossed as they wash dolls; the childminder shows them how to whisk bubbles with their hands, which makes them laugh as they copy her. They dry the dolls and choose clothes to dress them in, comfortable to be role playing this very familiar scenario, she plays with words 'splish, splash, splosh' and later reads a story which involves children washing dolls, this helps the children make connections and encourages them to communicate with the childminder and each other and develops their language skills well.

The childminder is imaginative and constantly provides new and exciting experiences, such as playing with wet spaghetti or ice in water and children are encouraged to use all their senses as they play. Music and singing form a part of the daily routine. They experiment with the sounds made by a variety of percussion instruments. Young children enjoy picking objects from a bag and then choosing a song to match, even the very youngest children join in enthusiastically, moving their bodies in different ways to the music. The childminder talks to the children, explaining what she is doing and encouraging them to express their thoughts and ideas. She takes every opportunity to help them learn, for example, counting slices as they cut the banana or naming shapes and colours as they play with the dough.

The childminder carefully observes and is beginning to record children's achievements. She uses these observations to discuss children's development with parents and to plan activities that will help each child progress. Good use of photographs, further informs parents how their children are enjoying and achieving whilst with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed by the childminder, who values each child's individuality. She makes great efforts to ensure they are fully involved in the setting and develop a real sense of belonging. For example, each child has a magnetic photograph of themselves to put on the board when they arrive. There are many photographs of the children involved in activities and children's art work is displayed or in their folders to share with parents. This helps build children's sense of worth. Parents are very well informed about all aspects of the care provided. There is an informative notice board and parents receive copies of all policies and procedures relating to the care of their child. The childminder spends time each day talking to parents and also provides daily written diary sheets for the younger children which helps with continuity of care. This good exchange of information helps build trusting relationships and ensures children's individual needs are very well met.

Children are very well behaved. They have talked about the house rules and have written and displayed them on the playroom wall. Young children get excellent support as they learn to share and take turns. The childminder avoids many disputes by ensuring children are purposefully occupied at all times and by having sufficient resources to avoid squabbles over popular items. From a young age children learn to play co-operatively and show concern for others. They learn about their local community, for example, when they visit the toddler services at church or visit the shops and childminding group, when they learn to socialise with other children and adults. They become aware of the wider world through many enjoyable themed activities, for example, to celebrate the Chinese New Year. They have helped make a lovely display of countries around the world with a good selection of books to help them learn about diversity. Children have made collages of people with different ethnicity and abilities, which helps them to value the differences and similarities between themselves and others.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in environment that has been very well organised to meet their needs. The home is safe and secure and toys are well organised, labelled and stored where children can help themselves. The daily routine is well planned to allow children time to eat, sleep and play. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The childminder regularly reviews her practice and looks for ways to further improve the care she provides; she regularly attends relevant training and enjoys exchanging aspects of good practice with other childminders.

All the required documentation is in place to support children's health, safety and well-being. However, the childminder has on occasions, for short periods, cared for one more child than her conditions of registration allow. This is a breach of regulations and an offence. She has used another adult on these occasions to help her but they have not undergone the relevant checks and Ofsted has not been informed, which is a requirement of her registration.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the childminder was given two recommendations to improve the standard of care. The first was to improve her knowledge of child protection procedures; she has since attended a training course and now has a good understanding so that she would know what to do if she had concerns for a child. Secondly, she was asked to practise her emergency evacuation procedure. She now practises this regularly with the children, so that everyone knows what to do and could act quickly in the event of an emergency.

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

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 that Ofsted is informed of any assistant used and that they have undergone the relevant checks prior to starting work
- ensure all electric sockets accessible to children are covered

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