

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	111424
Inspection date	13 April 2007
Inspector	Doreen Forsyth

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 good. 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 husband and her teenage daughter in a detached home in Andover, Hampshire. The home is near the town centre; there are shops, school and parks all within walking distance. All areas of the house are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for up to six children under the age of eight, of these three may be under the age of five, however, there is a special condition in place allowing the childminder to care for up to four children under the age of five at specified times. The childminder is also able to care for two children overnight. Currently there are four children under the age of five on roll and eleven children school aged children; all the children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a member of an approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder is very active in ensuring children are kept healthy and well. She follows very good hygiene practices and helps children to understand the importance of good hygiene routines, for example, children learn to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet to prevent the risk of cross infection. When children visited a nearby farm park they understood why they needed to wash their hands after handling the animals. Accurate records are maintained of any accidents or medications administered; there is a good sickness policy in place which is available to parents in their pack. The childminder has current first aid qualifications.

Children are well nourished and begin to learn the importance of healthy eating. They enjoy a wide variety of healthy daily snacks. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure children's dietary needs are well met; any special dietary requirements are recorded and observed. Children are offered regular drinks, but do not always have easy access to drinking water. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs as they wish.

Children take part in regular physical activities and have good opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They walk to and from school with the childminder, they visit local parks and soft play centres, they go for walks and play in the very well equipped back garden. They learn to move with confidence on the slide and trampoline and enjoy learning to control bikes, buggies and other wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe, secure, comfortable and child-centred environment. The childminder has made her home extremely welcoming to young children and their families, there are displays of children's work and photos of their activities on show. The childminder has risk assessed her home very well any potential hazards have been identified and minimised by the childminder, for example, a safety gate across the playroom doorway ensures young children do not have access to the stairs or front door. The childminder has very good emergency plans in place; even the younger children are aware of how they would evacuate the home in an emergency and have practised the emergency procedures. If the childminding uses her car to transport children appropriate safety seats and restraints are used, the childminder has suitable buggies to use when out walking with the children.

Children play mainly in the very attractive playroom, conservatory and garden. The areas used by the children are very welcoming, there is a very large selection of very well maintained and age appropriate toys and equipment available. Many toys are stored in clear boxes so that children can easily choose what they play with. The childminder encourages children to put away toys before they get out more to prevent toys being broken or accidents occurring.

Children are very well safeguarded because the childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in child protection and is able to put appropriate procedures in place if necessary, she has attended relevant advanced safe-guarding children training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled with the childminder. They are offered a very wide range of activities, both planned and spontaneous, that the children enjoy and that help them to learn and develop appropriately. Children have a very warm and loving relationship with the childminder they are very comfortable and relaxed in her care.

The childminder plans interesting activities appropriate to the children's stage of development using the Birth to Threes matters framework for children under threes and the six areas of the early learning goals for over threes. The childminder records the children's progress very well in attractive folders which are shared with parents. Children enjoy exploring the toys and activities provided. The childminder understands very well how children learn and develop; she questions them well, encouraging their language development and helping them to put their ideas into words. Children enjoy many suitable activities including stories, role and imaginative play, using small world toys and creative and craft activities such as painting, play dough and drawing. When the weather is suitable they particularly enjoy playing with sand and water in the garden.

Children have many opportunities to meet with and interact with other adults and children. They attend toddler and childminding group with the childminder, they spend time with other nearby childminders and their children. They often go out and about, when they have an opportunity to learn about their local community. For example, they visit nearby shops or go to the library in the town centre to choose story books. The childminder arranges trips and outings especially in the school holidays. The children recently visited a farm park where they enjoyed handling some of the animals. The childminder took photos of the children with baby rabbits which are displayed in the kitchen and are now a topic of conversation for the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed and highly valued by the childminder. She knows the children and their families very well and endeavours to work closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are well met. Children benefit from using a very good range of resources and equipment that help them to learn to value diversity. Posters and displays in the conservatory show people from all different backgrounds. Children play with small world toys such as doll's house people that portray different ages and backgrounds. They look at books that show different cultural backgrounds. Children enjoy celebrating and marking different festivals and special events such as Christmas, Easter and Chinese New Year.

Children behave very well. The childminder praises children's good behaviour at every opportunity. There is a pictorial display of the 'house rules' for younger children; for older children the written rules explain why some behaviour is not acceptable. Children learn to consider the needs of others, to share and to take turns. Children's good behaviour is rewarded with praise, rewards and some privileges, for example, choosing which video they all watch. Children are reminded to say please and thank-you when appropriate.

Children benefit from the close working relationship between the childminder and their parents. The childminder provides an excellent parents' pack which includes details of all the policies and procedures used, including an appropriate and well written complaints procedure. The folders recording the children's progress are regularly shared with parents. As well as being

able to exchange information with the childminder at the beginning and end of the session, parents can also arrange to speak to the childminder at other times if they wish. For children aged under one the childminder uses a daily diary to ensure information is regularly exchanged and kept updated. Very good settling-in procedures and visits to the childminder are organised so that parents are well informed and so that the childminder gets to know children well before they start at the setting. Attractive displays of photos are used to help parents see what their children do when at the childminders, and there is a very informative parent's notice board in the kitchen.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides. The childminder is very experienced and is well qualified. She has achieved very good childcare qualifications and regularly attends further training to update and enhance her skills and knowledge. All the adults in the childminder's home have been appropriately vetted and are suitable to have contact with young children. Any unvetted adults do not have unsupervised access.

All the required documentation and procedures that help to ensure children's health, safety and enjoyment are well kept, including a good record of children's attendance which includes a signing -in and out procedure by the children's parents. The required adult/child ratios are always adhered to. Even though on some occasions the childminder has up to six children in her care at one time they all receive very good support and attention because the childminder is very well organised. The childminder is very committed to continuous improvement; she evaluates the provision she offers and is always seeking to enhance the care she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was set a recommendation regarding parents access to the complaints procedures. The childminder gives extremely good information to parents about all aspects of the childminding provision, including very good information about the childminder's complaints procedures.

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 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 good. 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 all children have easy access to drinking water.

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