



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY256622
Inspection date	01 July 2005
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury

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 registered in 2003. She lives with her husband and their two children aged eight and four years of age in Deepcut, on the outskirts of Camberley in Surrey. All areas of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight at any one time. She is currently minding three children under five years of age and three older children after school. Of the younger children, one attends on a full-time basis and the others attend part-time.

The childminder attends a local toddler group and childminder's network group.

She regularly takes children out for walks and to visit the local museum. She walks to and from local schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from good opportunities to be outside in the fresh air and to engage in physical activity. They regularly play in the garden where they can explore the good range of outdoor play equipment available and practice and develop their gross motor skills.

While parents provide most food for the children currently in her care, the childminder demonstrates, through discussion, an awareness of healthy eating. She is conscious of her role in supporting children's understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet. She encourages children to try new tastes, for example, different fruits. The childminder ensures that she stores food appropriately which reduces the risk to children's health. Children have regular drinks throughout the day. They do not become dehydrated or go thirsty because the childminder monitors children's fluid intake and encourages them to drink.

Children sleep and rest according to individual need and their parents' wishes. Whilst the childminder does use a baby monitor, her current practice of physically checking sleeping babies approximately every forty minutes, is not sufficient.

Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene as part of the daily routine and through the input of the childminder as she reminds them of the need to wash hands. The childminder follows generally effective practices herself which help children to stay healthy and which contribute to their overall welfare. Her home is clean and comfortable. She does not accept children who are unwell because of the implications this may have for other children in her care. She makes a point of informing parents if her own children are ill. These measures help to minimise the potential for the spread of infection for all children. Whilst the childminder is aware of the importance of following good hygiene procedures, her practice of laying young children directly on the carpet to change nappies, without any form of protection, does not actively promote this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children remain safe because the childminder is aware of her responsibility to ensure the safety of children in her care at all times. She does this through close supervision, explanation and the use of appropriate safety measures. These minimise most potential risks to children which helps keep them safe and secure. However, the location of a glass hurricane lamp on the floor, in an area of the lounge where

children play, may be potentially hazardous. Safe, unrestricted access to the kitchen allows a crawling baby to practice his skills as he moves around and enables him to stay close to the childminder, when she goes into the kitchen to fetch drinks for example, and feel secure. Good procedures for ensuring the security of the premises contribute positively to children's safety as do suitable fire safety precautions.

The childminder helps children learn about keeping themselves and others safe. For example, in the way she explains to an interested older child about the need to be gentle with the baby and as she teaches children about road safety when they are out walking. She helps older children understand their role in being "good role models" for younger children who may copy them.

The childminder is secure in her knowledge of issues relating to child protection. This means that she is able to protect children and act in their best interests should she have any concerns about their welfare. She ensures that parents are aware of her responsibility with regard to this.

Children play with a suitable range of age-appropriate toys that are safe and of clean condition. The childminder regularly checks items to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm them. She minimises potential risk to babies and young children by ensuring that any toys with small pieces remain out of their reach. Older children help themselves to easily accessible items in the upstairs playroom, whilst younger children can make their own selections from those items kept downstairs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

There is a relaxed, homely atmosphere at this childminder's home. Children are settled and at ease, both within the environment and with the childminder. They enjoy warm relationships with her which contributes to their feeling of security and sense of belonging. The childminder spends much of her time sitting on the floor, playing with and talking to children. Good levels of interaction ensure that children enjoy their play and benefit from her positive input.

Children experience a varied range of activities, both inside and outside the home, which contribute to their overall development. They regularly go to a toddler group, and more recently, to a newly established childminding group, where they have the opportunity to mix with other children and develop their social skills. These outings also enable children to play with different toys and experience a different environment.

Whilst the childminder regularly rotates resources to help keep children's play provision fresh, the variety of items that children can independently access from the storage units downstairs is not sufficiently broad enough to challenge or fully engage the attention of an older child.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a satisfactory awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities. She treats children with equal concern and values them as individuals. The childminder provides a variety of resources that reflect different aspects of diversity to help children gain awareness of the wider world in which we live. Children can independently access some items; for example, play people, finger puppets and puzzles. They have less opportunity to independently access books because the childminder does not organise these to be so easily accessible.

Children explore their immediate environment and gain awareness of their local community as they go for walks through the woods and visit the local museum. This experience also provides children with opportunities to participate in the range of activities on offer at the museum and enables them to expand their knowledge.

Children behave well. They learn about good manners because of the childminder's consistent encouragement to say please and thank-you. They learn to share and take turns which helps them gain awareness of one another and each other's needs. The childminder's good use of positive language and praise supports children's developing self-esteem and enables them feel good about themselves. For example, in the way she acknowledges an older child's "kindness" towards the baby and as she notices the baby's efforts to pull himself up to a standing position.

Children benefit because the childminder enjoys good relationships with their parents. She works with them to meet the needs of children and thus, fosters their well-being. Initial visits and ongoing discussions about children means that they receive care that is consistent with their home routines. The sharing of information about how children spend their time helps parents feel involved in their children's day. The childminder also provides parents with a written copy of any accident record.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Required documentation and other records which contribute to the efficient and safe management of the provision are in place. The childminder maintains these well to meet individual children's needs. For example, she seeks written parental consent for different aspects of children's care which ensures that parents can feel fully included and consulted. This impacts positively on children's safety, welfare and good health because the parents and the childminder work together in partnership.

Children are comfortable and at ease in the childminder's home. They have space to sit and play and they move freely around the ground floor of the house and thus, develop confidence within the environment. The provision of a separate playroom upstairs allows older children to play independently away from younger children. The childminder's use of consistent routines, for example, for going out, helps children look forward to their day. They receive support and reassurance.

The childminder has a professional approach and a positive attitude to childminding.

She recognises the importance of providing parents with detailed information about her service and the policies and procedures she follows. She is aware of the recent introduction of the Birth to Three Matters framework of good practice and has applied to attend a training course on this to help her further develop her practice in the care of babies and young children.

The childminder meets the needs of the children she cares for.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder received a recommendation that she should keep individual children's records separate. The childminder has made suitable improvements to her practice with regard to documentation and ensuring confidentiality. She maintains separate entries on the attendance register for each child present and ensures that all other records pertain to individual children.

These measures contribute positively to the overall organisation of the provision and ensure confidentiality for all children and their families.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- review existing procedures for monitoring sleeping babies to ensure that they are regularly checked. Revise nappy changing practices to ensure good hygiene at all times.
- assess the risks to children in relation to low level glass in areas where children play and take action to minimise these.
- expand the range of play materials that children can easily access by themselves to ensure that there is a greater variety of items available

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