

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148558
Inspection date	05 September 2007
Inspector	Marie Thompson
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 1995. She lives with her two children aged 21 and 20 years old in Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire. The whole of the downstairs of the childminder's house is used for childminding, including a playroom and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

There are currently six children on roll. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group.

The family have one cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn to follow some good hygiene practices. The children are encouraged to wash their hands after visiting the toilet or playing in the garden and before eating. Children use the downstairs toilet and wash their hands at the small sink

using a soap dispenser. However, all the children use the same towel to dry their hands which does not positively control the spread of germs. The children are able to get a wet wipe to clean their sticky hands if they need them and the childminder encourages them to dispose of them appropriately.

The childminder has attended a first aid training course and has a fully stocked first aid kit. This means that children can be treated effectively if they hurt themselves.

The children go out in the garden to play and get fresh air everyday. They have use of a sand pit, tunnel, slide, trikes and a tent which they thoroughly enjoy playing with. The children like planting seeds, bulbs and sunflowers. They take them home with them so that they can watch how they grow. The children walk to and from school each day which is a good form of exercise. They have great fun dancing to music tapes and with a pretend micro-phone in their hands they perform the actions and sing along to 'The Okey Cokey' and 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes'. These activities give children plenty of opportunity to develop their physical skills and to exercise. Indoors the children have use of lots of toys to promote fine motor skills and hand eye co-ordination, they can assemble puzzles, practise drawing or writing skills and build objects with construction activities.

The childminder provides healthy snacks consisting of different kinds of fruit. The childminder takes account of the parents' wishes and the children's likes and dislikes providing snacks that appeal to the children and meets any dietary requirements. The parents provide the children's meals. The childminder makes sure that the food is stored appropriately and warmed thoroughly before the children eat. All the children sit together at the table in the dining room and the childminder encourages good table manners during the meal. She encourages the children to sit correctly and wait for everyone else to finish eating. Children receive plenty of drinks, especially in warm weather, which prevents dehydration. The childminder makes sure that each child has a non-spill beaker full of mild squash or water which is placed on the sideboard in the living room. This means the children can help themselves when they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to enjoy outdoor games and activities in the fresh air. The childminder's car is a multi-person vehicle with all the required safety seats and features fitted, enabling children to travel safely. The childminder has discussed the emergency evacuation procedure with the parents but it has not been discussed or practiced with the children so that they know how to exit the premises safely. The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. She is a child protection trainer with the Scouts association which means that she attends refresher training annually.

The childminder's house is organised and welcoming for the children. The childminder identifies risks and minimises hazards. This allows the children to move around safely, freely and independently. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, she encourages them to look and listen for cars on outings, to treat animals with respect, adhere to the house rules and to use play equipment appropriately. She takes appropriate measures to maintain children's safety inside and outside the home because she is proactive in spotting any potential hazards and has taken action to minimise risks.

Children have easy and safe access to toys, which are stored in low-level boxes in the living room. Resources are good and suitable for children's stage of development and meet safety

standards. The childminder makes sure she checks the toys regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. The childminder has a good understanding of how to keep the children safe when they go out. She encourages them to learn about the Green Cross Code when they are out walking and use pedestrian crossings whenever possible. The childminder makes sure the children are securely strapped in the buggy and that older children walk alongside either holding onto the buggy or holding hands.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the environment where the childminder interacts well with the children. The children enjoy playing together. All toys and activities are stored at child height and children are able to choose what they do right through the day. The free floor space enables them to spread their games around. For example, assembling a row of cars and setting up the large dolls house. Together the children decide which dolls fit in the house and how many cars will fit on the car transporters. The children develop many skills from these activities such as, co-ordination, co-operation, sharing and taking turns. Children are able to do large and small puzzles on the floor or on the table. There are creative play materials such as painting, drawing and sticking.

There is a good range of toys that promote mathematical thinking such as, counting and matching games, shape sorters and bricks. The children are beginning to develop an interest in books and they enjoy going to the local library to choose some books to borrow. The childminder encourages them to talk about the stories with her and she asks them questions about the books they are reading together. This helps the children to develop their communication and listening skills. The children are able to develop and progress according to their individual needs.

The children really like having a carpet picnic at the childminder's house. They are able to develop their social skills through regular visits to the local toddler groups and childminder drop in centres.

The children enjoy excursions to Marwell Zoo where they enjoy looking at the tigers or day trips to Bournemouth where they ate ice creams on the sea front. They had a super day out recently on a trip on a narrow boat to Pangbourne. The children took turns to drive the boat under adult supervision. The childminder made sure the children had colouring pictures of some of the items on the boat which they could colour in when they had spotted them. At the end of the day everyone had a picnic on the river bank and an opportunity to fly kites. The children have a lovely day out to Denton Pastures where they fed the ducks. These trips allow the children to have lots of fun and to form some really good memories of their time with the childminder. The children are involved in structured and free choice activities during the day and receive good adult support.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides positive encouragement and support, therefore, the children feel respected as individuals and made to feel good about themselves. They learn about the local community through outings to the parks, shops or going to and from school. The childminder encourages them to look at the things around them such as the changing colours of the trees or different people going about their daily routines. This is not always extended to help children

learn about the wonders of the wider world. The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities and there are some toys and resources that reflect positive images of diversity. The children take part in some activities that celebrate other festivals such as Chinese New Year.

The childminder meets the children's needs by following normal daily routines as discussed with parents, which helps the children feel secure. They have time to relax as well as be active. Children benefit from some praise and reassurance. The children's behaviour is good and they play extremely well together. However there are occasions when the childminder does not always use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour. As a result children do not always develop their understanding as to why their behaviour is unacceptable.

Parents receive satisfactory information about the childminder's service. Feedback on children's progress and development is given verbally when the parents collect their children. A contract with parents and signed consent forms for various situations, such as outings, sun cream and photographs, are in place.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children benefit from a well-organised and comfortable environment. Resources both indoors and outdoors are used effectively to provide children with appropriate play space and experiences. The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of her role and responsibilities. She has attended a childminder registration course. Her Ofsted certificate is displayed for parents and visitors. All persons living in the household have been vetted. The childminder has obtained the relevant car and public liability insurance. She pays appropriate attention to confidentiality. The childminder keeps up to date with current childcare issues through publications from the national childminding association and Ofsted. This helps ensure the continued well-being of the children.

The children have settled well in the childminder's home. This means they are confident to initiate their own play. The childminder has a policy statement about her business in place. However, the complaints policy providing the contact details of the regulator, Ofsted, is not in place. The childminder has most documentation available, which includes a daily record of the children's attendance.

By working in partnership with the parents, the childminder ensures that she meets the children's individual needs. Discussions take place daily with the parents to exchange information. The regular, informal discussion with parents ensures there is some continuity of care for the children. Children receive some good adult support to help them feel secure and confident to develop their learning through play. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to up date her first aid training.

The childminder has now completed a paediatric first aid course.

These measures contribute to ensuring children's continued health, safety and wellbeing.

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):

- minimise the risk of cross infection when children dry their hands
- further develop the fire evacuation procedure
- improve strategies for managing children's behaviour
- make sure a complaints policy which contains the name, address and contact details of the regulator, Ofsted is available at all times

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