

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	506021
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 August 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Miriam Sheila Brown

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 was registered in 1995. She lives with her husband and two children in a house in the Stratton area of Swindon. The house is within easy reach of schools and community facilities. The whole of the house is used for childminding and a fully enclosed garden is available for outside play. The family have four dogs, three cats and a rabbit. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently has 13 children on roll who are cared for at varying times throughout the week. She also works occasionally with an assistant.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and an active member of the Upper Stratton Childminders' group.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are making good progress in their all round physical development. They enjoy robust play in the garden using a range of large equipment such as wheeled toys, sand and water play. Regular trips to the park and soft play centres enhance this development. They recently

accompanied the childminder to assist in choosing some new outdoor equipment for the home. Children's small muscle development is increasing as they play with small construction materials and manipulate tools. For example, using scissors, with a variety of different blades, to cut paper grass spikes and a swimming pool, for collage pictures.

Whilst playing outside children are reminded to wear hats and sun cream, increasing their awareness of the importance of caring for themselves in the sun. They are effectively protected from becoming ill because the childminder reminds them to wash their hands at appropriate times and provides them with paper towels for hand drying, reducing the chance of cross infection. Nappy changing procedures are well managed and hygienic. Accident and medication details, including all required individual permissions, are recorded clearly and shared with parents. The childminder has recently updated her first aid training, enabling her to care for children appropriately if they have an accident or become unwell. Children are able to rest or sleep in either a cot or comfy chair, depending on their individual needs, and are monitored at all times. The family pets have their own areas within the home and are regularly vaccinated and checked to ensure they do not pose a health risk to children.

The childminder offers children a variety of healthy snack foods depending on the time of day. For instance, they enjoy toast, crumpets or croissant first thing in the morning and fruit or yoghurt later in the day. Drinks are freely accessible to children throughout the day. Packed lunches are provided by parents. These are stored safely in a refrigerator and served at the table, assisting children in their growing understanding of social conventions.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment. Indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively to create child orientated play areas. For example, the play room has a wide range of low level storage units which children access freely, enabling them to make choices in their play and develop independence. They make good use of the conservatory to build train tracks and play with small world toys. This area also gives them access to the garden where they may spontaneously extend their play. Toys and resources are appropriate to the ages of children cared for and are clean and well-maintained.

The childminder assesses potential risks to children and puts procedures in place to minimise these. For example, children regularly practise emergency evacuations and understand what they must do if they hear the smoke alarm sound. Basic safety equipment such as stair gates, are used to help protect children in their daily play. However, the garden gate, although generally secure, has a bolt which is accessible to the tallest child present, and the shed has some broken perspex at child height. The childminder supervises children well at all times and records all visitors to the home.

The childminder understands her responsibility to keep children safe and has attended 'Safeguarding children' training. Her written policy is shared with parents who are asked to sign to say they understand and accept her use of these guidelines. Discussion with her demonstrates her clear understanding of the procedures to use should she have concerns about a child in her care. This assists in maintaining children's well-being.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and settled within the childminder's care and most have been with her for a number of years. They understand daily routines such as tidying before snack times, that shoes are removed indoors and that paper towels go in the basket in the bathroom. They respond very positively to her and show concern for each other, for example, waiting until all have applied sun cream and hats before going into the garden. Throughout each day children are constantly making decisions about where they want to play and with which resources, helping to develop their independence and self esteem. They confidently refer to the childminder when they require information or assistance, for example, whilst looking at stickers of fish, asking for their different names, and seeking assistance using scissors. Children are proud of what they do and are keen to show their achievements to the childminder and unfamiliar adults. They talk animatedly about things they have done at home and things they have recently experienced on holidays such as 'we saw some sardines while we were away'.

The childminder makes excellent use of everyday activities to support children's all round development. For example, to encourage their interest in healthy foods and their knowledge of how things grow, they have special jobs to do such as watering the cucumbers and other vegetables. The childminder instinctively includes references to colour, number and shape within everyday activities and makes good use of books and toys such as a play kitchen, hospital and dolls house to reinforce their learning through play.

The childminder makes comprehensive use of Birth to three guidance and the Foundation Stage curriculum to help her plan activities, these are then adapted according to children's own ideas. This helps to ensure children receive a balance of experiences and are engaged in activities which inspire and enthuse them.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The childminder encourages children to be kind and thoughtful of each other by her gentle reminders to share toys and take turns. This is positively supported with clear explanations that help children to understand that their individual needs are different. For example, explaining to an older child that the younger children still find it hard to share and that they must be helped by older ones showing them how. Clear 'house rules' and the consistent and calm approach used by the childminder, help children to behave appropriately. Children are very much at ease with the childminder. They enjoy sharing jokes with her, experimenting with the format after reading those printed on the side of a food wrapper.

All children are treated as individuals and all resources equally accessible to them. These include toys which increase children's awareness of the wider world such as small world toys and books. Their knowledge of the local community is enhanced by regular visits to the local park, library, and walks in the area.

The childminder works closely with parents, involving them as much as possible in their children's care. Written information about activities is provided for them and daily diaries are used to exchange information for the youngest children. Daily discussion is also used with all parents to ensure they are kept up-to-date. Policies and procedures such as those for emergency evacuation, complaints and child protection are shared with them.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. All those connected with the home, including her daughter and mother who occasionally work with her as assistants, have suitable clearance. The childminder has attended several training courses to enable her to develop her practice. She also plans her activities with a small group of other childminders, using 'Birth to three' guidance. This collaborative approach assists in the positive use of the guidance to meet the needs of children concerned.

The childminder's home is well organised to inspire and encourage children in their play. The variety of play areas offered provide children with opportunities to enjoy a wide range of self-chosen activities in a child orientated environment. Records show that appropriate ratios are met at all times.

All aspects of documentation are well maintained. Records are clear, up-to-date and shared with parents. All individual permissions are in place. Information about how parents may contact the regulatory body is readily available to them and the registration certificate clearly displayed.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to increase toys and resources that support children's knowledge of different cultures and lifestyles, and to ensure that a glass cabinet did not pose a hazard to children. She has successfully met both of these recommendations.

Children's toys now include a variety of resources which provide positive images of different lifestyles, gender and disability, for example, small world toys, books and role-play equipment. This positively assists children in their growing awareness of the wider world. The glass display cabinet now has protective film on the glass which ensures that if it is accidentally broken it will not pose a risk to children.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of 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 garden is secure for children of all ages and that garden buildings do not pose a risk to children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)