

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110408
Inspection date	15 August 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Davies
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 registered in 2000. He lives with his wife, father-in-law and two children aged 17 and nine years. His wife is also a registered childminder. Their home is a three bedroomed, detached house, situated on the edge of a village in a rural area between Hungerford and Newbury, Berkshire. The childminder can take children to and collect them from, local schools and pre-schools.

The entire house is available for childminding purposes, although in practice the downstairs is used mainly. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outside play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. His registration permits him to care for six children under the age of eight years, at any one time. When minding with his wife, they may mind a total of eight children together. They currently mind nine children aged from 18 months to 10 years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of the importance of preventing cross-infection. He teaches children that they must wash their hands after touching animals, setting the example himself to help them learn the fundamentals of good personal hygiene. Children use a clean environment as his wife uses suitable daily procedures to maintain good hygiene. Parents receive clear information about when children must not attend owing to illness.

Children eat healthy snacks, eagerly choosing from the excellent variety of fresh fruit offered. Most children bring suitable packed lunches from home to sustain them through the day, which are stored appropriately with perishables refrigerated. Children drink according to their needs and are encouraged to take fresh water regularly. They have plenty of regular exercise in the spacious garden, developing their physical skills well; the childminder joins in to help them learn new skills.

The childminder keeps his first aid skills up to date through undertaking relevant courses. This means that he can look after children appropriately if they are unwell or sustain a minor accident. He does not seek parents' written permission for emergency medical care or treatment, however, which puts children at risk in an emergency.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of risk assessment, for which he takes responsibility. Consequently, children play in a secure, safe environment both indoors and when outside. Children learn that they must be quiet when they go to look at large farm animals, such as cows, as these are scared easily and can cause harm if frightened. The childminder keeps his vehicle in a suitable state of repair and has appropriate insurance for transporting minded children, although not all written parental permissions for them to use it have been sought. Suitable fire prevention precautions are in place. The childminder has thought about emergency evacuation procedures but these are not written down for older children and parents to see and are not practised.

Children play in a very welcoming and homely environment, seeing their creations displayed. They use a very well equipped playroom, kept exclusively for their use. Here, children of all ages find toys and resources to interest them. Children make their own choices about what to play with, making the most of the available space. They move around freely outside in the garden too, where equipment is checked regularly to make sure it remains suitable for use.

The childminder understands his responsibilities for safeguarding children. He has the most recent West Berkshire Child Protection Handbook and relevant contact details if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy interesting activities when in this childminder's home. They learn something of farm life through seeing the dairy herd and hearing what cows feed on, for example. Children look forward to special treats, such as picnics in the fields. Overall, however, the childminder's

wife spends more time playing and talking with the children, giving them a lot of attention. Children enjoy making their own decisions about what to play and where. They go outside eagerly whenever possible to play with sand, water and chinks as well as the physical play equipment. The playroom provides high levels of choice, so that younger children find toys for sorting, stacking and constructing as well as resources for imaginative and creative play, such as dressing up clothes. As yet the childminder does not use guidance materials, such as 'Birth to three matters', to plan activities. He offers flexible routines that meet children's welfare needs well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children receive a warm welcome in this childminder's home. They use a suitable range of resources that help them learn about the wider world and differing families within it, in a positive way. The childminder has little experience of children who have additional needs but understands what procedures to follow if he had concerns. The childminder's wife undertakes much of the initial communication with parents but the childminder is fully aware of children's individual needs and meets these appropriately. Parents appreciate the flexible settling in routines and initial interviews, which help them learn something of the childminder's methods, although they do not receive any written information to take home and peruse at their leisure. The childminder provides parents with Ofsted's contact details but he lacks detailed knowledge of procedures to be followed if a parent makes a complaint.

Children behave well. They know what is expected of them, such as helping to pack things away. Children are happy and settled in the childminder's household. They enjoy friendly but respectful relationships with the childminder, who clearly enjoys their company.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom he provides. He works with his wife and between them, they manage their home and time well for childminding purposes. The childminder's wife takes responsibility for records, permissions, registers and contracts, whilst he takes charge of risk assessment procedures, although the emergency evacuation process is not established. All legally required documentation is in place, with the exception of vetting checks on all persons over the age of sixteen years in the household. All paperwork is kept methodically, securely and confidentially. The childminder is uncertain of the October 2005 legislation but tries to keep up to date through reading suitable periodicals.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the childminder was required to ensure all documentation is kept confidentially, to obtain prior written consent for giving medicines and to have the relevant child protection booklet. The childminder has addressed all these issues successfully, with the result that children are better cared for and documentation is now kept confidentially.

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 all members of the household, over the age of 16 years, have had suitability checks
- further develop knowledge and understanding of the October 2005 legislation with regard to complaints
- devise and practise an emergency evacuation procedure.

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