

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110548
Inspection date	26 July 2007
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett

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 has been registered since 1997. She lives with her husband who works as an assistant. They have two teenage children and live in Thatcham, West Berkshire. The ground floor is used for childminding with sleep and toilet facilities available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder when working with an assistant is registered to care for a maximum of eight children at any one time. She is currently minding eight children on a part time basis. Six of those children are aged under eight years. The childminder and her assistant walk to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained home. Children learn the importance of hygiene through routines, such as, washing hands after using the toilet and before eating. Generally, clear systems are in place in the event of children being ill or having an accident.

Accident records are kept and parental signatures recorded. Medication records are kept and consents are obtained. However, the childminder does not consistently ensure parents sign the records to acknowledge entries after administration of medication.

The childminder has a sound understanding of healthy eating. Parents provide the meals and snacks for their children and the childminder ensures these are stored appropriately. Children have regular access to drinks, such as diluted juice and water. Each child has an individual cup which prevents the spread of cross-infection. Children have suitable opportunities for fresh air and physical activities. They enjoy regular outings to local parks and playgrounds. Access to an enclosed garden on the premises ensures they are able to play outdoor games and enjoy the fresh air. Younger children are able to sleep according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the welcoming home from home environment. They have good access to a varied range of toys, books and resources. These are clean and kept in a good state of repair. Children choose and select resources from the broad range on offer which help their all round development. The children play happily under the supervision of the childminder and her assistant with a varied range of planned and free child initiated activities.

Children are secure and confident in their environment. Appropriate safety equipment is used according to the age and development needs of the children, including socket covers and smoke alarms in every room. Adequate procedures are in place to ensure children are safe in the garden and when on outings. However, the trampoline in the garden does not have a safety guard. This puts children's safety at risk.

Children benefit from the good understanding and knowledge the childminder has concerning child protection. She knows how to proceed should concerns arise about a child in her care. This safeguards the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a range of activities for the children. Children's understanding, language, and vocabulary are extended as the childminder and her assistant talk to them as they play. For example, as children complete puzzles developing their hand and eye coordination, the childminder introduces colour and mathematical language into the activity. Older children show good perseverance and concentration skills as they complete word searches. The childminder provides space for the children to choose and play with the activities and resources. They are able to access the resources easily, promoting their choice and independence. For example, some children explore the speed of the 'playmobil' motor bikes going up and down ramps on the kitchen floor. Older children learn the game of chess and challenge the assistant to a game. Younger children find a book and enjoy a favourite story before lunch.

The relaxed atmosphere and the warm relationships evident between the childminder, her assistant and the children enable them to settle quickly. This is evident when one of the sleeping children wakes up. All the minded children are pleased to welcome the child back into the room with smiles and warm greetings. Younger children are well nurtured and look to the childminder and assistant for comfort and reassurance as they are given cuddles and soothing words. This promotes their trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are fully included in the homely environment by the childminder and good relationships are evident. The childminder has a positive attitude towards diversity. This is used effectively in conversations with children, relating to cultures and discussions about the war. Children have access to toys and resources that promote positive images such as books and puzzles. This helps children develop an awareness of their own and other cultures. Children develop a sense of place and learn about where they live and the local community during walks and outings.

Children behave well, responding positively to praise and encouragement. They are familiar with the routines and understand the simple boundaries for good behaviour, such as sharing and promoting manners. The childminder uses appropriate strategies to manage behaviour that are consistent and take into account the individual needs and development of the children.

Children benefit from the friendly relationships between parents and childminder to meet the children's health and care needs. The childminder cares for children according to their parents' wishes. Appropriate paperwork is in place to ensure children's personal information is up to date to promote their welfare and development. A daily verbal exchange of information relating to activities and personal care ensures continuity of care for children between the childminder and home. However, parents do not have current contact details of the regulator, or the procedure to follow if they have a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures necessary documentation and record keeping systems are in place to support children's safety and welfare, with the exception of the complaints procedure and details of the regulatory body. She ensures that she maintains adult to child ratios at all times and she keeps an accurate record of children's attendance. The childminder and her assistant work well together and the children benefit from the working partnership. There are written agreements in place for all the children and appropriate consents are in place as required. However, the registration certificate is not displayed and medication records are not consistently countersigned by parents. This prevents parents having regard to the legal requirements relating to registration. Adults living within the home are appropriately vetted and the childminder ensures confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Children feel at home and are welcomed within the family environment. The space, toys and resources are suitably organised to allow the children to move freely and choose activities for themselves. The daily routine is structured so that children feel secure, but is flexible enough to allow their individual needs to be met. 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 keep an accurate record of children's attendance and obtain written consents from parents for children to travel in a vehicle and for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder keeps an accurate record of children's attendance through the use of a daily diary. Consents are in place from parents for transporting children and for seeking emergency medical advice. This ensures the health, safety and welfare of the children at all times.

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 parents countersign medication records
- inform parents of the complaints procedure and the contact number of the regulator and ensure there is a system in place to record complaints
- ensure the registration certificate is displayed 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