

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	111914
Inspection date	11 July 2007
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 1997. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a residential area of Blackwater in Hampshire. The house is in walking distance of local shops, schools and parks.

The ground floor of the property is used for childminding with toilet and sleep facilities provided in this area. Additional sleep facilities are provided upstairs. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding three children aged one, five and seven years on a part-time basis.

The family has two dogs.

The childminder attends a local childminding group on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, comfortable home which contributes to their overall good health. They are protected from the spread of infection as the childminder implements effective practice. For example, she provides children with their own towels and ensures family pets do not pose a health or safety risk to children. Young children who spend a lot of time sitting and playing on the floor are protected as no outdoor shoes are worn inside the house. Children are helped to develop awareness of good personal hygiene through consistent daily routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after going to the toilet or playing in the garden. The childminder talks to a baby about the need to clean his hands before lunch. This helps to instil awareness of hand washing at certain times from an early age.

Children are able to rest and be active according to their individual need. They take part in energetic play as they explore the range of outdoor play equipment in the garden, which includes climbing and sliding apparatus, a sand pit and trikes and bikes. Children visit the park and listen to music and dance.

The childminder works in partnership with parents over the provision of food. She supplies some meals whilst parents provide others. Positive steps are taken to ensure food is stored appropriately so that it does not pose a health risk to children and to make sure the childminder is aware of children's dietary requirements. Babies begin to develop independence at meal times as the childminder provides them with a spoon to hold and encourages them to have a go at feeding themselves.

The childminder keeps written records of any accidents or medicines she administers and provides parents with a carbon copy of any accident report involving their child.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have sufficient space to move around and sit and play in comfort in a warm and welcoming home. The childminder identifies and minimises most areas of risk although currently, the level of water in a half barrel in the garden has risen above the safety grid protecting it and this may pose a potential hazard to children. Security and fire safety precautions are good.

Children learn about how to keep themselves safe when they are out and about as the childminder talks to them about road safety and sets clear boundaries. Older children are encouraged to tell her when they think it is safe to cross the road and the sharing of such books as 'Saying no to strangers' develops their understanding further.

Children explore a broad range of age appropriate play materials that are checked regularly to ensure they are safe and ready for them to use. These are arranged to be easily accessible which enables them to develop their independence.

The childminder has most required procedures and documentation in place to safeguard children and promote their welfare. She holds a valid first aid certificate and has a sound understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection. She has a copy of the local authority child protection procedures and provides parents with a copy of this information; however she does not have a copy of the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused.'

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has a flexible approach towards minding which benefits children. For instance, she willingly takes older children to swimming lessons and to other after school activities they participate in, on behalf of their parents. She responds to children's interests. For example, one child has recently started to learn the keyboard and so she has brought down a keyboard she was storing in the loft so the child is able to practise whilst at her house. The childminder also collects information from the school older children go to so she is aware of other events that are occurring in their lives. On occasions she also goes to school events that children are participating in, when parents are unable to do this.

Children take part in activities outside the home, for example visiting the park, going to feed the ducks, regularly attending a childminding group and, on occasion, going on outings further afield. This allows children to become familiar with their local community and experience different environments, as well as mixing with a wider range of children and adults, which enables them to begin to develop their social skills.

Babies explore the selection of age appropriate toys that are placed within their easy reach. The childminder involves herself in their play and supports them well which enables them to achieve and become competent learners. For instance, as they try to put different objects into a shape sorter and complete simple inset puzzles. They enjoy playing with the stacking cups, repeatedly building them up with help and then knocking them down. The childminder extends this activity by hiding small toys under each cup. She supports young children's developing communication skills by talking to them and naming the different pictures in a picture book they look at together. Children enjoy the closeness of cuddles and snuggling in. They giggle as the childminder recites 'round and round the garden' to them and does the corresponding actions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and treated with lots of care and concern. For instance, the childminder is very conscious that a baby is wary in the presence of the inspector and that the baby has not brought their special toy with them. She acknowledges this by providing lots of reassurance and cuddles. The childminder's practice of displaying children's artwork within her home adds to their sense of belonging and helps them understand that their efforts are valued. Children's awareness of the wider world in which we live is enhanced because the childminder provides them with an excellent range of resources that reflect positive images. These include a broad variety of books, both factual and fiction, dual language books, books in Braille, dressing-up clothes, puzzles, dolls and an interesting selection of authentic musical instruments from different countries. The childminder uses these to develop children's knowledge and to support topic work they may be doing at school. She also allows children to take items from her collection into school.

Children benefit from continuity of care because the childminder seeks information from parents to ensure she is fully aware of their daily routines and any specific information she needs to know about their care needs. There is a daily exchange of information which is supplemented by a written communication diary for the youngest child in her care. The childminder seeks written parental consent for all aspects of care.

Children receive a lot of praise and encouragement, both verbal and non-verbal, which fosters their developing self-esteem and confidence well. The childminder has a consistent approach to behaviour management and sets clear boundaries which help children understand what is expected of them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children benefit from a well organised environment, consistent routines and good levels of support which helps them to feel settled and at ease.

Required documentation and other records relating to the health, safety and welfare of children are well maintained. The childminder has her certificate of registration on display, so parents are aware of her conditions of registration. Paperwork is well organised and kept securely. The childminder implements good arrangements to ensure confidentiality.

The childminder develops her knowledge by attending training courses where possible and reading relevant publications. Last year she achieved level one of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) Quality First scheme.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her knowledge of some aspects of child protection and to look at further ways of sharing information with parents. She has attended child protection training and through discussion, demonstrates awareness of the procedure she should follow if any allegations of abuse are made about her or others. Parents are provided with their own copy of written policies relating to the way she organises her service. These include details of the procedure they should follow if they wish to make a complaint although contact details for the regulator are not included. This has been carried forward as an area for development following this inspection. A diary is used to inform parents of babies about how they spend their day.

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 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):

- assess the risks to children in relation to the outside water feature and take steps to minimise these and obtain a copy of the booklet 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- include contact details for the regulator in the information provided to parents about the procedure they should follow if they wish to make a complaint.

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