

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 133449  
**Inspection date** 17 August 2007  
**Inspector** Jennifer Read

**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](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 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 1983 and may provide care for six children under eight years at any one time. She currently cares for four children under five years on a part-time basis. She provides additional care for two children over seven years after school, during school terms. The childminder travels to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder lives with her two children of 13 and 19 years in the rural market town of Chipping Norton. The whole of the house is available for childminding. The main areas used are the living room, play room/conservatory, kitchen and downstairs toilet facilities. Upstairs bedrooms are available for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed rear garden with grass and patio surfaces for outdoor play. The family has two dogs who live in an allocated area of the garden.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy through regular fresh air and opportunities to explore the outdoor environment. They enjoy local walks during fine weather and visiting the play parks where they

use a range of equipment to build on their fitness and physical skills as they climb, slide, swing and run around the large open space. The children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their large muscle skills on regular trips to the soft play centre, learning to move in different ways as they slither, slide, crawl and roll under, over and through the different equipment. Limited discussion or planned activities mean children gain little awareness of the importance of physical exercise on their healthy well-being.

The younger children are also given many opportunities to develop their balance and gain control of their body as they practise their early walking and increase their co-ordination. They excitedly scramble through the Thomas ball pit, initiating games, such as hiding balls in each other's tops and seeing how high they can throw the balls in the air. The children are beginning to hold tools and writing implements with greater dexterity and are given many occasions to increase their balance as they learn to jump on the small trampoline and use small ride on toys around some areas of the garden.

Children benefit from a clean, tidy home and the childminder's good example. They have a developing understanding of their personal care, demonstrating good awareness of the very regular hand washing and toilet training routines. However, explanations are not consistent to help children gain sound awareness of why they need to wash their hands. Nappy changing routines are adequate to minimise the risk of cross contamination, although they are not sufficiently private to safeguard the children's dignity.

Children stay healthy because the childminder acts in the best interest of children when they are unwell and maintains a well-stocked first aid kit to ensure children receive appropriate treatment for minor injuries. The informative illness policy and list of infectious diseases and incubation periods helps to maintain children's health and ensure parents are well informed to provide appropriate care.

Children are developing a basic knowledge of healthy eating habits through eating a balanced diet and drinking water regularly, although exploring healthy foods through practical activities is rare. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's dietary needs are well met through recording any allergies or specific requirements and providing alternatives when necessary. Meal times are a social and lively occasion with the children sitting together and responding to the childminder's conversation and questions. This helps encourage children's enjoyment of their food.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have ample space to have fun and move freely and confidently through the different rooms. Good emphasis is given to making sure the environment is bright, stimulating and welcoming for the children to aid their enjoyment and development, for example, displaying posters, using the various rooms for different experiences and displaying a broad range of well-maintained toys in low-level drawer units. This enables children to access activities independently. The childminder regularly rotates the comprehensive range of interesting resources and provides child-friendly character rugs on the floor to offer comfort for the younger children while playing and crawling on the floor. However, toys strewn across the floor are creating a tripping hazard.

Children's safety and security is given suitable priority. The childminder closely supervises the children and ensures doors are secure at all times to safeguard the children from people walking

into the home unsupervised. Close supervision ensures the childminder is able to respond swiftly to their aid, for example, when children are learning to climb into the ball pit independently. Effective systems for the safe collection of children mean they are well protected from persons not known to the childminder.

Children are gaining good awareness of how to keep themselves safe through clear explanations of safe play, for instance, 'steady, as if you let go you will slip'. Regular practise of the displayed escape plan helps the children learn appropriate action to take in an emergency. They stay safe because the childminder has a positive approach to their safety when out walking or travelling in the car, although written permission from parents for children to go on outings is not in place. Children wear wrist straps when walking, are securely strapped into the pushchair and learn how to cross the road safely. The childminder is proactive in seeking guidance from the police on the use of car seats to transport children safely.

The children are very well protected from abuse or neglect as the childminder has professional understanding of child protection issues. She is very clear about her responsibility to record and report any concerns about a child in her care.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a broad range of stimulating and enjoyable activities that extend their experiences and aid their development. For example, visits to Yarnnton garden centre, the local farm, where they help to feed the ponies, and trips to the Wildlife Park, shops and country parks help to engage children's interests. They show interest in what they do for short periods, taking pleasure in making their choices in the flexible play routines.

The childminder knows the children generally well and adapts toys and activities appropriately to offer good levels of challenge. She actively involves herself in their play, providing generally good support when they are acquiring new skills, such as holding pencils and crayons and attempting to place small stickers onto their homemade birthday card.

Children are developing their early communication skills successfully as they imitate sounds and words from the childminder as she readily interacts, naming objects and talking about what they are doing in their play. Regular praise, cuddles and support help increase children's confidence and promote a close and friendly relationship with the childminder. They enjoy many opportunities to develop their social skills as they meet other children of a similar age.

The childminder has a sound understanding of an appropriate range of experiences to help the younger children develop their senses, creativity and motor skills. For example, they investigate the feel of the paint on their feet as they toddle across the paper, explore the texture of play dough and investigate various household objects and cardboard boxes to sit in. Children are happy and show pleasure as they listen and dance to the music and hear familiar songs and rhymes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled as the childminder has a strong focus on promoting children's individual needs, supporting their emotional well-being through regular cuddles and enabling them to make choices. This helps children feel a strong sense of belonging. The childminder

works closely with parents to obtain and record useful information about their daily routines, allergies, likes and dislikes. As a result, the children's needs are generally well met.

The childminder has previous experience and sound understanding about the care of children with a learning difficulty or disability. She works closely with parents and other agencies, implements observations and adapts activities and resources to promote an inclusive environment that meets the individual needs of the children. Although children have regular trips within the local community to help them become familiar with their surroundings, they gain little awareness about diversity and the wider world, as there are few resources or planned activities available.

The childminder is very positive and consistent and gives clear explanations to help children begin to learn about acceptable behaviour. As a result, children are well behaved, share their resources and play co-operatively alongside each other. The childminder sensitively encourages the use of manners and offers frequent praise and encouragement during play and daily routines. This values children's achievements and actively promotes their self-esteem and confidence.

Children benefit from a close, friendly partnership and informal contact between their parents and the childminder. The initial meeting is successful and used to discuss all aspects of care, to complete the child record forms, draw up the written agreements with parents and to share the complaints information and sickness and fire policies. However, not all written agreements are in place to ensure the business arrangements are well known by all parents and written permissions for all aspects of care, including taking photographs, applying sun creams and lotions and going on outings, are not available to ensure children are cared for according to parents' wishes.

Parents value the daily communication with the childminder to share important information about their children's day, their routines and care needs. The sharing of photographs and their children's pictures enables parents to feel involved in their children's experiences and development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder is enthusiastic and committed to the care of the children and has high regard for their welfare and a strong ethos on ensuring they have positive experiences in a child-friendly and stimulating environment. She ensures play areas are well organised to maximise their play opportunities to help them develop and have fun. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The childminder is professional in her approach to childminding and updates her first aid and child protection training when necessary to ensure she keeps up-to-date with new legislation and guidelines to enhance the care of the children. The childminder's enthusiastic teenage daughter supports her in the care of the children during the school holidays, such as building train tracks and setting up creative activities. The childminder monitors and guides her daughter adequately to safeguard the children.

The childminder demonstrates acceptable knowledge of the regulations and ensures documentation is easily accessible and stored securely. The accident and medication records are shared and signed by parents and information about the complaints procedure is readily available. However, not all records and agreements are in place or complete for the efficient and safe management of the childminding. For example, the daily record of attendance does

not include actual times of arrival and departure or show when all persons working with the children or regular visitors to the setting are present to show clearly who is on the premises at any one time in the event of an emergency or child protection concern. Children have an individual sleeve, with their child record forms and some written permissions from parents, to maintain confidentiality.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The last inspection recommended the provider establish a written agreement with parents that sets out the business arrangements and expectations of both parties. The childminder has taken steps to implement contracts for some parents to ensure business arrangements are well known and understood.

### **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 the daily record shows consistent and accurate times of arrival and departure for the children, any person who look after them and any visitors to show clearly who is on the premises at any one time.
- extend the resources and activities to help children develop knowledge and understanding of diversity and the wider world.
- obtain written permissions from parents for all aspects of care and ensure written agreements are in place for all parents to set out the expectations and business arrangements of both parties as to the care of the children to meet their needs.

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)