

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 154348
Inspection date 20 August 2007
Inspector Jacqueline, Ann Connell

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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and two, school-aged children in Alton, Hampshire. Minded children have access to the ground floor of the house. They use the bedrooms on the first floor for sleeping purposes. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. There are currently two part time, pre-school children on roll. The childminder walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She attends local parent/toddler groups. The family keep small caged pets. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the wide range of stimulating experiences, which actively contribute to their good health. Most days they spend time in the fresh air, for example, when they play in the garden or go for a walk. They have great fun as they try shooting goals into the football net or splash around in the paddling pool. Jumping on the trampoline helps to develop their co-ordination and balance. Children thoroughly enjoy visits to the local flood meadows where

they can run freely. Climbing on the equipment at the park helps them to gain control of their bodies. Children are confident to try out new skills and set their own limits because the childminder offers appropriate activities and high levels of support.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the daily routines help to maintain a healthy environment. Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through discussion with the childminder and her example. They understand that it is important to wash their hands before handling food and after using the toilet in order to stop germs from spreading. Each child has an individual towel to reduce the risk of cross infection. Regular sleep and quiet times contribute to children's good health. The childminder respects parent's wishes and works closely with them to follow home routines for rest times. Children keep protected from illness and infection because the childminder does not take them if they are unwell. Their welfare is supported because she has a good understanding of their medical requirements and maintains records when she gives medication. She has a first aid qualification and procedures to record accidents. Parents sign the completed records so that they keep fully informed.

The childminder understands the importance of a healthy diet in order to maintain good health. She is aware of children's individual dietary requirements. Children have frequent drinks throughout the day. This helps to keep them well hydrated. They enjoy mealtimes, which are social occasions because they all sit down together at the table. There are appropriate storage arrangements for food supplied by parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a child-centred, homely environment. The low-level furniture, attractive posters and accessible toys make them feel very welcome. They have plenty of space to play freely and are able to move around independently. They keep safe because the childminder identifies and minimises risks, both indoors and outside. There are good security arrangements and the childminder ensures children are not left alone with anyone who has not been vetted. Children learn the importance of keeping safe because the childminder gives high priority to helping them understand about safety. For example, they talk about road safety when they go for a walk and learn how to keep safe when handling animals. They understand about fire safety because the childminder involves them in practicing the emergency evacuation procedures.

Children independently select their own toys from the broad range of stimulating toys and play materials. They remain free from harm because the childminder checks the equipment regularly to ensure it is safe and clean. She supervises their choice of toys and ensures they play with those which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. The childminder is very aware of her professional duty to safeguard children and has a good understanding of the child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle extremely well at the childminder's house and become totally absorbed in their play. They are exceptionally confident in their relationship with the childminder and respond enthusiastically to her vitality and cheerfulness. For example, they have fun together as they try to score goals with the table football game. Egg and spoon races, using cooking spoons and ladles, promote lots of laughter. Children receive consistent support and encouragement. This makes them eager to develop new skills. For example, a child successfully completes a

challenging puzzle because the childminder offers helpful suggestions and gives warm praise when it is finished.

Children become independent as they choose from the extensive selection of toys and equipment. These provide appropriate challenge and cover all their developmental needs. They spend their time purposefully and play for extended periods. For example, they become deeply involved in constructing with the lego bricks or designing a layout with the brio track. Children thrive on the rich variety of experiences they encounter. They love going to the garden centre where in addition to the plants there are exciting creatures, such as snakes and fish. In holiday times, outings to the beach or a country park provide great enjoyment. The childminder uses these experiences to extend children's knowledge of the natural world. For example, they design miniature gardens and do creative activities based on bugs and butterflies.

Children's language and communication skills increase because the childminder talks to them while they play. They benefit from her clear explanations and skilful questions which help to extend their learning. For example, they talk about feelings as they look at pictures showing a variety of facial expressions. Learning is fun because the childminder puts a great deal of thought into preparing activities. For instance, children quickly develop their colour recognition when they play with the assortment of bouncy balloons. The extensive range of craft materials and role play clothes stimulate children's creativity and imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have excellent relationships with the childminder. She knows them extremely well and responds to their individual needs in a very caring, respectful manner. This helps them to feel valued and included. For example, she ensures older children have privacy when using the toilet but is always close in case they need assistance. Children learn to show respect and kindness to one another. They have a very good knowledge of the ground rules for behaviour. They know, for example, that they must be polite, share their toys and take off their shoes when they are indoors. They consistently help to clear away the toys before getting new ones out. They feel extremely proud when the childminder praises them for being especially helpful. Children's awareness and respect for others increases as a result of the exciting range of activities and resources, which help to promote a positive view of the wider world. For example, whilst playing on the computer children discover that some people need to use sign language. They learn to sign simple words, such as hot and cold, for themselves. Outings around the local community, combined with discussion about differences, help to extend their understanding.

The childminder develops an extremely close partnership with parents and has a very good relationship with them. She works closely with them in order to follow children's home routines. For example, she ensures that the strategies for managing behaviour are the same in both households. This gives children consistency, which is essential for their good development. She keeps a detailed diary for each child and has a daily exchange of information with parents. This enables them to work together in order to get the best outcome for the child. She gives parents very clear information about her policies and procedures so they understand how she organises her business.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel settled and relaxed in the friendly, welcoming environment. This is organised so that they can play freely and become independent. They are familiar with the informally planned, daily routine. This is flexible but takes into account the requirements of each child in order to meet individual needs. Children benefit from the balance of active and quiet times and the regular opportunities for indoor and outdoor play. The childminder organises her day so that each child takes part in activities appropriate for their age and stage of development. For example, she provides older children with more challenging tasks while the younger ones are having a sleep.

The childminder understands the importance of additional training in order to update her skills and enhance the quality of care she provides. She has regular contact with other childminders. This broadens the range of the children's experience and helps to increase her knowledge. She works to the correct ratios and has most of the required documentation in place. However, she has overlooked the fact that she requires written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. She ensures the records are in good order and that all information relating to the children remains confidential. She consistently applies her policies and procedures in order to safeguard and promote their welfare. This means that 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 improve the fire safety precautions by introducing a fire evacuation plan. This is now in place, which contributes to children's safety.

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):

- obtain written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

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