

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 161611 |
| Inspection date | 06 September 2007 |
| Inspector | Miriam Sheila Brown |
| 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 outstanding. 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 partner in a bungalow in a rural village near Malmesbury, Wiltshire. The home is within walking distance of the local school, and is surrounded by countryside. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There is a dog, some guinea pigs and some chickens at the home and the childminder also has a horse which is used occasionally by children.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently has four children on roll who are cared for at varying times throughout the week. The childminder takes children on regular country walks and cycle rides. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in an environment which is clean and well looked after and where hygiene procedures are thorough and effective. They take part in a wide range of stimulating and

meaningful activities which enable them to learn about good health and take responsibility for their own personal hygiene. Children instinctively wash hands after using the toilet and have their own towels and toothbrushes. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy eating. They discuss, choose, prepare and eat food which is nutritious and healthy, and eat vegetables they have grown in the childminder's garden. They are encouraged to help themselves to drinks as and when they want and understand that squashes and other mixed juices must not be too strong. Individual dietary needs are discussed with parents, recorded on information sheets and met effectively by the childminder. Medication records are well maintained and although children self-administer their inhalers, this is carefully monitored and recorded by the childminder. The childminder has several pets and animals, including chickens, guinea pigs and a horse. Children learn how to care for these and how to keep themselves healthy whilst doing so.

Children benefit from excellent opportunities for robust physical exercise and play. They use a wide range of equipment in the garden, such as a trampoline, wheeled toys, outdoor skittles, playing tennis, gardening and swing ball. They enjoy regular walks with the dog and go on bike rides with the childminder.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for within an environment where risks of accidental injury are minimised because the childminder is extremely thorough and vigilant. High priority is given to meeting fire and safety requirements and maintaining standards. A clearly written emergency evacuation plan, written by the children, is in place and practised regularly with them. They all understand what to do if they hear the smoke alarm. This excellent opportunity for their personal involvement meaningfully equips them for dealing with this situation in real life, without fear. The main entrance to the property is secure whilst children are present and the garden fully enclosed.

Children have a high awareness of safety issues and are learning about keeping themselves safe. They have helped to write their 'house rules' and follow these extremely well. These rules include not going outside without asking the childminder, and being kind to each other and the animals. Children have extensive space to play safely and they develop good independence as they freely access resources. These are stored invitingly in the indoor play room and outdoors in a fully enclosed storage room. Children's pictures and creations are displayed around the home creating a warm and inviting environment for children to play and feel they are valued and respected.

Children demonstrate good awareness of keeping themselves safe outside of the home. For example, without being reminded, they instinctively stop at kerbs to look for traffic and ask the childminder if they may walk with friends, before doing so. Outings during the holidays are carefully planned to ensure they are fun and the venues appropriate. The childminder ensures her car is road worthy and that children use appropriate safety seating or seat belts.

Through discussion the childminder demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of child protection practice and procedures. She has a clearly written policy which is shared with parents, and their written acknowledgment of having seen and understood its implications. This assists in maintaining children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder. They are very settled and relaxed within her home. They have access to a wide range of well chosen, good quality resources and meaningful activities. During school holidays these are supported by a number of exciting outings which are both fun and educational for the children. For example, on a recent trip to a nearby town, they took maps and followed a planned route. Returning home they wrote stories about their experiences, including seeing a swan land and a visit to the chip shop. On other occasions they have enjoyed a scarecrow hunt, bike rides, walks with the dog and visits to the zoo.

The range of resources, both for indoors and outdoors, provide children with excellent opportunities to relax and have fun after their day at school. They enjoy a wide variety of craft work, imaginary play and boxed games. A computer is available in a separate room should children need to complete homework. The childminder discusses a wide range of topics with the children helping them to feel valued and developing their confidence and self esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The children behave extremely well. They demonstrate good manners and respect for others, for example, saying 'please', and 'thank you' and holding gates open for an adult. They have clear and consistent boundaries of expected behaviour some of which they have written themselves. The childminder gently reminds them of responsible behaviour in a light-hearted way, for example, asking them where the fairies have gone when they forget to put a plate in the dishwasher or leave something lying about. Good behaviour is reinforced through the use of a 'smiley face' chart to record positive and on occasion, not so positive behaviour.

Toys and resources reflect positive images of different cultures and lifestyles and children's awareness of the wider world is developed through maps displayed on the walls and discussion with the childminder. They learn about their local community through walks in the village and surrounding areas and attendance at the local school. The childminder knows the children in her care very well. She listens carefully to them and helps them to resolve conflicts and problems through discussion, which assists them in managing difficulties for themselves.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. Time is given to discuss all policies and procedures as well as activities, routines and children's likes and dislikes before children start with the childminder. Individual care plans for children and their families are worked out depending on the individual needs of all concerned. For example, taking into consideration parents' working patterns and children's out of school activities. Information relating to the children is shared with parents through verbal communication at the end of each day. The childminder is very committed to a good working relationship with parents and is very understanding of children's needs. Letters of commendation from parents show their full support for all aspects of the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children are relaxed and at home within the well organised environment. Very accessible resources, well planned space to play and good supervision allow children to be confident and initiate their

own play and learning. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote children's welfare, care and learning.

Efficient procedures are in place to ensure children are safe and to monitor the premises. The childminder does not allow people she doesn't know access to the premises whilst childminding unless it is an emergency, then she never leaves them unsupervised. All those connected with the registration are in receipt of suitable clearance.

All required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, clearly set out and regularly reviewed. Children benefit from the childminder's dedication to provide high quality care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to extend her knowledge of food preparation practice. Through discussion the childminder demonstrates a sound awareness of how to store and prepare food to ensure it is safe for children's consumption. This helps to ensure children are kept free from infection and ill health.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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